

**BEREA TOURISM COMMISSION MINUTES
SPECIAL CALLED MEETING
MAY 12, 2021**

VIDEO TELECONFERENCE MEETING PER KRS 61.826

WORK SESSION:

Called to order at 2:37 PM; Patrick Huston presiding.

COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT:

- Laura Carpenter
- Patrick Huston
- Charles Saunders
- Rick Thomas
- Charles Arnold
- Kristy Napier

SUPPORT STAFF PRESENT:

- Donna Angel
- Daniel Brindley
- Nancy Conley

USAGE OF MITCHELL TOLLE BUILDING:

Discussed ideas for usage of the Tolle Building:

Original intention was to move to move Welcome Center to Tolle Building.

- Utilize for event space.
- Have a museum for famous Bereans.
- Wedding venue.
- Tolle building needs to be as multipurpose as possible.
- A storytelling building to tell the story of Berea.
- Displays of outdoor adventure.
- Original renovation plan for Tolle building included an elevator.
 - Need to figure out what the space upstairs will be used for.
- Berea Tourism Commission purchased a group of Tolle prints and an original to be on an ongoing display.
- Tolle Building is the gateway to Berea.
- Are the restrooms in the Tolle building handicap accessible?
- Can funding be obtained for a kitchen that can be used for teaching as well as a warming kitchen?
- How can the Depot be used as a traffic generator?

- Can sell alcohol at Depot without food requirement.
- Berea Tourism did not purchase the Depot it is a City building.
- Short term plan and long term is needed for all Tourism Properties including the Tolle Building, Hotel Building and Property on Adams Street.
 - Substantial tax incentive for renovating historic buildings.
- Ability to investigate if USDA funding is available or not.
- Deed for Tolle is in City's hands discussed this being reversed and in Tourism's name.
- Donna Angel supports moving a couple Tourism employees to the Tolle building if there is a really good plan in place.
 - Tolle building roof leaks and the heat and air units do not work properly; these are among other items that need addressed.
 - Pavilion should be ready for use by August.

WORK SESSION ENDED AT 3:32 PM.

BUSINESS SESSION:

Called to order at 3:37 PM; Patrick Huston presiding.

COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT:

- Laura Carpenter
- Patrick Huston
- Charles Saunders
- Rick Thomas
- Charles Arnold
- Kristy Napier

SUPPORT STAFF PRESENT:

- Donna Angel
- Daniel Brindley
- Nancy Conley

VISITORS PRESENT:

- Amanda Olmsted with RPM
- Devin Johnson with RPM

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Laura Carpenter moved to approve the minutes of April 14, 2021, April 27, 2021 and April 29, 2021; seconded by Rick Thomas. Motion passed unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

One public comment, from Ali Blair read by Donna Angel: Information was shared regarding Ali Blair and Levitt AMP. Ali would like to see Berea Tourism Commission embrace Levitt AMP Berea.

PAVILION UPDATE:

No changes or updates since the last meeting/updates.

RIGHT PLACE MEDIA (RPM) UPDATE FROM DEVIN JOHNSON & AMANDA OLMSTED:

Shared information on upcoming Ads. Reviewed location visit report from last fall and winter holidays. Top cities visitors are coming from: Lexington, Louisville, Cincinnati and Knoxville (most from Central KY area). Devin Johnson will double check to make sure that they are taking measures to eliminate Berea Cell pings and will look at more robust reports to show more visitor tracking. Also, will look into push notifications on cell phones to visitors that are in Berea area.

DIRECTORS REPORT - DONNA ANGEL:

SOCIAL MEDIA #'s

FACEBOOK: LIKES - April 2021 9,022 vs. March 9,008: Increase of +14:

***Comparative to April 2020, COVID 7,882: Increase of +1,140

***Comparative to April 2019, NORMAL YR 6936: Increase of + 2,086

TWITTER - April 2021 had 543 Followers vs. April 2020 443: Increase of +100

INSTAGRAM - April 2021 2,969 vs. April 2020 2,035: Increase of + 934

- A joint work session between city council members and BTC commissioners was conducted on April 19th, with discussion and disclosure of updates of the Artist Search Committee's work in progress: Hosted by Rick Thomas and the committee:
- Food Trucks on Saturdays continue to be a success in Old Town: Hosted by Village Life Boutique:
- Farmers Market reports an increased membership of 15) new vendors at the market: Fee Street location until their new home is in place.
- Mother's Day special program with participating merchants was a great success:
- Jeff Richey concert Electra was a great success showing citizen support at the Spotlight Playhouse Theater:
- The Wood Carvers will be returning to the Cabin grounds in May:
- Music on the Porch will be returning in June either at the Folk Center or on the Cabin Grounds:
- Berea Craft Festival is on target to roll out July 9th, 10th and 11th:

- Celtic Festival Concert is scheduled to return in August either at the Folk Center or here on the Cabin Grounds:
- We will have our L&N Day coming up in August as well:
- We welcome back Honeysuckle Vine; Linda Wagers is back:
- Weston Glass has started back small group classes on glass blowing:
- Top Drawer Gallery has beautiful new work on display of multiple crafts makers:
- KY Guild is preparing for their October Guild Fall Fair:
- Berea Arts Council prepared for a Plant Sale as a Fundraiser & displayed beautiful artwork and Gallery openings w/entertainment:
- Berea College is preparing for 135 rising high school seniors on June 19th that will participate with Tourism and the city on volunteer projects:
- Berea College Trace Short Film Series are currently out and incredible to watch:
- The Kiwanis conference from TN & Ky chapters will be at Boone Tavern in early August of which Tourism will host and entertain with the Hotel:
- We have Mr. Coffey's 25-yard Sale coming in June 3rd -4th-5th:
- The Chamber of commerce is in the planning stages of the Spoonbread Festival:
- Holiday Inn Express has been hosting coach busses:
- Boone Tavern continues to serve many wedding parties and conference bookings:
- Creekside Lodge gets a shout out for supporting and working with the State ESG & City program for the Homeless along with RITI for January thru March of this year:
- The Mtn. Bike Trail should wrap up by August end:
- Our search mission for the Tourism Operations manager wrapped up this month: Promoting internally, Nancy Conley, tourism programs manager to the new position:
- Interviewing has started for part time staff for working in the KY Artisan Center and front-line reception staffing at the Tourism office:

CONNIE MONDINE- MOTORCOACH SPECIALIST

Saturday April 10th, organized the "Chalk, Hop and Shop" event in Old Town. Merchants offered special sales, demonstrations, etc. We had an art scavenger hunt with a small goodie bag for participants, provided sidewalk chalk for guests to draw their own art on the sidewalks, etc. Tourism even had a chalk hopscotch up to our front door. The event saw many local people and families who said they had never been in this part of town as well as many visitors from out of town. Total guest count in the office that day: 111 people, the most of any Saturday this year so far.

On Sunday April 18th, had group of 10 guests on Collette Tour bus. All guests were from California. They had special demonstrations by Michelle Weston, Becky Brown, and Tim Wade.

Have been working with a group from Wisconsin planning on bringing tour group to Berea in June.

Working with other groups and conferences coming to Berea later in the summer.

L&N Day has been moved to Saturday August 7th for this year. In process of sending “new date” cards to everyone on that specific mailing list, securing exhibitors, etc.

Update on mailings from leads sent from KY Visitor Guide. As of April 28th, have received 708 requests for information. Top 6 states folks from requesting info.:

- 1) KY
- 2) Ohio
- 3) Indiana
- 4) Michigan
- 5) Wisconsin
- 6) Illinois

NANCY CONLEY, PROGRAM MANAGER REPORT

Working with RPM as they research and evaluate workshop ticketing systems. Goal is to have a system in place, tested and ready to use in July. A continued postponement of the Festival of Learnshops is in order. We will begin planning the 10th Anniversary celebration for 2022!

Planning for Fall themed workshops to take place in September/early October. Make It, Take It, Give It winter holiday themed workshops to begin on weekends in October instead of November this year.

Nancy accepted the Tourism Operations Manager Position and am eager to continue working on strengthening Berea’s tourism and travel industry while increasing awareness of its value.

MITCHELL TOLLE BUILDING - PATRICK HUSTON:

Patrick Huston moved for the Commission to authorize moving forward with three contractor bids to paint, replace flooring, update current restrooms to ADA standards and remove the four interior walls providing the above is structurally possible and meets our 2021-22 budget of \$250K. Patrick Huston proposed to include a meeting with Code Enforcement to understand possible building occupancy capacities based on current versus modified or new restroom setup which will also be included in the contractor estimates. Patrick Huston recommends that the Commission ensures air conditioners and roof leaks also be fixed in the budget to ensure the preservation of the building in this estimate. Seconded by Charles Arnold. Motion passed unanimously.

ARTIST SEARCH COMMITTEE UPDATE - RICK THOMAS

Many take aways from joint meeting with Tourism Commission and City Council.

- It is important to communicate all things that each entity and committee is doing; need to communicate regularly what we are doing to the community.

- Received a lot of outreach from the community asking how they can help.
- Committee to focus on: How to support existing artists and attract new.

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS:

Rick Thomas encourages all Commissioners to watch the videos by the Berea College Trace Program. Patrick Huston is happy to forward the videos onto the Commissioners.

ADJOURNMENT:

Kristy Napier moved to adjourn; seconded by Laura Carpenter. Meeting adjourned at 4:49 PM