

**BEREA TOURISM COMMISSION MINUTES
BUSINESS MEETING
WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 8, 2021, 3:30 PM**

**City Annex Building
304 Chestnut Street**

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

COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT:

- Kristy Napier
- Charles Arnold
- Laura Carpenter
- Linda Ross
- Patrick Huston

SUPPORT STAFF PRESENT:

- Donna Angel
- Nancy Conley
- Liz Todd

GUESTS PRESENT:

- Mayor Bruce Fraley
- Rose Beverly
- Shawn Sandlin
- Jacque Bowling

AMEND AGENDA

Charles Arnold moved to add a discussion on Ellipse Street and the mountain bike trail. Seconded by Kristy Napier. Motion passed unanimously.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – AUGUST 11, 2021 AND AUGUST 19, 2021:

Laura Carpenter moved to approve minutes. Second by Charles Arnold. Motion passed unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

None.

INTRODUCTION OF NEW CITY ADMINISTRATOR: Mayor Bruce Fraley

Mayor Fraley introduced Rose Beverly, City of Berea's new city administrator. Commissioners introduced themselves to Rose.

CHESTNUT STREET PAVILION UPDATE: Shawn Sandlin

Grand opening and ribbon cutting on September 14. There are a few punch list items still to be completed. We met with the fence contractor and the fence will cover the air units.

Charles Arnold: Will the pavilion be open to book soon?

Donna Angel: Hopefully in October.

Kristy Napier: Who do you contact to book the pavilion?

Shawn Sandlin: Contact Ms. Angel.

MOUNTAIN BIKE TRAIL UPDATE: Shawn Sandlin

The mountain bike trail is complete. Grand opening will be on Friday, September 10.

Over the weekend, KYMBA had an outing and did a video with a Go Pro.

Councilmember Steve Caudill did an interview with a YouTuber about the park.

Charles Arnold: Will liability signage be up by Friday?

Shawn Sandlin: Yes.

Donna Angel: Will the park be open to the public Friday or Saturday?

Shawn Sandlin: Friday after the grand opening.

ELLIPSE STREET

Charles Arnold: This is follow-up to other discussions. Years ago, we discussed this. I would've never imagined we would have a bike trail. We budgeted \$50,000 from Ellipse Street project but we never replaced it. Ellipse Street is an OK project, when will it get done? Not sure. Not as touristy as the mountain bike trail. I suggest Tourism fund the trail and then the city maintain it. Let's fund it, do signage, promote this thing. Then we can promote the 26 mile trail for people ride on flat stuff.

Charles Arnold made a motion not to move the money to Ellipse Street, asking the commission to give \$60,000 to get some signage included.

Charles Arnold: It is my understanding we've done \$60,000 and \$11,000 = \$71,000.00. \$112,000 current cost, add sign cost, so roughly \$60,000 moved to fully fund.

Kristy Napier seconded the motion.

Discussion:

Donna Angel: We're already seeing great interest, this is a worthy cause. Charles, to back you up, the Hungry signs are great with restaurant promotion. The college will pay for the banners.

Laura Carpenter: Could someone provide clarity on Ellipse Street project?

Patrick Huston: Shawn, can you fill us in?

Shawn Sandlin: It's a connector trail between 595 to 25 North. It's a multiuse path.

Mayor Fraley: Good question. Ellipse Street shared use path is the result of a 80/20 grant. Federal funds make up 80% and we pay 20%. Transportation Alternatives Program supports safer paths to school. It's a 10ft shared use path. Kentucky Transportation Cabinet says funding is already there. We were supposed to see that this fall but hasn't happened yet. It's secured funding, so we're thinking spring. It's uncertain when it will all happen. We likely have plenty of time.

Kristy Napier: I support 100% funding of the mountain bike trail.

Patrick Huston: I agree. Sounds like what Berea wants.

Vote: Total of \$131,000 includes contingency funding. Unanimously passed.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT: Donna Angel

BUSINESS TOPICS:

A. Blue Ridge Outdoors magazine announces 100 finalists in Four Categories for its 11th yr. "Top Adventure Towns Contest: Runs thru September 6th: Vote online: Four Winning Towns will be featured in the November issue of Blue Ridge Outdoors: Berea was listed as a Small Town choice: Lrg. Town, Medium Town, Small Town (16,000) & tiny Town (3000):

B. State Tourism office was on site doing the Fall photo shoots for the new state website: Top Drawer, The Cabin, Weston Glass & Becky's Jewelers will feature new shots on the web site:

C. Miles Partnership-KY-Coop will be on site this month filming for our marketing company ads: Ky Living, Ky Monthly & the Ky Visitors Guide:

D. A meeting was set w/KY Retail Federation to discuss "apprentice/internship programs" for working artist shops as a future employment source and a way of sustainability of the store business:

E. RFP for maintenance in Pavilion vs. hiring a full-time employee:

F. Chair Patrick Huston preparing a long-term draft of the M.T. building plan as the upcoming Tourism Gallery & Event Center: Commissioners Work Session requested for the week of the 20th-24th:

G. Church Bus Van: Option for tours:

H. GIS Map plan w/QR codes. For Outdoor Trails, reduce paper maps and the cost of producing so many trail maps per yr. (GPS)

I. I am looking at concrete flower boxes (for outdoor weather) that could be used to decorate from Old Town thru Chestnut St. as beautification. Teresa Scenters / Jim Davis (Council) have volunteered to help me with a store front issue on Chestnut St. to improve the exterior look on: Once we receive private owners' approval:

J. A reminder that the Silver Creek Mtn. Bike Trail Invitational Grand Opening will be September 10, 6:00pm: (Rick cannot be present)

K. Dr. John Fox & Ira Bates will be visiting the Boone Trace Trail will receive new signage in Berea to mark the US Bike trail and connector pieces for the Wilderness Trail.:

L. UK/Lex, Berea, Georgetown, Hazard & Paducah: National Tree Week October 9-16: Berea Kick off day will be on Saturday 10-9 10:00am with a Tree planting at the Berea Dog Park and the mayors special address: The week's events will consist of the KY Guild Festival with UK/Tree booth set up on the ground: BC walking tours, BC scheduled hikes: Nature Art Display at Anglin Falls: Nature Art Gallery at the Forestry Outreach Center: Hidden Life of Trees Walk: Table at Farmers market: FOC will label trees along parts of the Bike path: FOC "Find that Tree" games: Berea Parks and Rec will create games as well: BCS will conduct in-class tree games and history: The Berea Library will host tree reading stories: MORE TO COME!!

M. State/County Report on Employment / Taxes / Income:

N. Mth bills were \$650,000.00 due to a payoff of the MT/Hotel property.

O. We must continue to search out a billboard for Nth bound traffic.

MEDIA REPORT: Sarah Stillwell: (presented by Nancy Conley)

Visitor Count Numbers:

August 2021: 1,891 (plus 108 grab and go bags)

July 2021: 2,290 (plus 119 grab and go bags)

August 2020: 1,350 (plus 113 grab and go bags)

August 2019: 1,610

Social Media:

• Facebook:

Likes: 9,620 vs. PRV Mth July 9,607 Increase of +13

Reach: 29,657 vs. PREV Mth July 180,811 Decrease of -151,154

Engagements: 6,468 vs. PREV Mth July 23,426 Decrease of -16,958

Link Clicks: 3,539 vs. PREV Mth July 8,484 Decrease of -4,945

• Instagram:

Followers: 3,116 vs. PREV Mth July 3,098 Increase of +18

Impressions: 12,218 vs. PREV Mth July 43,915 Decrease of -31,697

Reach: 2,082 vs. PREV Mth July 16,400 Decrease of -14,318

Website Taps: 33 vs. PREV Mth July 43 Decrease of -10

• Emails:

Open Rate: 35% (5% increase over previous month, 19% above industry avg)

Click Rate: 10% (3% decrease over previous month, 9% above industry avg)

*New Email Subscribers: 198

(*) indicates new data point tracked

Other Updates:

• Back-to-School Boutique Week: Five boutiques across Berea participated.

• Blog continues to receive positive community feedback.

- Regular newsletters: Monthly newsletter, Berea Biz Weekly, Berea Business Spotlight.

OPERATIONS MANAGER REPORT : Nancy Conley

- Completed and submitted application for Matching Funds with KDT for last quarter. Also received notice of matching funds pre-application approval for 2021-2022 for an allocation up to \$13,872.
- Created and deployed a Berea Craft Festival Artist/vendor survey to collect feedback on the festival.
- Mentoring and planning LearnShops with Liz. Attended training sessions by RPM on ticketing platform.
- Continue training and learning about visitberea.com website platform - making updates/edits and changes.
- Working with Sarah and Connie to develop a system to collect updates and details from tourism industry businesses in Berea. The information collected will be used to update and create business listings on VisitBerea.com and KentuckyTourism.com as well as creating/updating our contact lists for internal office use.
- Site visit with Brian at Berea MakerSpace on August 3.
- Worked with Connie and Team to set up and staff the very successful L&N Day on Aug 7.
- Team attended a Storm Water awareness and training class (IDDE - Illicit Discharge Detection and Elimination) with Jean Luc with City GIS.
- Attended the KDT strategic planning meeting with other Bluegrass Tourism Industry members in Lexington on August 11.
- Worked with our Team to host the Berea chamber of commerce luncheon catered by Becky's Breads on August 19.
- Met with Berea Arts Council Consultant Judy Sizemore to discuss community building initiatives on August 25.
- Attended brainstorming for a fall festival and winter holiday events and decorations in the Artisan Village.

EVENTS AND OTHER HAPPENINGS: Nancy Conley

- Mountain Bike Trail Ribbon Cutting - September 10 at 6 pm
- Chestnut Street Pavilion Grand Opening - September 14 at 3:30 pm
- Spoonbread Festival - September 17-19
- LearnShops September 25 and 26, Select Weekends in October/November/December
- Berea Parks and Recreation: Sammy's Hide & Seek - September 27 - October 1
- Boone Way Yard Sale (US 25) - October 1 and 2
- KY Guild of Artists and Craftsmen Fall Fair - 60th Anniversary Celebration - October 9 and 10

LEARNSHOPS PROGRAM REPORT: Liz Todd

- Berea KY Tourism LearnShops Weekend September 25-26
Official return of the Berea KY Tourism LearnShops are slated for September 25-26. Have received proposals from instructors (jewelry, woodworking, clay/sculpting, quilting, floral design, woodworking, bonsai) for this date, we will continue to monitor and follow

the updated guidelines from the city. Each student will be spaced six feet apart to adhere to recommended social-distancing guidelines, we are “requesting” that masks be worn. Berea Tourism will supply hand-sanitizer, disposable masks, sanitizing spray, and the use of six- or eight-ft. tables/chairs as needed.

- Visited potential LearnShop locations, the basement of the City Annex will need work to be accessible to the public, upstairs Annex room and Berea MakerSpace definite options. Will continue to work on master list of LearnShops spaces and locations based on class needs (appropriate flooring, size, outlets, clean-up, sinks/water, tables, media).
- Met and spoke with numerous artists, working on building connections and relationships. Vetted new Berea artists (collected resumes and interviewed) as potential future LearnShops instructors.
- Continued to work with Nancy Conley on rebranding/planning of the LearnShops name/delivery of concept. Updated the existing website to include The Berea KY LearnShops umbrella as its own entity.
 - Removed the link to the “Hands On Workshops” (no longer valid) page, updated overall description of LearnShops.
 - Updated the photo/name under the “Experience” tab to reflect the changes.
- With the assistance of Sarah Stillwell, promoted Berea KY Tourism LearnShops coming in the Fall on Berea Biz Weekly and September newsletter, including link for signup be notified.
 - These LearnShops include but are not limited to “Make it Take Give It” (12 Days- Starting with the weekend of October 9-10, ending November 13-14 with a potential pop-up last-minute shopping date December 11-12.
- Updated the surveys, guidelines, and proposal information for potential instructors - streamlined, dates, accessibility.
- Worked with Nancy Conley to update the attendee welcome letter and the LearnShops Attendee Resources (including the terms & conditions, cancellation forms, and youth authorization form) – updated Attendee Resources listed on website.
- Updated the Berea Tourism LearnShop Instructors bio/information (credentials, experience) will continue to update as received.
- Continued working with Nancy and Jon Wilburn from Right Place Media to customize and master the new ticketing platform for LearnShops courses. We created events, tickets, and processed mock sales. Working towards adding a function to send post-event surveys, and our customized welcome letter.

MOTORCOACH UPDATE: Connie Mondine

Connie Mondine reports that Sunday September 6, we had a Collette Tour bus here w/36 guest of whom got to see demonstrations by Tim Wade, Michele Weston, and were gifted with music by the Lambs before heading to lunch at Boone Tavern:

Next Tour bus arriving will be, Sunday Sept. 19th:

POW WOW group will arrive in Berea for a performance on the Cabin lawn Friday September 24th-2:00-3:00, COVID permissible:

SPOONBREAD UPDATE: Kristy Napier

We plan to start in the park on Tuesday at 6PM. We'll take anyone available Friday-Sunday. 107 vendor booths confirmed. We will take COVID precautions. We have ingredients to make 4,000 pans of spoonbread.

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS:

Charles Arnold: There's a work session coming up regarding the Tolle Building. Shawn, can we explore moving the generator?

Patrick Huston: It would be good to know the cost.

Charles Arnold: I think the city installed it.

Kristy Napier: This was lots of great information.

Laura Carpenter: Love the flowers. We need to spend more on beautification.

Linda Ross: Have you seen London? So pretty.

ADJOURNMENT:

Laura Carpenter moved to adjourn. Charles Arnold seconded. Motion passed unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 5:02 PM.