



GREENE COUNTY TOURISM
Tourism Council Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, February 10, 2021, 9:00 a.m.,
Greene County Visitor Center – 9157 Seminole Trail, Ruckersville, VA

Call to Order: A meeting of the Greene County Tourism Council was called to order at Greene County Visitor Center & Zoom Conference Call, Ruckersville, Virginia on February 10, 2021. The meeting convened at 9:05 a.m., with Council Chair, Mrs. Deanna Gephart calling meeting to order.

Attendance: Those present were David Fowley, Deanna Gephart, Chuck Swinney, Bill Henry, Alan Yost, Michele Wallace (non-voting) and Diana Gamma (non-voting).

Approval of Minutes: A motion was made by Mr. Chuck Swinney to approve minutes as amended and Mr. Bill Henry second for the December 9, 2020 meeting.

Treasurer's Report: The Council reviewed monthly financial reports. Mr. Chuck Swinney continues to have concerns with the confusion of State Sales Tax payments by AirBnB. (A) Mrs. Deanna Gephart offered to share the lodging related tax statement received for Stone Mountain Vineyard with Mr. Chuck Swinney to assist with contacting state for overpayment of lodging tax

Old Business:

- 1) Budget 2021-2022 – Budget was reviewed. Mr. David Fowley made motion to approve, Mrs. Deanna Gephart second and all approved. There were none opposed.
- 2) Scenic Byways – This initiative is still pending. It has stalled with the DCR (VA Dept of Conservation & Recreation). Mr. Alan Yost continues to be in regular contact checking on status.
- 3) Visitor Center Greene Space - The recommendations from RAC (Ruckersville Area Committee) were to be presented to B.O.S. A concept plan will be discussed with the Tourism Council prior to moving forward.
- 4) Ordinance Recommendation–Private Property Camping – Mr. David Fowley emailed his proposed ordinance changes to group prior to meeting. Mrs. Deanna Gephart shared her concerns with Hip Camping due to several bad experiences at winery and the Flat Top

Mountain Community. Several questions asked: who is going to police it, how will fire issues be addressed, what are restrictions on proper sanitation, how will trash be handled and theft issues.

New Business:

- 1) Entry Run Project – Mr. Alan Yost shared a PowerPoint on PATC Entry Run project. Currently, parking and reoccurring culvert pipe issues with flooding are issues. Friends of the Rappahannock has received a grant from Trout’s Unlimited for \$20k to use toward a permanent bridge to solve the culvert issues and to make the structure not impede the trout habitat. It is expected to cost \$70k to: build bridge replacing culvert pipe, place interpretive signage and build parking space for 6-10 vehicles. PATC will contribute \$20k, Trout’s Unlimited \$20k. Mr. Alan Yost proposed pledging support of up to \$20k for remaining funding once final cost has been determined. Cost to maintain will be provided by VDOT for Entry Run Road and PATC for bridge and parking area. Mr. David Fowley asked about spending tourism money on private property. Mr. Alan Yost shared that there is no problem with spending money on private property; in fact, public/private partnerships are very common to increase tourism assets. Mr. Bill Henry questioned whether TOT dollars were being collected on PATC cabin rentals, if so this could be another lodging location to promote to tourist. Group agreed to move forward in concept, no vote will be taken until next meeting in April. (A) Mr. Alan Yost will follow up on TOT collections from PATC cabins. Mr. Alan Yost stated that if timing becomes an issue, a special meeting may be required for a vote prior to April meeting. The item was tabled.
- 2) Vineyard / Winery Trail - An initial meeting inviting Stone Mountain Vineyard, Kilauren Winery, Moss Vineyards, Hark Vineyards, Glass House Winery, Foothills (old Autumn Hills) Vineyard and Maybelle’s Market was held February 1st. Group discussed interest in supporting a wine trail with signage on Rt. 33 and potentially Rt. 29 & 33 intersection. Simmons Gap Wine Trail is the prevailing name at present. Signage would be for the trail, not any individual winery / vineyard. This could potentially pair nicely with the scenic byway’s initiative.
- 3) Autumn Hill Funding: Potential AFID Grant (21-22 fiscal year) – Mr. Alan Yost met with owners several weeks ago. Funding was discussed along with any potential grants. AFID a federal agriculture grant was suggested to research.
- 4) Bicycle Marketing – A first draft of an outdoor tourism strategic plan was shared with group. Mr. Alan Yost asked group to read through document and share digitally thoughts, recommendations and concerns with group.

- 5) Restaurant Month: Becoming an Economic Development initiative for Greene Together - This initiative is converting from a strictly restaurant focus to an all small businesses digital marketing effort. Funding will come through Economic Development Department. This will take place during the month of March.

- 6) 29 Median Strip Mowing - This was an initiative discussed several years ago. RAC also had it in their plans. Mr. Alan Yost shared the area involved and cost associated with it. The area to maintain is uncertain, but to keep at a very minimum. First step would be to keep mowed and later consider additional landscape to add. Cost was estimated at \$1,000 per mow, completed every other week with trash pickup included. (A) Mr. Alan Yost will discuss with RAC at next meeting.

Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 10:36 a.m.