**BEREA TOURISM COMMISSION MINUTES**

**BUSINESS MEETING**

**MONDAY August 29, 2022, 2:30 PM**

**City Annex Building**

**304 Chestnut Street**

Called to order at 2:30 PM; Patrick Huston presiding.

**COMMISION MEMBERS PRESENT:**

* Becky Brown
* Laura Carpenter
* Bill West
* Patrick Huston
* Rick Thomas

**SUPPORT STAFF PRESENT:**

* Donna Angel
* Nancy Conley
* Liz Todd
* Dani Gift
* Ethan Cima

**GUESTS PRESENT:**

* Sune Frederiksen
* Jacque Bowling
* Robert Elam

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA:**

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

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES – May 11, 2022:**

Laura Carpenter moved to approve minutes. Second by Becky Brown. Motion passed unanimously.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

Jacque Bowling – I just wanted to give a big shoutout and lots of kudos to the new established tourism team that work out of the old depot. They are really on top of things and are really reaching out to businesses and all the things we have to offer in Berea and they’re just doing a fabulous job, so I wanted to give a shout out to them and thank them.

**DIRECTOR’S REPORT: Donna Angel**

**BUSINESS TOPICS:**

1. **Welcome Gallery & Event Center:** Follow up w/Architect drawings back by August end.
2. **Marketing:** Social Media Takeover for August,Travel Hostmagazine half page ads July-August-Sept-Fall Pkg. Ky Living Magazine, Lane Report- Paid social media ads.
3. **Article HIGHLIGHTS:** Best Small Towns to Visit - Explore KY. Small Towns w/Big Art Scenes & Festivals G&G:
4. **Berea Craft Festival:** Festival was a good turnout: <compared to 2021. 110 Vendors, Vendors reported great sales: No issues: Tourism staff trained again this year, offered CC sales this year, along with T-shirts, and Tote bags, sold well:
5. **Concert Updates:** Approx. 300 people to attend YTD
6. **Tolle Wall Sign**: Dani’s layouts
7. **Art Projects:** Horses, no bids came back:
8. **Bike Art Project:** Susan Meeks, Bicycles
9. **Trolley Updates:** Bill West
10. **Street Flags:** Looking for bids

**TROLLEY UPDATE – Bill West**

Bill West- I’ve talked to some local cities and trolley suppliers. I think we’d all agree that we should trend toward smaller trolleys and according to how much money we want to spend we’d be better off with two small ones than one big one, which would give more versatility. The smaller ones are the electric variety, which would be helpful. The problem is that these electric trolleys are not on the used trolley market yet. They’re still in the $100,000 range. Some of those things that affect the prices are decisions that the council and city would have to make, whether you want a seasonal trolley for 7-8 months a year where you could go with one that isn’t enclosed, which is cheaper to run and cheaper to buy. If you want to run year round, the enclosed is a little more expensive to run and buy. We might want to look for a gas or diesel model and then look for a grant to upgrade to an electric version later.

The trolleys gave a strong initial contact with people. Nearly half the trolleys are used by the local community. Generally, the support of the community runs 3-1. IT’s not meant to be a survey, just talking to people at random. Operating cost could run the city 5 cents to a dollar per mile. I’m supportive of the trolley, and it certainly has enough merits that the city council should spend some effort looking at it.

**FLAG/ SIGNAGE COMMENTARY**

Bill West- I think it’s a good idea. To go into a broader theme, The feedback I am getting is from people outside the core of the activity and what can they do to be included in promotional efforts so anything we can do to broaden things out, I’m general supportive of.

Laura Carpenter- I love this idea. As I travel I’m in communities and you wee a lot of these and they’re eye catching. If our flags could promost spoonbread with the date, the bike trails, boone tavern.

Becky Brown. I think it’s a great way to add color and make people feel welcome

Rick Thomas- I think in all our billboards, we need to make sure that exit 77 is supported and don’t forget that’s coming from the artisan center and the path to Berea college is an opportunity to give a good message but let me say something about the tolle building and the billboard there. I think we’re overlooking how much traffic is there and what a message center that could be. I see the vinyl banenrs hanging on the fence and we need to consider having a changeable message board there that we can change. For instance, the music. There’s so much traffic going by, what’s going on in Berea this week, I just think we need to look at permanent changeable signage.

Donna Angel- You’re correct and I agree with you 100%. I’ve been working on that. I am working on digital LED reader boards. Digital reader boards are great and I have never approved the banners hung up there. I believe we need to keep it a clean beautiful area. I will email you the information tonight so you can be looking at it.

Rick Thomas- I just think we become blind to the message, but this is a new way to get the message across.

Donna Angel- It’s a great way to communicate throughout the community, which is our mission to communicate with the entire city.

Rick Thomas – What you’re showing us here in the re-emphasis on the arts and crafts capital of Kentucky along with the experience Berea. I think it’s a good way to combine messages and be consistent and bring in new ideas. It’s very attractive.

**THE CELTIC FEST AND GATHERING: Sune Fredricksen**

\*\*The last half of this presentation had no audio, so notes drop off then the microphone stops working and pick back up when we regain sound.

1. Thank you to Parks and Recreation and the City of Berea for Support
2. The last two years, the Celtic Fest has been online only through zoom. There was a significant international response.
3. Focus has been to build a personal relationship to remind musicians of Berea
4. This is a niche you can’t find anywhere else in Kentucky. This is a gathering of musician who want to meet, share, and learn from one another.
5. People came from 15 states to Berea during the Celtic fest.
6. This has put Berea on the map as something unique and special.
7. New locations had to be found for a concert, presentations, and workshops. The event center at Boone Tavern was able to accommodate.
8. Pleased with response in sponsorship and in-kind donations, including water bottles, discounts, and gift certificates.

**COMMENTARY**

Donna Angel– I want to thank you for such a great festival This weekend. What I was most impressed with was how you spread it out throughout the city from end to end. Your event was well received, and we heard wonderful comments about it and thank you for all the hard work you put into it.

Laura Carpenter – I want to say thank you too. I hear people rave about it. Boone tavern, you are getting to be the hip hop place in town! The community and the visitors come together, and I think about that. Trying to get people to volunteer is the hardest. The children in the high schools need community service hours. Wouldn’t that be great for those students to reach them through the music.

Sune Frederiksen- The problem is that this is the beginning of the school year.

Rick Thomas- It’s very impressive. The quality and venues were impressive. Thank you for your persistence.

\*\*Audio Drops Out Here\*\*

Donna Angel- We have your application to discuss

Sune Frederiksen– I have an application asking for 50% of our advertising expenses and I hope you feel that this is worth it. Most of the money we spent is being spent in Berea and Madison County.

Patrick Huston – You did a great job breaking down what this is going for and I will just way that we did work together with the change in union church and attendance policies, and it was very successful. I will say that one of my initiatives and the best way to draw attention to your town or your business is hosting event. Some create revenue and some don’t but, in the end, these people coming in have to stay somewhere, get gas, eat in our restaurants, shop, and have side trips along the way. I know this event brought a lot of revenue into Berea. I was very glad to partner with you on that. I saw more traffic than usual, and we sold out, we did very well. This is definitely the kind of event we want to continue to host in Berea

Bill West- This is a great event but what I liked is that it is available to range of income streams and while it brought tourism in, it supplied services to the local citizens as well. I think as a tourism commission this should be a theme, where we figure out ways to promote tourism and help the local citizens at the same time. I’m very supportive of it

Laura Carpenter- I’m 100% supportive of this. You did spend all this advertising in Madison County. You do a fabulous job.

Becky Brown- I just want to thank you for persevering through covid. I’m glad this event is continuing, and I just want to thank you for contributing to the artistic culture of the town. A lot of people in my store complimented it.

**APPROVAL OF 50% Reimbursement for Celtic Fest Advertisement**

Rick Thomas moved to approve a 50% reimbursement ($1,150) for Celtic Fest Advertising. Second by Laura Carpenter. Motion passed unanimously.

**OPERATIONS MANAGER REPORT: Nancy Conley**

1. **KY Visitor Guide Leads:**

January thru August 2, 2022: 1014 leads received

Top 10 states are the same as last month just in a different order:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Kentucky | 158 |
| Ohio | 74 |
| Illinois | 57 |
| Michigan | 55 |
| Indiana | 54 |
| Wisconsin | 54 |
| Florida | 47 |
| Texas | 46 |
| Pennsylvania | 43 |
| New York | 32 |
|  |  |

1. **American Heart Association CPR, AED and First Aid Training:** Staff completed certification in June
2. **WKYT Interview with Amber Kennoy:** Berea Craft Festival for Everyday KY
3. **Berea Craft Festival:** FISERV credit card account for admission and t-shirt and tote

bag sales; participated in set up and tear down

1. **New Opportunity School for Women:** Hosted Ms. Carpenter for job shadowing on June 27
2. **Motorcoach:** Have now completely transferred all bookings over to Ethan; continue to be available for questions and special group trainings
3. **New Part Time Receptionist:** Ciara Moberly
4. **Jammin on the Porch:** Location change on Aug. 25 – will be held at the pavilion
5. **Brushy Fork Leadership Summit:** Hosting networking evening Sept. 22 in Artisan Village; Jammin on the Porch in Artisan Village on the Sept. 22
6. **Aramark:** Held a Job Fair for EKU Dining at the Pavilion July 6
7. **Maintenance/Janitorial:** Maintenance/updates to Ford Bldg. restrooms; stained wood hiking map sign frame on Berea Welcome Center lawn
8. **Familiarization visits:** PT Staff visiting 3-4 businesses/attractions each week

**COMMENTARY**

Patrick Huston- I think it’s extremely important for staff to visit places on a regular basis just to keep up with trend and events so thank you. Just a sincere thank you. The transition from Connie to Ethan, you have been a huge help and very responsive in scheduling entertainment for motorcoach groups and other big conferences. Thank you for your help in the interim.

Laura Carpenter- When you have a transition of hiring so many employees, I know you took on a whole lot extra and I appreciate that.

**PROGRAM MANAGER REPORT: Liz Todd**

**June**

* City of Berea CPR Training/Certification
* RPM Marketing Plan Meeting
* Helped with early planning for the “Celebrate America Door Decorating Contest”
* Continued work on 10th Anniversary Festival of LearnShops celebration/classes:
* Finalized locations, worked closely with artist instructors, answered all incoming questions LearnShop related, continued to update website and ticketing platform through WordPress and Woo Commerce, resolved any potential/imminent issues, finalized schedule, calendar finalized

**July**

* Authorize.net credit card system training
* Berea Craft Festival – ticket sales, greeting customers, providing information, familiarization with processes (entrance/exit, pre-event, and post-event procedures), selling merchandise, promoting the City of Berea
* Festival of LearnShops Kick-Off Event July 15 – live music, entertainment, artists in attendance, Yeti Ice on site, photo opportunity

Festival of LearnShops July 15-24

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Orders Placed** | 271 |
| **Tickets Sold** | 390 |
|  |  |
| **Number of Artist Instructors** | 31 |
| **Number of Classes** | 99 |
| **Class Locations** | 10 |
|  |  |
| **Top Performers** |  |
| **Tickets Sold** | 1. Jeff Farmer  (Blacksmithing - 4 Class Options) |
|  | 2. Paul R. Buhrmester  (Pyrography - 1 Class Option) |
|  | 3. Michelle Amos  (Weaving - 2 Class Options) |
|  | 1. Mary Ann Woolery Bussey  (Silk Scarf Dyeing - 1 Class Option) |
|  | 2. Jeff Farmer  (Blacksmithing - 4 Class Options) |
|  | 3. Pat Sturtzel  (Fabric Dyeing - 2 Class Options) |

* Post-Event Analysis with potential changes and improvements, instructor surveys, and customer surveys emailed.
* Detailed survey results will be given at next meeting, after post-event survey results are tallied and analyzed. Including but not limited to average number of nights out-of-town guests in Berea and estimate of dollars spent per attendee.

**MEDIA REPORT: Dani Gift**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Facebook** | **May 2022** | **June 2022** | **July 2022** |
|  |  |  |  |
| Total Posts | 80 | 99 | 102 |
| Total Reach | 76,373 | 248,210 | 272,398 |
| Engagement | 1,288 | 1,696 | 7,034 |
| Link Clicks | - | 624 | 11,122 |
| Followers | 10,457 | 10,805 | 11,076 |
| **Instagram** | **May 2022** | **June 2022** | **July 2022** |
| Total Posts | 18 | 96 | 87 |
| Total Impressions | 5,068 | 44,127 | 35,034 |
| Account Reached | 1,920 | 11,853 (85.5% Ads) | 7397 (75.4% from Ads) |
| Website Taps | 9 | 27 | 41 |
| Followers | 3,447 | 3,502 | 3,532 |
| **Constant Contact** | **May 2022** | **June 2022** | **July 2022** |
| Open Rate | 40% | 47% | 48% |
| Click Rate | 6% | 10% | 7% |
| New Subscribers | 296 | 1,314 (Ky Visitor Guide) | 231 |
| Total Subscriptions | 11,910 | 13,224 | 13,413 |

**Digital Media Projects (Completed)**

1. Berea Arts Council Website Blog
2. Sourced photos for Amplifier Utilities Magazine
3. Organized the Celebrate America Door Decorating Contest on Facebook
4. Berea Craft Festival Facebook Page takeover
5. Festival of LearnShops Live Updates

**Digital Media Project (Ongoing)**

1. Business / Artist Spotlight Videos (4 completed to date)
2. Gathering information for major website updates
3. Berea Biz & The Monthly Tourism Newsletter
4. Building a presence on Twitter
5. Events Calendar Updates

**Print Projects (Completed)**

1. Redesign of Mitchell Tolle Building Sign
2. 2-Page Spread for Discover Madison Magazine
3. Flyers for Back to School Bash, Boutique Week, and the Pavilion Concert Series

**Print Projects (Ongoing)**

1. Map of all shopping, dining, and lodging locations
2. Brochure redesign

**Commentary**

Rick Thomas- how do we measure the impact of paid advertising? I would like to see some type of graph that shows a correlation of when we’re spending money and how it impacts these numbers throughout the year .

Dani Gift- I will work on putting together a graph where we can chart the trends between paid advertising and out reach numbers.

Laura Carpenter- You all are jumping on my page now. I must have shared something you posted because now I’m seeing it all over my page. I can already see a difference in how active you all are and I appreciate what you’re doing.

**MOTORCOACH SPECIALIST REPORT: Ethan Cima**

**Bus Report:**

**June 13, 2022** – My first bus, from Lake City, MI. This was a group of 39 individuals in Berea for a 2 hour stop. I provided a step-on tour when they first arrived. Their itinerary consisted of shopping in the Artisan Village for two hours, then ate fast food located near Exit 76.

**June 14th, 2022**- Group of 29, from Terre Haute, IN. Met them at Kentucky Artisan Center at 12:30 and from there started a tour of Berea. I trained with Nancy on this bus, learning how to provide guided tours of Berea. Once the tour was over, the bus came to Artisan Village where they shopped from 2:10-2:50. After Artisan Village, the group then went to Log House Craft Gallery and Taleless Dog Bookstore from 3-3:50. Group then went to Boone Tavern at 4:00 pm, where they stayed the night.

**July 13, 2022** – Group of 46 from Vienna, WV, came to Berea and had dinner at Boone Tavern followed by entertainment from 6-8:15pm. Worked with this group to get their entertainment setup and accommodations at Boone Tavern.

**July 26th, 2022**- We had a group message us through our website in regards of helping to plan their itinerary for Berea. This group was 27 students from Madison, WI, who were here visiting Berea College. I helped this group find activities throughout Berea for them to do during their stay. When they arrived, they came to Artisan Village for 2 hours. Left from Artisan Village and went to Forestry Outreach Center. Stayed overnight, ate dinner on the 27th at Hitz BBQ on Exit 77.

**Upcoming:**

We do not anticipate many motorcoach buses arriving in August due to August being such a busy month for families to return home from vacations and preparing children and grandchildren for back to school. I am using August as my month to confirm all scheduled tours for September. I have added new buses to our calendar for October of this year, and I am already confirming buses for 2023 Tours to Berea.

**Other:**

I have registered to attend the Heartland Conference in 2023, located in the Cincinnati region. I will be scheduling my appointments with tour operators soon.

**July-** I worked on the “Hungry Hiker” campaign with Louisa Summers of Berea College. I did the graphic design for this project. The signs will be put up around the city at various locations.

**July 19th-** I met with Susan Buckmaster to discuss the motorcoaches coming in and out of Berea. This meeting was very helpful, as I was able to learn more about what it is I can do for the city as a whole and work together with others in the community.

**July 26th**-I attended the Kentucky League of Cities webinar, where I am was a Zoom Meeting for the Homelessness with over 100 other attendees from around the state of Kentucky. The KLC continues to strive to solve homelessness in our cities.

**July 26th** -I had a meeting with Patrick Huston, Susan Buckmaster, and Alexandrea Gabbard as we try to learn more about what we do for the motorcoach groups coming through our city. This meeting will continue to become a monthly event, as we want to stay as updated as possible as to what each of us have on our agendas and how to help one another.

**July 27th**- I attended the “Room in The Inn” meeting with Donna Angel. This was in correlation with my Zoom meeting on the 26th. I sat in on the meeting to learn and offer suggestions to the non-profit organization for how we can help not just Berea, but Madison County as a whole

**COMMISSIONER COMMENTS:**

Laura Carpenter- I was so I know all her hard work on that billboard for the pavilion, is that what you’re (rick) talking about? I like your idea better

Rick- No, I think they’re talking about the billboard that is attached to the building. What I was talking about was some kind of signage at the pavilion that could tell people what is going on at the pavilion.

Laura Carpenter- Like what is at Richmond on the corner by Kroger

Rick- That’s a video board and I know those can be very expensive. IT’s effective and expensive.

Laura – Could what you’re talking about be replaced with what they’re hanging?

Rick – if we could afford it, I’m sure it could. I have some experience in those prices and high-quality ones are very expensive.

Laura- I love your idea. I like it better than the banner. IT’s the same location, correct? People are going to stop. That’s your gateway to Berea.

Donna- I think what Rick is saying is that the digital comm board would go over toward the pavilion, on top of the pavilion.

Laura – And where is the sign you’re talking about

Donna- That would still be over on the Tolle building. That would be more of a welcome to Berea Sign whereas the digital on the pavilion would market the whole town.

Laura – Would it be an option to rent advertising on the trolley?

Donna- It’s food for thought to take into consideration. That could be a good open discussion

Laura- And the billboard too? People could advertise on that as well?

Rick – That was not my intention

Laura – I’m always thinking of how we can being revenue back.

Rick – We recently had a vinyl banner on the fence. I would not necessarily want to see businesses advertised on that fence. It should be a community event space. What I’m thinking about is I understand why we have banners because its inexpensive, but it’s also recognition of what a good space that is.

Bill- You’re going to have intersections where there are events at the businesses

Patrick- when we look at lex, the billboard advertised events going on at lex center but you typically didn’t see businesses advertised.

Bill- I know it’s expensive but the right sign done right is worth the investment.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

Laura Carpenter moved to adjourn. Rick Thomas seconded. Motion passed unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 4:32 PM.