

**BEREA TOURISM COMMISSION MINUTES
BUSINESS MEETING
WEDNESDAY, May 17, 2023, 3:00 PM**

**City Annex Building
304 Chestnut Street**

Called to order at 3:03 PM; Bill West presiding.

COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT:

- Becky Hurt
- Laura Carpenter
- Rick Thomas
- Aaron Crawford
- Bill West

SUPPORT STAFF PRESENT:

- Donna Angel
- Liz Todd
- Dani Gift
- Nancy Conley

GUESTS PRESENT:

- Mayor Bruce Fraley

APPROVAL OF Agenda:

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

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Rick Thomas moved to approve minutes. Second by Becky Hurt. Motion passed unanimously.

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION OF AARON CRAWFORD, NEW COMMISSIONER TO REPLACE PATRICK HUSTON, REPRESENTING BOONE TAVERN.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

None.

DIRECTORS REPORT: DONNA ANGEL

Director's Report foregone to review the 23-24 fiscal year proposed tourism budget.

Laura Carpenter Motioned to accept the budget as is. Rick Thomas Seconded. Budget accepted unanimously as is.

OPERATIONS MANAGER REPORT – NANCY CONLEY

1. Visitor Information

Berea Welcome Center Visitor Count April 2023: 1681 (plus 15 grab and go bags)

Increase of 299 visitors compared to April 2022. Still on the upward trend

2. Sunshine Friends School Group Toured L&N Depot: Pre-K and Elementary students visited April 13th: 18 kids in the AM and 11 kids in the afternoon, 6 teachers/ chaperones.

3. Lobby Glass Display Case: Current display is an L&N Day Promotion. Next up will be a display promoting the Berea Festival of LearnShops and the Berea Craft Festival

4. Beautification and Team Projects:

- Hotel Entrance – sanding and staining complete
- Flower box planters – Repaired what we could, sealed, and leveled existing boxes.
- New LED lights are being installed through the welcome center

- Public Works are our team have completed a few smaller maintenance projects including un-winterizing outdoor water faucets at the welcome center and repairing a split water line for faucet on back platform.
- Moved items out of the former Ford building to prep for renovations.
- In the market for a new outdoor trash can for the cabin lawn and colorful umbrellas for the picnic tables.

5. STS Domestic Showcase Huntsville Alabama April 17-19

- Appointments with seventeen operators and third-party organizations.
- Attended networking events and breakfast/lunch and learns.
- Met journalists during networking receptions – had a follow up meeting with the President of Premier Travel Media May 2nd. Learned about different marketing opportunities for the group travel industry.

6. Special Needs Gala May 5

- A beautiful Evening for children in MSD Classrooms in Madison County and their families,
- Partnership between Nicole Ingold and her family, Police Department, Parks Department MSD Teachers, Berea KY Tourism, and more.
- Members of our team photographed the event and provided a fun photo booth offering printed pictures at the event.

7. L&N Day June 17th 9am-4pm- In planning stage; accepting vendor applications. Exhibitors signed up to join us from Florence KY, Cincinnati OH, Liberty KY, Berea KY, Lexington KY, Cox's Creek KY, and Clemson SC.

- Collaborating with Berea Volunteer Fire and Rescue for a car show to take place from 9am-3pm on N Broadway/City Parking lot next to Old Town Fabric. They will have an on-site DJ with the car show hosting fun music during the event.
- A model train show will be set up inside the depot.
- Vendors selling train memorabilia set up on the back platform.
- Food Trucks on the street around the cabin lawn
- Activities for kids and more under the big tent on the cabin lawn
- Merchants are encouraged to bring a table outside with sellable items to add on extra sales for the day.
- Parking for merchants at the stream go media parking lot. We plan to provide golf cart shuttle service for anyone that requests it. Visitor parking at the City Park Expansion/skate park parking lot.
- Handicap accessible parking spots on N. Broadway in front of the Old Town Shops building.
- Last year we had over 700 guests through the welcome center. With the addition of the car show, we anticipate an increase in guest numbers and merchant sales this year.

8. Chestnut Street Pavilion Concert Series kicks off May 20

- Excited to work the first concert of the series: May 20 Kelly Caldwell and KAshmere. Concert is 7:00 – 8:30
- Out team has distributed posters throughout Berea for this series
- Team members have signed up to work the concerts of their choice.

9. Berea Craft Festival

- Collaborating with team on planning/coordination and communications with artists and vendors.
- Sanitation: Reserved porta pots, hand wash stations, and made arrangements for delivery and pick up of a 30 yard roll off dumpster
- Reserved tables and chairs; arrangements made for delivery and pick-up.
- Our team has distributed posters throughout Berea.

MOTORCOACH REPORT – READ BY DONNA ANGEL

Dear Commissioners,

During the month of April we welcomed several groups to our city, including the Citizens progressive Bank Group (US Tours), Collette Tours, RJ Tours, GTB Travel, and more. These groups brought in a total of approximately 250 visitors to our city, contributing significantly to the local economy.

The highlight of April was the Citizens Progressive Bank Group (US Tours) Visit on April 12th. We welcomed approximately 40 visitors to our city, and they had a fantastic time at the Artisan Village, taking part in demonstrations and enjoying the shopping experience. We also had the pleasure of hosting Collette Tours twice in April, and they had a great time shopping in the Artisan Village.

In addition to welcoming visitors to the city, we also worked on developing new relationships with travel companies. During the month of April, we worked closely with Village Travel in Wichita, KS, to plan future group tours to Berea. We met Danielle Geesling from Village Travel at the ABA in Detroit in February, and I will be meeting with her on May 17th to discuss potential collaborations. We are excited to continue working with Village Travel to bring more visitors to our city in the future.

Furthermore, we are pleased to report that in May, we are set to welcome the VEGA bus with 23 people, including 18 in blacksmithing class and five in jewelry class. We also have the Country Travel Discoveries bus visiting our city on May 20th. Both of these groups will be provided step-on tours and shopping in the Artisan Village and throughout the city of Berea.

In terms of numbers, our April efforts have resulted in an increase of approximately 5% in tourism revenue compared to the same period last year. This is a significant achievement and is a testament to the hard work of our team and the growing popularity of our city as a tourism destination.

In addition to our regular operations, I also attended the Southeast Tourism Society's 40th annual domestic showcase in Huntsville, Alabama from April 17-20. This was a great opportunity to network with tourism professionals from the southeast and make appointments with companies. During the showcase, I met with roughly 20 companies and provided them with personalized emails regarding our discussions.

Lastly, I had a meeting with Jeff Gayduk to discuss marketing for motorcoach and group travel companies. Following our meeting, Jeff shared a proposal prepared by Cheryl Rash that includes a sample itinerary, strategic content marketing, and brand advertising in their weekly e-newsletter. This well rounded program will amplify our brand and help me to make better connections with decision-makers in the group space. We are currently reviewing the proposal and will keep you updated on the budgeting process.

Overall, we are pleased with the progress we have made in April and are excited about the future. We remain committed to working hard to bring more visitors to our city and to ensuring they have an enjoyable and memorable experience while they are here.

PROGRAM MANAGER REPORT – LIZ TODD

Meetings/ Events/ Other

- Hosted GBT (George Brown Travel) Motorcoach group from Atlanta – 31 guests, shopped, boxed lunch from Becky's breads
- Craft Festival Meetings
- Artist Meetings (Photographers, mixology, stained glass, painter, ceramicist)
- Special Needs Gala Meetings
- Prevett Financial Ribbon Cutting
- Miles Media Grant Writing Zoom Training
- City of Berea Cyber Security Training
- City of Berea Employee Appreciation Interview
- L&N Day Logistics Meeting

Enchanted Spring LearnShops

- Theme – Enchanted Spring – color, light, flowers, leaves, nature, spring in Kentucky
- April 29-30 – two new instructors, nineteen unique classes, seven new offerings
- April 15-16 (glassblowing) The birds and the bunnies. Sold out.
- Locations: tolle building, folk center, intergenerational building, welcome center platform, old town fabric, becky brown studio
- First session of classes utilizing new ticketing platform Eventbrite
- Worked with part time, tolls on sharing class information (tickets, photos, samples, Locations, contacts, details.
- Post-event surveys – artists and attendees
- Artist payments/ feedback
- Weekend Analysis – geographical Demographics ranked:

| |
|-------------------|
| Attendee Stats |
| 1) Kentucky |
| 2) Ohio |
| 3) Colorado |
| 4) North Carolina |
| 5) Missouri |
| 6) Tennessee |
| 7) Pennsylvania |

FOL 2023

- July 21-30, 2023
- Reviewing, editing, and finalizing proposals
- Troubleshooting and answering questions
- Planning a celebration to honor our valuable artist instructors
- Marking plan with Donna, Dani, and RPM
- Instructor Discussion, small town hall style meetup before
- Toured new classroom space with “dirty space” and utility sink
- Entering Ticket information
- Collecting photos for proposals and bios
- Six new artists and over 50 classes
- Theme/ plan with media manager for promo
- Finalize map of the week
- Collect short artist video clips for promos
- Master list of classes
- Add inquiring guests to contact database

Mixology Class May 6, 2023

- Collaborated with Director Donna Anghel, Honeysuckle of Churchills, GM Dee West, and Media Manager Dani Gift to create a first time mixology class” Derby Spirits: Mixing up iconoic Kentucky Flavors”
- Interview, article with Andy Mcdonald
- Brainstorming, research, and promotion with Dee West
- Article in Richmond Register, *Class on bourbon cocktails coming th Berea LearnShops just in time for Derby Day*
- Details/analysis in next month’s report

April 2023 Media Report – Dani Gift

Digital Media Projects (Completed)

- 1) Updated LearnShop logo.
- 2) Press Release for Turkish Consul visit.
- 3) Updated YouTube with most current videos.
- 4) March Monthly Newsletter and Weekly Berea Biz
- 5) Mass email to business owners to submit social media requests for April.

Digital Media Projects (Ongoing)

- 1) Special Needs Gala Video Series
- 2) Enchanted Spring LearnShop social media roll out.
- 3) Pulling together information for the Historical Places map.
- 4) Event updates for the website.

Print Projects (Completed)

- 1) Berea Craft Festival Rack Cards, Posters, and Banners
- 2) Large map printed for the welcome center (Thank you, codes dept.!)
- 3) Small, printed maps for The Berea College Visitor Center and The Log House
- 4) Special Needs Gala flyer

- 5) L&N Day Car Show Flyer and Registration Form
- 6) Mock-up of pavilion with an electronic sign, to submit for variance.

Additional Projects

- 1) Obtaining contracts for the Pavilion Concert Series Performers.
- 2) Continue to encourage our local businesses to share events, promotions, sales, etc. with us.
- 3) Working with Berea Craft Festival entertainers to create a performance schedule

Paid Advertising

*The spring course of paid advertising will begin in **April** and is projected to cause a significant increase in social media reach, engagement, and followers.

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS:

Compliments given to the tourism staff for their continued show of energy, enthusiasm, and professionalism.

ADJOURNMENT:

Laura Carpenter moved to adjourn. Becky brown second. Motion passed unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 4:19 PM.