

**Berea Tourism Commission Minutes**

**Wednesday May 9, 2018**

**212 Chestnut St., Berea City Hall, Community Room**

**Business Session:** Called to order at 5:04 PM, Reynolds presiding.

**Commission Members Present:** Ken Gastineau, Ahmad Reynolds, Cheryl Stone, Pat Greathouse, Rick Thomas, Dale Ballinger

**Support Staff Present:** Kerri Lee Hensley, Jeffrey Carpenter, Aja Croteau

**Visitors Present:** Mayor Steven Connelly, Randy Stone, David Rowlette, Martina LeForce, Gwen Childs, Tom Houser, Charlie Brown, Donna Brown (formerly Robertson), Hannah Coldiron, Barb Sallee, Susie Merida, Ethan Connelly

**Approval of Agenda**

Cheryl Stone motioned to approve the agenda; Thomas seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

**Approval of Minutes: April 11, 2018 Meeting**

Ken Gastineau motioned to approve the April 11, 2018 Minutes; Greathouse seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

**Approval of Minutes: May 2, 2018 Special Called Meeting**

Cheryl Stone motioned to approve the May 2, 2018 Minutes; Greathouse seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

**Presentation to Donna Brown (Formerly Robertson)**

Kerri Hensley shared highlights from Donna Brown's time serving on the Berea Tourism Commission. The Commission presented Brown with a cup engraved with the Berea logo to thank her for her service. Brown thanked the Mayor and the Commission for the opportunity to serve over the years and advised the city to keep building on Berea's legacy as the craft capital by including art, crafts, food, and one day breweries. Brown also advised not to let negativity grow that would inhibit the continuation of that legacy.

**Director's Report – Kerri Lee Hensley**

Before the official report, Hensley invited Art Accelerator Program Manager Jeffrey Carpenter to share updates on the program since the fire.

Carpenter shared that since their opening day on Saturday, May 5<sup>th</sup>, they have had \$716 in sales. The gallery's guest book has record of visitors from multiple states during that time. They fellows and Bob Berger are largely settled into the new space and the location will have its official reopening gala on May 19<sup>th</sup> from 6-9pm. The gala will include a silent auction of artwork donated by various artists from around the area to raise funds to replace supplies lost in the fire. Carpenter, Berger, and Dwan Finney will be going to Louisville on May 10<sup>th</sup> to collect supplies

donated to the program by Artist & Craftsmen Supply. The program's first free community art workshop will be Saturday, May 12<sup>th</sup> and will teach participants how to make wire-wrapped sea glass pendant necklaces. Carpenter and the fellows have planned two months of Saturday kids art workshops that will be open to the public and will cost \$5/person to cover the cost of materials. The fellows have discussed adding evening "date night" and "singles night" workshops and community film screening nights in the future. The program will also have a small free craft work space set up with a theme that rotates daily so visitors can participate in a small easy craft any time they visit the gallery. Ideas for the craft table include origami and watercolors, and the supplies will all be donated from Carpenter's personal craft supply.

A copy of the full Director's Report is on record in the minutes book.

- Budget: Tourism Cash, \$545,308.00
- Communications: Aja compiled and distributed all event information including the May newsletter, the weekly events notice sent to local businesses, promotional social media posts, and updating the website calendar. She shared two new Our Berea videos online according to their biweekly schedule. She worked with Michael to schedule 1 Our Berea video interview. She finished designing and ordered the 2018 Coupon rack card that will accompany the 2018 Travel Planner. She scheduled interviews for Art Accelerator Program applicants. She met with the Madison County International Committee to plan for the 2018 visit from the Hokuto-Shi Delegation from Japan and has arranged Learnshops and other activities for the delegation. She attended the Dandelion Festival at Berea College and promoted this year's Festival of Learnshops, highlighting sustainable skills Learnshops and funding opportunities for Berea College students. She attended the quarterly meeting of the Governor's Office of Ag Policy. She worked with Kentucky River Foothills to set the 2018 Trolley schedule, which started running April 21st. She promoted voting for Berea in American Craft Week's Top 10 Towns for Craft Lovers contest, in which Berea came in at #10.
  - Social Media Updates:
    - Twitter: 10,800 impressions and around 310 total followers.
    - Facebook: Facebook: 5,784 total "likes," 497 page views, 3,163 post engagements, and 15,691 people reached. (Brand Ads were also run during this time)
    - YouTube: 20,019 video views so far on 39 public videos.
    - Instagram: Up to 1,181 followers.

## **Workshop Programs Report**

### **Berea Festival of Learnshops, July 13-19, 2018**

- Online catalog and registration went live April 12, 2018.
  - There are 156 different learnshops being offered; 266 sessions total
    - 73 are new for FOL18
  - 73 instructors
    - 23 are new instructors for FOL18
  - Registration prices start at \$9.00 and go up to \$345.00
    - More than half (82 learnshops) of the learnshops cost \$75.00 or less
  - Learnshops range in length from 1.5 hours to 24 hours (4 days)

### **“The Art of the Learnshop” Exhibit, July 6-27, 2018**

- Hosted by the Berea Arts Council
- An exhibit of works by the 2018 Berea Festival of Learnshops Instructors

### **Singing Bird Music School, August 1-3, 2018**

Presented by the Berea Festival of Learnshops.

- Offerings will be seven learnshops in Banjo, Guitar, and Fiddle
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### **It/Multi Media**

1. Photoshoot for Motor Coach tour
2. Developed and delivered photos for motor coach tour
3. Filmed, edited and delivered Our Berea Short for College Visitors Center
4. Filmed edited and delivered Our Berea Short for Gallery 103

### **April Group Report**

April 3<sup>rd</sup>-4<sup>th</sup>    Group of 44 from Missouri. Arranged music for group after dinner on 3<sup>rd</sup>. Next day, 4<sup>th</sup>, group did basket making class, had basic step-on tour, and had different music group after dinner. Stayed in Berea 2 nights, meals at 2 different restaurants, class, tour.

- April 5<sup>th</sup> Group of 22 from Canada. Arranged through Bluegrass Tours in Lexington. Group of quilters, so arranged special tour of College Student Weaving. After lunch, group came to Old Town to shop before going back to Lexington.
- April 19<sup>th</sup> Group of 30—Madison Co. Youth Leadership for Arts Across the Curriculum field trip. This Group is comprised of 11<sup>th</sup> graders identified as leaders from all 4 Madison Co. high schools. Each student visited 3 artists, had tour of Berea Arts Council and KY Guild of Artists/Craftsmen.

### **Art Accelerator**

The new full time Program Manager, Jeffrey Carpenter started Tues, May 1<sup>st</sup> just the day after the fire. He and the fellows worked to get the Gallery open at the Tolle Building. They opened Saturday. Their sales were \$699.00; they received 67 visitors. There will be a grand reopening on Saturday, May 19<sup>th</sup>.

The interview committee (Jeffrey Carpenter, Kerri Lee Hensley, Judy Sizemore, Ahmad Reynolds and Cheryl Stone) will complete interviews for the 18/19 Fellows on Monday May 14<sup>th</sup>.

### **Administration**

Stan Spivey Started on April 23<sup>rd</sup> as part-time janitor. He will be working 22 hours per week.

### **Upcoming**

- Berea Makers Market – May 12
- Japanese Exchange May 15-19
- Grand Reopening of Gallery 123

### **Advertising Update – Brand Advertising Group**

A copy is on record in the minutes book.

- Susie Merida apologized for their absence from the April meeting and explained that their staff was away at a conference during that time.
- Brand staff created a new banner to advertise the relocation of the 123 Gallery to the Tolle building. A banner will be put up in the window of the old gallery at 123 N Broadway and on the side of the Tolle building to let people know about the change.
- Print Campaign: 1/4 page to full page ads ran in Cincy-Dayton Magazine, The Lane Report, and Kentucky Monthly in April and will run in Travel Host Magazine, Group

Tour Magazine, The Berea Citizen, The Grant County Newspaper, and American Airlines Magazine in May. Grant County is where Ark Encounter is located, and the paper is widely distributed at the park, reaching a wider audience than just Grant Co. residents.

- Digital marketing: Digital marketing efforts resulted in 444,184 impressions and 750 total actions from April 1 to April 30. The target areas for digital campaigns were along the I-75 Corridor from Detroit, MI to Jacksonville, FL.
- Television: A 15 second advertisement runs April-June on Travel Channel, Discovery, DIY, Weather Channel, and Outdoor Channel within select cable markets along the I-75 Corridor. A 15 second advertisement for the Festival of Learnshops has been created.
- Berea Craft Festival/Festival of Learnshops: Posters, rack cards, and FOL newspaper inserts have been created and printed. FOL T-shirts have been designed.
- Web Traffic Report: April 1 – April 30
  - Unique Sessions 9,722
  - New Visitors 81.6%
- Year to date budget: Budget is \$335,000; Actual YTD \$254,378; Difference \$80,622.
- Upcoming Events: 2018 Festival of Learnshops, Berea Craft Festival, Levitt AMP Berea 2018, KTIA Conference May 16<sup>th</sup> & 17<sup>th</sup>

Rick Thomas asked Brand if Berea runs ads in Kentucky Living. Merida responded that Berea has in the past and plans to run more in the future.

### **2018/19 Budget**

Hensley reviewed changes made since the last review of the budget, which included an increase in the full-time salary and benefit line items due to the hire of Jeffrey Carpenter and a reduction in the Sidewalks and Shared use path line item due to some of the funds having already been spent. The Special Programs line item was increased by \$50,000 and the Land Improvements line item was decreased by \$50,000 due to a request from the city's Finance Department to move the Celebrating Artists in Berea project to Special Programs instead of Land Improvements.

Randy Stone shared that the Commission previously granted \$50,000 for trails and the splash pad and that the funds were transferred from the general fund. The contribution from the commission to these projects was \$75,000 over two fiscal years. Randy Stone also shared that all city employees received a 2% pay increase for the fiscal year and that city administration is reviewing all positions and may have additional increases soon to ensure that wages are competitive within Madison County. Randy Stone shared that line items related to city employee health care plans will change because the city is switching to a Humana 80% plan and negotiations are still in progress. Randy Stone did note that the change resulted in a decrease in premium cost. Randy Stone also shared that there was no increase for the new fiscal year in dental or life insurance costs. Randy Stone explained that the addition of full time employees increased the pension line item from \$32,000 to \$55,000.

Reynolds noted that the Art Accelerator Program line item was kept at \$140,000 after discussion from the commission about increasing that line item at a previous meeting. Hensley explained that after reassessing the line item after the recent updates to the program, she feels that is an

ample amount for the program. Randy Stone shared that the city has been in constant contact with Mrs. Hays, the owner of 123 N Broadway as they work to move forward after the fire, and that Mrs. Hays currently plans to demolish the roof and the interior walls of the building.

Randy Stone explained that when the Tolle building was purchased, a 10 year loan was taken out, and that the commission should consider increasing the loan payments to ensure that it is paid off on time. Randy Stone shared some of the renovation plans for the Tolle Building, including the plan to build space for an elevator and an elevator mechanical room so that, if needed, an elevator can be added to the building later. Randy Stone explained that the city is working on deconsolidating the Tolle and Ford building lots and the restoration of the Hays before renovations can begin. Randy Stone also shared that he plans to wait until after the peak tourism season to begin the project so it can be funded without accessing the CDs. Randy Stone shared that he believes the relocation will be good for the Welcome Center based on the significant increase in customers that the 123 Gallery has seen since moving to the temporary location.

Gastineau made a motion to approve the 2018/19 Budget; Greathouse seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

#### **Celebration of Artists Project- Judy Sizemore**

A copy of the project overview is on record in the minutes book.

Hensley shared that Sizemore was not able to be at the meeting due to a family emergency and that she will do her presentation at the June Tourism Commission Meeting. Hensley also shared a one-page overview of Sizemore's proposed project, which includes adding to and updating Berea's Public Art Tour.

#### **Let's Grow Berea- Martina Leforce**

Leforce began by explaining that the Let's Grow Berea Facebook group and in-person meetings were created as an opportunity for citizens to share concerns and ideas and come together for the good of Berea. The Facebook page serves as an "online conference room" for citizens and is committed to being non-partisan and does not tolerate members attacking one another. The group has monthly meeting that are open to the public to identify projects that people want to work on. The first project was a proposal to the Parks and Recreation Committee that identified existing strengths and gaps of the Chestnut St. park and proposed additions to make it better space for community use. The result of that meeting is that the committee is considering the park in their discussions for the 2018/19 parks budget. The group has an interest in expanding public art through murals and filling empty store fronts, and are considering beginning projects to further those goals. The group is also interested in improving the safety of a number of crosswalks around town and have been discussing options to do so. The Let's Grow Berea group also played a large part in coordinating a creek clean-up behind the Glades Christian Church, removing invasive plants, trash, and taking down part of the fence that separates the property from the Spotlight Theater, increasing visibility and safety in an area known to harbor drug traffickers. Members of the group have also used the Facebook page to share information and build support for their own projects.

Cheryl Stone asked if the group is involved with the Berea Farmers Market. Leforce replied that it isn't involved in any official capacity but that members of the market staff and board are members of the Facebook page and participate in discussions.

Leforce clarified for the commission that she came to tell them about the existence of the group and its current initiatives and not to ask for any kind of support, monetary or otherwise.

### **Swing for a Cure- Tom Houser**

Houser updated the commission that the tournament is 3 months away and that there were roughly 3000 people in attendance at last year's event. This year, the Markey Cancer Center has decided to support the event and their banners will be hung up in the stadium. The tournament will use the parks facilities as well as the Berea College Softball field and possibly the college Baseball field and Farristown Middle School's field. Houser shared that he has been trying to get Berea College more involved in the event and is working with the college's Technology department to create a wooden bat made by students for the occasion. The bat won't be completed this year but they hope to have it done by next year's tournament. Houser is still reaching out to find more coaches for the tournament but has already had multiple teams and coaches register and there is plenty of time left for others.

Reynolds asked if Berea Tourism had a presence at last year's tournament. Houser said yes, sharing that the Tourism logo was displayed on event banners, the trolley added the park to its route on the day of the event, and that all participants got gift bags that included travel guides and wrist bands.

Houser shared that he is currently working with the parks department to allow players the opportunity to swim at the community pool between or after games.

### **Motion to Adjourn**

Cheryl Stone made a motion to adjourn. Greathouse seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 6:52 pm.