

Berea Tourism Commission Minutes
Business Session
Tuesday, December 11, 2018
212 Chestnut St., Berea City Hall, Community Room

Business Session: Called to order at 5:09PM, Reynolds presiding.

Commission Members Present:

- Rick Thomas
- Cheryl Stone
- Ahmad Reynolds
- Ken Gastineau
- Dale Ballinger
- Patrick Huston

Support Staff Present:

- Kerri Lee Hensley
- Megan Hardy
- Jeffery Carpenter

Visitors Present:

- Ronnie Terrill
- Jacqueline Bowling
- David Rowlette
- Mayor Elect Bruce Fraley
- Terry Fields
- Jim Davis
- Bob Berger
- Leslie Berger
- Jesse Albert Glenn
- Cynthia Main
- Stacey Sizemore
- Cinnamon Callins

Approval of Agenda

Ken Gastineau motioned to approve the agenda; Dale Ballinger seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Approval of Minutes: December 11, 2018

Ken Gastineau motioned to approve the September 12, 2018 Minutes; Rick Thomas seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Director's Report – Kerri Hensley

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

Budget

Tourism Cash \$474,867.00

Communications

Aja compiled and distributed all event information including the December newsletter, the weekly events notice sent to local businesses, promotional social media posts, and updating the website calendar. She worked with staff and Brand to develop the 2019 Travel Planner, which will be ready to print by mid-December. She did three TV interviews promoting the Make It, Take It, Give It workshop series and holiday shopping in Berea. She was joined in these interviews by Diane Gilliam & Andy Glenn, both MTG instructors, and by Mae Suramek from Noodle Nirvana/ Hole & Corner Donuts. She continued working on updating the Berea History signs located in the Artisan Village and at the Artisan Center. She coordinated Small Business Saturday on Nov. 24 and created brochures and posters to promote the event. She assisted Jeffrey in developing a certificate of completion for Art Accelerator Program fellows.

- Social Media Updates:
 - Twitter: Around 13,300 impressions and around 350 total followers.
 - Facebook: 6,744 total "likes," 575 page views, 5,868 post engagements, and 76,020 people reached. (Brand Ads were also run during this time)
 - YouTube: 23,000 video views so far on 47 public videos.
 - Instagram: Up to 1,298 followers.

Workshop Programs Report

Make It, Take It, Give It! 2018

Weekends (Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays) November 23, 2018 thru December 16, 2018.

As of 9AM December 5, 2018 we have 202 registrations totaling \$16,549.00 in Gross Revenue. We are 61 registrations OVER our TOTAL registrations last year (2017 we had 141 reg's.).

Hands on Workshops

Dates and HOW themes are: Valentine's Themed (scheduled for February 9-10, 2019);

Easter/Spring Themed (scheduled for April 13-14, 2019) and Mother's Day Themed (scheduled for May 11-12, 2019). Registration for all three weekends will go live on or before December 14, 2018.

Currently there are 7 Berea Artists offering 25 different workshops totaling 47 sessions over the three-weekend period.

Festival of Learnshops July 12 thru August 2, 2019

Festival of Learnshops will present Singing Bird Musical School, July 31 – August 2, 2019.

Call for proposals started November 5, 2018 with the deadline of December 7, 2018. Learnshop registration is planned to go live on or before March 1, 2019. KY Artisan Center at Berea will host the “Art of the Learnshop” Exhibit (name subject to change) for our 2019 Learnshops event.

It/Multi Media

1. Photographed Developed and Delivered Photos of locations in Berea for Autumn
2. Photographed Developed and Delivered indoor and outdoor shots of local businesses around Berea including, White Stitch, Log House Gallery, Gallery 103 and others
3. Photographed Developed and Delivered Product shots for MTG 2018
4. Developed and delivered photos for past events like Makers Market, Contra Dance, Singing Bird Music School & Fall Craft Festival.
5. Edited and delivered video clips from past events
6. Photographed Developed and delivered photos and video from MTG 2018 classes.

November Group Report

Thursday Nov. 15th Arts Across the Curriculum field trip for Hunter Hills 4th grade, London KY. Had 104 students, used 8 artists.

Wed. Nov. 28th Arranged music for tour group from Ohio. Group of 108 people ate lunch at Boone Tavern, with music after. Stop over on their way south.

Art Accelerator

The gallery had 350 visitors for the month of November with larger crowds for Shop Small Saturday (82) and 65 for Jammin’ on the Porch. In-house gallery sales were \$303. Fair, wholesale, and commission sales for the group totaled \$2185. Total sales were \$2488.

Activities for December for the group include presenting and selling at Boone Tavern which Stacey and Cinnamon will be attending; Jesse Albert Glenn is working on another commissioned mural; Cynthia will be selling at Nashville’s Porter Flea.

The fellows are looking forward to our move back to Old Town. We all believe that being part of a larger walkable shopping experience, more visitors and more sales will prevail after the move.

Jeffrey will be presenting a 3-week lecture series with assistance from PBS' Craft in America Series in January at the Berea Public Library. 3 episodes will be shown and a workbook will be provided to the participants. This lecture series will connect it with the importance of the craft legacy here in Berea and why it is so vital to support and hold value to our crafters in the area.

Administration

Attended the KY Arts Council's Annual Creative Summit November 30th in Georgetown, KY.

TV Series Top Chef began airing its 16th season on Bravo Network on December 6 at 9E. The competition was filmed earlier in the year in locations across Kentucky before heading for the finale in Macau, China.

Hosted the Bluegrass Region Meeting at Boone Tavern on December 7th.

Hosted Santa for the Where's Santa Program through Berea Parks and Recreation December 10th.

Upcoming

November 23rd – Dec 16th – Make It, Take It, Give It

December 26-January 1 – Christmas Country Dance School.

Pat Greathouse Resignation

Reynolds announced that Pat Greathouse resigned from the Berea Tourism Commission. He then explained that the new member selected to be on the commission would have to come from the hotel/ motel category.

Cheryl Stone suggested that the commission write her a letter signed by all of the current members acknowledging her 20 years of service.

Reynolds agreed that would be a great thing to do.

Discussion about Tourism Properties

Reynolds continued the work session discussion regarding the Hays building lease options. The option that was being discussed was the four one-year lease options.

Ken Gastineau agreed to move forward with the four one- year lease options.

Rick Thomas agreed to move forward with the four one- year lease options.

Cheryl Stone agreed to move forward with the four one- year lease options, since she

believes that the location is strategically important to Old Town.

Dale Ballinger agreed to move forward with the four one- year lease options.

Patrick Huston agreed to move forward with the four one- year lease options.

Cheryl Stone made a motion that the Berea Tourism Commission notify the owner of the Hays Building of our intent to take our renewal option for the year, and relocate when certificate of occupancy is received. Ken Gastineau seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Rick Thomas then discussed the plans for the Train Depot. Thomas started by saying that he truly believes that the best use of the property is a restaurant, and would be the centerpiece of the town. Thomas believes that having Apollo and the Train Depot as two new restaurants would make Berea prime hotel property. Thomas explained that we need to attract an entrepreneur to go into the facility, and need to make that initiative before Tourism moves to the Tolle Building.

Ken Gastineau agreed with Thomas, saying that it doesn't matter why you go somewhere, you want to eat and drink. Gastineau explained that this would attract entrepreneurs because food has an impact on traffic, and he couldn't imagine a better way for visitors to experience the beauty for the train depot then relaxing and eating with friends.

Bruce Fraley suggested for the commission and finance to get together about some possible joint funding for the general fund and the tourism funds for restaurant renovations, such as a kitchen.

Ronnie Terrill commented, saying that he believes tourism needs to go ahead with the Tolle Building renovations, so tourism can get moved in because the people want to see the welcome center there.

Terrill also commented that he doesn't believe that we should pay for the stuff going into the restaurant, but instead have escalating rent, starting low and going up. Terrill said that would be the only way he would support it.

Ballinger said that he has hesitation to move forward with the Tolle Building renovations and move before we have a plan for the Train Depot.

Reynolds suggested doing both simultaneous projects at the same time.

Terrill then commented that the 40% tax credit would be an incentive.

Thomas responded that the 40% tax credit should be attractive, and hopes that someone will come in and do it all.

Ballenger commented that it's hard to put down money on something that you don't own.

Cheryl Stone explained that her concern was with vacancy. Stone explained that the original agreement was on a restaurant at the depot, and under those conditions' tourism was happy to relocate, but believes we should postpone until we have a set plan for something to go into the depot. Stone believes that Old Town cannot afford to have another vacant building.

Thomas agreed with Reynolds about having simultaneous plans for the Train Depot and Tolle Building.

Bruce Fraley suggested grant-based funding. Fraley said that people would like to see a facility everyone can use such as a farmer's market, outdoor activities for children, he believes it could potentially be a multipurpose facility.

Thomas replied that the space could be used for meetings, potlucks, wedding receptions. Thomas said we need to see how to best fully utilize the building to where people can see where their tax dollars are being used.

Leslie Berger commented that the demographic in Berea is not young people throwing money around. Berger said that she believes that a quick sandwich shop would do better than a restaurant. Berger believes that would be a good way to incorporate the history of Berea and the depot while eating a sandwich for lunch. Berger then went on to say that she doesn't believe tourism will be able to get busses in the Tolle Building parking lot, which will be a problem for tour directors on strict agendas. Berger ended by saying that her feelings are to support local artists, make it affordable, and make it attractive so people remember Berea.

Jesse Albert Glenn commented that he believes that the depot would bring in people of all generations, but doesn't believe a deli would. Glenn said that a lot of young people are foodies, and with the right kind of restaurant it would draw them in. Glenn then described food as being an art form in today's world.

Reynolds suggested going forward for the commission to get with the city council to have specific discussions about parking and simultaneous plans for the Train Depot and the Tolle Building.

Reynolds then moved the discussion on to the Berea Hotel property.

Thomas said that he and Ballinger went with Mayor Elect Bruce Fraley upstairs in the Berea Hotel property, and recommends that the commission gets an engineer experienced in renovating old buildings to take a look at it and make recommendations. Thomas suggested that the commission do this while the building is empty, then decide the next steps from there.

Ballinger said the property value of the Berea Hotel building will go up with restaurants surrounding it, since there will be more foot traffic. Ballinger also mentioned that the Historic 40% tax break should be desirable to potential renters.

Thomas then asked if the next step was to get an estimate and evaluation on the Berea Hotel building from an engineer while it's mostly empty to figure out the structural situation?

Reynolds replied, yes, that will be the next step. Reynolds said he will talk with Randy Stone about getting an estimate and evaluation to get a direction to go in.

Motion to Adjourn

Rick Thomas made a motion to adjourn. Dale Ballinger seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 6:14pm.