

**BEREA TOURISM COMMISSION MINUTES
BUSINESS MEETING
WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 11, 2021, 3:30 PM**

**City Annex Building
304 Chestnut Street**

Called to order at 3:34 PM; Patrick Huston presiding.

COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT:

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

SUPPORT STAFF PRESENT:

- Donna Angel
- Thomas Horn
- Daniel Brindley
- Nancy Conley
- Sarah Stillwell
- Liz Todd

GUESTS PRESENT:

- Mayor Bruce Fraley
- Jacque Bowling
- Sune Fredrickson
- Devon Johnson, Right Place Media
- Amanda Olmstead, Right Place Media

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – JULY 14, 2021:

Rick Thomas moved to approve minutes. Second by Laura Carpenter. Motion passed unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Jacque Bowling asked the following questions:

1. What is the progress on the Tolle Building? Donna Angel responded that the building has been paid off.
2. Would the Tourism Commission be willing to meet later in the day so more people could attend?

CELTIC FESTIVAL UPDATE: Sune Fredrickson

Due to COVID / Delta variant and Berea / Madison County in the red, the 12th Annual Celtic Festival which was scheduled for August 19-22, will be cancelled. Sune

Fredrickson had applied for a grant for marketing and requested his application be held for future events. Application will be kept on file for future.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT: Donna Angel
BUSINESS TOPICS:

- A. Welcome Center had a small HVAC interruption from the power outage. Roy Curtis had us up and going next day. Great thanks to Kevin Howard and Utilities staff for initial day of outage.:
- B. Water leak at the underground meter: Repaired completely & quickly.
- C. We are seeing a lot of cracks occurring in the concrete around the back platform and the front of the concrete entrance as well at the Depot. Service work may be required or evaluated.
- D. Mitchell Tolle mortgage was paid off last week (\$610,310.66 plus Interest of \$2,965.38)
- E. RFP for maintenance in Pavilion parking lot continues to be fine-tuned:
- F. Chair Patrick Huston preparing a long-term draft of the M.T. building plan as the upcoming Welcome Center & Gallery:
- G. Working w/EKU on a transportation bus replacing the Trolley:
- H. Display case for the Welcome Center by Bob / Judy Mattingly. Allows us to spotlight a local artist work monthly.
- I. McGraw family gifted Tourism art items from Gina's candles for cultural history: Copperas Candle shop:
- J. Hays building broken into: Be attentive to your surroundings.
- K. John Fox & Ira Bates will be visiting the Boones Trace Trail this fall:
- L. UK/Lex, Berea, & Estill County: partnership with National Tree Week October 9-16th
- M. Update on the L&N Day:
600 visitors to 21st Annual L&N Day that we could count. Vendors from 3 states (KY, OH, IN)
3 model trains including one 10 ft. by 4 ft depicting a WWII battle on a railyard in France with General Patton's army bringing in troops.
Several vendors commented this was their best year yet for sales, as did some of the shops.
Becky's Breads made a special L&N Train cookie to sell for the event.
Very special thanks to Liz for working the children's activity tent on Saturday, Sarah for publicity, Nancy, Stan and Donna for helping with all the physical parts of the day.
- N. Old Town Shops building owner, JH, Thk You for parking L&N Day:
- O. Stream Go Media (Old Town) thank you for the parking L&N Day:
- P. Becky's Breads Chamber luncheon coming soon on the deck of the train depot: August 19th 12:00-1:00
- Q. 10 Most Charming Towns in KY: #1: Midway-#2 Berea-#3 Burkesville, #4 Cattlesburg, #5 Lex. #6 Fort Thomas, #7 Harrodsburg, #8 Hodgenville, #9Murray, #10Prospect": Ky State Tourism page:
- R. We installed our Quilt Patterns on the flower boxes in Old Town:

- S. We hosted Village Life in the Cottage “Re-Grand opening” in Old Town:
- T. New produce & specialty shop “Pop Up Market” in Kingston opened: with Cheyenne Amon and Katie Combs as the new entrepreneurs:
- U. Bluegrass Road Trip magazine, Grant County- Ark Encounter 4) Pages of Ads:
- V. US Motorcycle Riders Club: Ad very worthy of cost, 3) hotels engaged repeatedly:
- W. Travel Host magazine continues to be a good investment ad for us, with numerous calls for “stayovers” and busses:
- X. Dandy Dan radio spots for L&N Day, 7) calls of inquiry from the ads:
- Y. RPM visited w/us for a future planning session of marketing, now moving us out of an awareness stage into an “actual” conversion process of activity’s happening from the marketing.
- Z. Update on Tourism staff: Liz Todd and Sarah Stillwell

SOCIAL MEDIA UPDATE, Sarah Stillwell:

Visitor Count Numbers:

July 2021: 2290 (plus 119 grab and go bags)
 June 2021: 2085 (plus 87 grab and go bags)
 July 2020: 927 (plus 164 grab and go bags)
 July 2019: 2746

Social Media:

Facebook:

Likes: 9,607 vs. PREV Mth June 9,462: Increase of +145
 Reach: 180,811 vs. PREV Mth June 881,639 Decrease of -700,828
 Engagements: 23,426 vs. PREV Mth June 43,724 Decrease of -20,298
 *Link Clicks: 8,484
 (*) indicates new data point tracked

Instagram:

Followers: 3,098 vs. PREV Mth June 3,046 Increase of +52
 Impressions: 43,915 vs. PREV Mth June 423,600 Decrease of -379,685
 *Accounts Reached: 16,400
 *Website Taps: 43
 (*) indicates new data point tracked

Emails:

Open Rate: 30%
 Click Rate: 13%

Other Updates:

- Berea Tourism now has a blog on the VisitBerea.com website.
- Weekly business spotlight emails highlight stories featuring local businesses.
- Visited with 12 shop owners.
- Met many local officials and leaders.
- Monthly newsletter, Berea Biz Weekly emails.

- Press coverage: great exposure for 21st Annual L&N Day (see enclosed clips).
- Looking ahead to fall / holiday season: plans are underway for Shop Small Saturday and the shoppers we seek to attract to Berea.

EVENTS AND OTHER HAPPENINGS: Nancy Conley

There were over 25 events that took place in Berea last July. From the Berea Craft Festival to the Farmers Market, Glass Blowing Workshops, to a Mystery Theater Dinner at Boone Tavern etc.

August events include:

- 1) L&N Train Day was last Saturday Aug. 7 from 9-5PM.
- 2) Berea Farmers Market - every Tuesday 4-7PM and Sat. 9-1PM at Fee Park on Chestnut Street.
- 3) LEVITT AMP Berea Music Series, Aug. 6-7 at City Park Expansion/Skate Park. Pop-Up Concert on August 28 from 12-1PM at the Berea Farmers Market.
- 4) LEVITT AMP Berea Music Series AMP Creativity Business Workshop Series: Aug. 9 was Digital Ecosystems and Selling Online; Aug. 30 is Organization & Long Term Planning with Vallorie Henderson.
- 5) Berea Woodcarvers will continue at the Berea Welcome Center on Wednesdays from 10:30AM-12:30PM.
- 6) Jammin' on the Porch will continue at Memorial Park area on Thursday nights from 7PM-9PM.
- 7) Berea College Forestry Outreach Center continues w/Saturday Group Hikes at 10AM.
- 8) 3rd Annual Pooch Poolooza Dog Swim Aug. 10 from 5-7PM at Berea City Pool.
- 9) Joslyn and the Sweet Compression Concert at Owleyes Farm Aug 14.
- 10) Churchill's Artisan Market Aug. 15 at Churchills from 11AM-6PM
- 11) Farm to Tavern August 26 at 5:30PM in the lovely gardens behind the historic Boone Tavern. Grilling Farm Store created Jalapeno Cheddar dogs & Brats. Boone Tavern will have a cash bar.
- 12) Battle of Richmond Reenactment - August 28 and 29 at Battlefield Park
- 13) Berea Urban Farm offering virtual classes - Aug. 14: Harvest and post-harvest handling of produce and Aug. 28: Planning the fall garden.
- 14) Mari Amber Melder Shaffer is planning a cleanup of creek beds in Berea. More details to come.

PROGRAM UPDATE: Liz Todd

- First day in position as Program Manager on 07/19/2021
- Working closely with Nancy to learn the role of Program Manager and prepare for upcoming events
- To reduce confusion and to make all programs more accessible to those not familiar with our offerings we will use the title LearnShop across the board for all programs
- Consistent Branding with our Hand design logo
- LearnShop to always be written as one word with a capital 'S' for impact on all marketing and promotional materials involving the program

- Conducted an Instructor Interest Survey for a Berea Tourism LearnShop Weekend: 09/25 & 09/26

16 responded “Yes” to teach, 2 replied “Maybe”, 3 replied “No” (traveling and Covid)

- Training/Introduction with Nancy and Jon Wilburn from Right Place Media
- Familiarization with Berea Tourism website and new RPM ticketing platform (Woo-Commerce and Tickera)
- Meeting local artists and vetting new artists and potential instructors for future LearnShops
- Networking with a goal to identify collaborative opportunities, LearnShop class spaces, and potential cross-promotion (Berea MakerSpace)
- Additional Weekend Winter LearnShop starting January 2022

MOTORCOACH UPDATE: Connie Mondine

Presented by Donna: The KY and TN chapters of the Kiwanis’s club held their annual conference in Berea this same weekend.

Connie created 175 Welcome Bags for their attendees with Berea brochures, maps, etc. Also arranged Foothills Express shuttle for late Saturday afternoon to bring attendees into other parts of town.

Connie reports that we have two Motorcoach busses on the books for September, pending COVID increases:

Spent month of July preparing for L&N Day. Confirming with vendors, working with Sarah Stillwell on publicity, creating activities for kids, working with shops on creating list of train/railroad items they have so we could help share with visitors, etc.

RIGHT PLACE MEDIA UPDATE: Amanda Olmstead, Devon Johnson

Amanda Olmstead and Devon Johnson from Right Place Media gave a presentation reviewing the results of the 2020-2021 Fiscal Year Media Plan and then provided an overview of plans for the 2021-2022. Presentations available in Meeting Minutes Book.

ARTIST SEARCH COMMITTEE UPDATE: Rick Thomas

Rick Thomas: They didn’t get the grant they thought they were getting. Businesses need help with promotion. The Small Business Development Center has training series about how to promote, etc. The committee is discussing hosting a creative seminar for local businesses to share their experiences.

CHESTNUT STREET PAVILION UPDATE: Mayor Bruce Fraley

Mayor Bruce Fraley: The Chestnut Street Pavilion is getting really close. It looks great. Reached substantial completion. We have a meeting with the contractor tomorrow to go through and make a punch list. Asphalt striped and down by Allen Company. Prior they had to do proof rolling test. Sub-soil was wet and had to be replaced with gravel. Similar issue near entrance. Change order coming on that. Optimistic it will be open by end of month.

Other updates: The Mountain Bike Trail is coming to a close. Looking at grand opening in September.

Boone Trace Trail now complete. Grand opening September 18, 2021 at 10 AM on Scaffold Cane side.

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS:

Laura Carpenter: Thank you for working hard.

Rick Thomas: The City Strategic Plan said we need at least 250 events to get people here. How do we continue to get that message out? Donna, you all do a great job telling us and the public what all you do.

Patrick Huston: It is great to be #2 on the list of Charming Kentucky Towns.

We recently started ads with motorcycles and I'm noticing a lot of motorcycles in town. Definitely worth doing.

Travel Host magazine is always a home run. They're in many full-service hotels in Lexington. Great to show readers what to get out and see outside Lexington. The owner / editor of that magazine is always looking for more content.

ADJOURNMENT:

Charles Arnold moved to adjourn. Kristy Napier seconded. Motion passed unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 6:14 PM.