

## **Berea Tourism Commission Minutes**

**Wednesday April 11, 2018**

**Berea Police and Municipal Center - Berea City Council Chambers - 304 Chestnut Street**  
**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, Nancy Conley, Aja Croteau

**Visitors Present:** Ali Blair, Gwen Childs, Hank Philips, Jeffrey Carpenter, Jessa Turner, Laura Poulette, Jaqueline Bowling

### **Approval of Agenda**

Kerri Hensley requested to amend the agenda by moving Hank Philips's presentation before the Director's Report and by adding the review of the proposal from Belle Jackson for the Trolley service for 2018. Dale Ballinger moved to approve the agenda with these amendments; seconded by Cheryl Stone. Motion carried unanimously.

### **Approval of Minutes: March 21, 2018 Special Called Meeting**

Ballinger moved to approve the March 21<sup>st</sup> minutes; seconded by Stone. Motion carried unanimously.

### **KTIA- Hank Philips**

Hank Philips from the Kentucky Travel Industry Association shared information on what KTIA does and on the economic impact of tourism in Kentucky.

- KTIA serves as a trade organization for all businesses in the tourism industry in Kentucky.
- KTIA works to educate legislators and the public on the importance of tourism as it relates to state and local economies.
- Last year Kentucky tourism generated \$14.5 billion, 193,000 jobs, and over \$1.5 billion in tax revenue.
- KTIA recently awarded Madison County with a Economic Engine Award as a county with the largest economic impact from the tourism industry
- Madison County generated \$217 million and over 4,050 tourism related jobs.
- Phillips congratulated Madison County for receiving the award and thanked the commission for their contribution to tourism in Kentucky.
- Phillips reviewed the projects and incentives that KTIA advocates for. They are:
  - To protect and preserve tourism funding, including restaurant and lodging taxes
  - Working with AirBnB headquarters to collect local taxes from participating lodging businesses
  - Maintaining a "Welcoming Kentucky" that is open to all visitors by fighting legislation that negatively targets certain groups (such as the so-called "bathroom bills")

- Support state-wide film incentive programs that encourage the production of movies and tv shows in Kentucky (this does not apply to commercials)
- Support the Tourism Development Act, which assists in the development of brick and mortar businesses within the tourism industry.
- Philips gave an overview of why the economic impact of tourism can be harder to see than that of industry. Philips also gave a brief explanation of how the numbers are determined when measuring economic impact.

The commission thanked Philips for his presentation and shared that they appreciate KTIA's efforts to spread awareness of the important economic impact from the tourism industry.

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

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

- Budget: Tourism Cash, \$462,901.00
- Communications: Aja compiled and distributed all event information including the April 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 on designing the 2018 Coupon rack card that will accompany the 2018 Travel Planner. She continued to work with Judy Sizemore to advertise the call for applications for the Art Accelerator Program until the deadline of March 20th. She shared a video interview of former fellow, Samantha Lyons on social media to encourage applications. She received the Art Accelerator Program fellow applications and checked them for completeness, following up with applicants when additional materials were needed and answering questions from applicants. She led the quarterly training on Optimizing Social Media Photos/Images for local business owners. She made content updates to the website including restructuring the section on Sustainable Agriculture and adding a page for the new Singing Bird Music School. She began adding photos to listings on the Kentucky Tourism Website and working with Michael to schedule photo shoots for businesses without photos in the internal library. She met with the Madison County International Committee to begin planning for the 2018 visit from the Hokuto-Shi Delegation from Japan.
  - Social Media Updates:
    - Twitter: 11,800 impressions and around 301 total followers.
    - Facebook: Facebook: 5,739 total "likes," 489 page views, 2,665 post engagements, and 8,204 people reached. (Brand Ads were also run during this time)
    - YouTube: 19,861 video views so far on 37 public videos.

- Instagram: Up to 1,173 followers.
- Workshops:
  - **Berea Festival of Learnshops, July 13-19, 2018**
      - Our team has continued to conduct a series of tests on the new shopping cart system and have been working with BRAND on troubleshooting.
      - Learnshop offerings are set up in the new system. We will have over 150 offerings.
      - The online catalog and registration for learnshops available NOW at visitbera.
      - Our team is working with the Berea Arts Council on a Learnshop Instructor Exhibit that will open in early July and run through the end of the Festival of Learnshops.
      - We are working on an addition of a three-day music school to take place right after learnshops this year – Singing Bird Music School. The dates will be August 1-3. This event will include old time fiddle, banjo, guitar workshops and more.
      - We are working on content to be used for a printed Learnshop catalog. Insert in newspapers in mid May.
- It/Multi Media:
  - Edited and Delivered Arts Accelerator – Sam Lyons interview for Public Art Project
  - Edited and Delivered Our Berea -Peacecraft
  - Edited and delivered Our Berea – Stephanie Runyan
  - Product Shots for FoL courses
  - Headshots for FOL Instructors
- Group Tour Report:
  - March 17-21st                      Attended Travel South Showcase in Biloxi, MS. Had 40 scheduled Appointments with owners/operators of various motorcoach (bus) Companies who bring groups to southern states.
- Art Accelerator:

- Interviewed for Art Accelerator Program Manager with Executive Committee. In process of offering candidate the position.
- Will be vetting applications for the Art Accelerator Fellows the week of April 16<sup>th</sup>.
- March Gallery Sales \$616.00
- Admin:
  - April 3<sup>rd</sup> hosted Leadership Madison County, included a talk with Richmond/Berea Tourism Directors and opportunity to explore working studios.
  - Attended meeting April 6<sup>th</sup> in Frankfort to learn of states new marketing plan and matching funds opportunities.
  - All tourism staff will receive First Aid Re-certification/Certification training in April.
  - The Berea City Council Finance Committee will meet with Berea Tourism's Executive Committee on April 17<sup>th</sup> at 5:30pm.
- Upcoming:
  - Rebuild Conference April 11-15
  - Stephenson Memorial Concert: Le Vent du Nord – April 12
  - A Midsummer Night's Dream, Berea College Theater Dept. – April 13, 14, 18-21
  - Joint Meeting with Berea City Council April 17<sup>th</sup> at 5:30pm
  - Redbud Recovery Ride Sunday April 22<sup>nd</sup>
  - Hands Four Spring Dance – April 27-29
  - Berea Makers Market – May 12
  - Japanese Exchange May 15-19

**2018 Trolley Contract- Belle Jackson**

Hensley shared the proposal for the 2018 trolley service from Belle Jackson, who was unable to attend the meeting. Jackson proposed running the trolley for 23 Saturdays in 2018 beginning May 12 and contracting with Connie Mondine and Maya Todd as tour guides. She plans to invest in promotional items and signs and asks for \$3000 to cover the total cost of the service.

Pat Greathouse expressed that last year she received positive feedback about the trolley program from her guests. Hensley shared that trolley attendance is recorded by the Tourism office and that the \$3000 requested was in the 2017-18 budget and that it has been included in the current draft of the 2018-19 budget as well.

Greathouse moved to approve the proposal and request for \$3000; seconded by Stone. Motion carried unanimously.

**Berea Levitt AMP Series Update- Ali Blair**

Ali Blair shared updates on the planning process for this year's Levitt AMP Music Series.

- Blair shared that four years ago, the commission approved funds for First Friday Berea and detailed many accomplishments that have been achieved since that time including building partnerships, coordinating and winning two online voting campaigns, and the emergence of Berea as a noteworthy location for creative placemaking.
- The Levitt AMP series is searching for funding to match a \$2500 grant that is due, along with their artist roster, to the Levitt Foundation on April 27, 2018. Blair detailed the increases in the program's budget, which account for administrative costs, improvements to light and sound equipment, and the goal to book high quality talent for this year's concert series.
- Levitt AMP Berea will be selling beverages at all ten of the concerts to generate revenue.
- The planning team is looking forward to the August 3<sup>rd</sup> concert, as it coincides with the THRIVE conference, the Kentuckians for the Commonwealth regional meeting, and the Singing Bird Music School.
- Blair shared some of the analytics from the series Facebook page with the commission, including the demographics of who engages most with their posts.
- Blair shared her appreciation for the support from the Levitt Foundation for their unique circumstance, as Berea was the first town to be awarded the grant where the events are coordinated by a third party contractor.
- The website for the Levitt AMP Berea series has been updated and includes applications for vendors, information on sponsorship opportunities, a press page highlighting the series in the media, and a call for local emerging artists interested in opening at the concerts.

Blair requested that the Berea Tourism Commission serve as the Presenting Sponsor for the 2018 series, which includes a \$10,000 funding commitment. Blair also asked the commission to cover the cost for printing rack cards to advertise the event. Blair clarified that she is asking for this instead of, or in addition to, the \$3000 already budgeted for the Levitt AMP series in the draft 2018-19 budget.

The commission discussed the feasibility of committing \$10,000 to the Levitt AMP series and considered multiple budgeting options related to remaining funds from the 2017-18 budget and previously discussed changes to the Grant program line item in the 2018-19 budget. All commission members voiced that they support the Levitt AMP series and feel it is a worthwhile program. Ballinger and Thomas expressed that they would be in favor of supporting the program provided that there is enough money in the budget to cover the expense. Hensley reminded the commission that while she does not oppose supporting the Levitt AMP program, the commission has a duty to be fiscally responsible, and to remember that approving this request would affect the budget's bottom line. Stone expressed that she sees giving funds to the Levitt AMP Series is in line with the commission's goal to support more activities that directly benefit the citizens of Berea as well as visitors. Blair shared that attendance to the events has grown since the beginning of First Friday Berea and that people from out of state have been attracted to the series as well according to owners of local lodging businesses.

Stone moved to approve the request of \$10,000 and for the Berea Tourism Commission to be listed as the Presenting Sponsor; seconded by Thomas. Motion carried unanimously.

The commission plans to review the request for covering the cost of printing rack cards at a later meeting. Blair thanked the commission for their support and contribution and thanked Hensley for being a good financial steward over money that comes from tax payers.

**Motion to Adjourn**

Gastineau made a motion to adjourn. Greathouse seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 7:15 pm.