

Berea Tourism Commission Minutes

Business Session (Amended)

Wednesday, March 22, 2017

Berea Police and Municipal Center - Berea City Council Chambers - 304 Chestnut Street

Business Session: Called to order at 5:00 PM, Reynolds presiding.

Commission Members Present: Ahmad Reynolds, Charles Arnold, Dale Ballinger, Donna Robertson, Ken Gastineau

Support Staff Present: Kerri Lee Hensley, Dylan Bogard, Nancy Conley

Visitors Present: Susie Merida, Anna Hartje Butcher, Hannah Coldiron, Danny Isaacs, David Rowlette, Beth Meyers, Ronnie Terrill, Critley King, Jim Davis, Tom Schultz, Justin Burton, Steven Connelly, Randy Stone, Ali Blair, Jaque Bowling, Randy Coffey, Estelle Sizemore, Tom Houser, Gwen Childs, Lindy Evans, Bob Mattingly, Judy Mattingly, Jereme McQueen

Approval of Agenda

Ballinger made a motion to approve the agenda with the amendments; seconded by Arnold. Motion carried unanimously

Approval of Minutes: February 8, 2016

Gastineau moved to approve the minutes of February 8, 2017; seconded by Ballinger. Motion carried unanimously.

Director's Report - Kerri Hensley

A copy of the full Director's Report is on record in the minute book.

- Budget: Tourism Cash, \$357,800
- Communications:
 - Dylan used February and March to build anticipation for the events coming up this summer.
 - He and Nancy totaled the early registration notices for the Festival of Learnshops since July, and noted that over 400 had been added. This tripled the amount of interested visitors.
 - Dylan is drafting a campaign for the upcoming Tourism Week.
 - Dylan is holding an introduction to Esty and Amazon Handmade on Thursday, March 23rd. He will also be offering help on social media if people are interested.
 - He received an updated from American Express, the organizers of the Shop Small/ Small Business Saturday Campaign. There were 6,700 community organizers and \$15.4 billion dollars of sales nationwide due to this event. The data did not go deeper than this, but many people in Berea did participate. November 25th is Small Business Saturday in 2017.
 - Social Media Updates:

- Twitter: around 23,300 impressions from tweets and around 140 followers total.
 - Facebook: 4,098 total “Likes” on the page, 245 page views, 10,592 post engagements, and 60,770 people reached. Brand Advertising had boosted posts during February as well.
 - YouTube: 5,432 views on 7 public videos.
 - Instagram: 743 followers, between 3,700 and 4,400 impressions weekly.
- Multi-media:
 - Micheal made edits to the website for shop listings and the Berea Craft Festival Page. He also uploaded the current newsletter and graphic.
 - He edited and prepped the photography for the Festival of Learnshops online catalog.
 - He finished the Fiber Frenzy, Woodphoria and Club Arena Skating Rink Our Berea films.
 - He filmed Todd’s Antique Mall and Lindsay Gallery for the Our Berea series.
 - He re-rendered the Berea Video Tour and uploaded it to the cloud drive.
- Workshops:
 - The February HOW event was a success. 5 instructors offered 8 workshops, for a total of 14 sessions. There were 68 patrons who purchased 92 tickets. The ticket sales totaled \$8,023.
 - The upcoming April HOW vent will be offered April 8, 9, 28, 29, and 30. There are 8 instructors, 14 workshops, and 31 sessions total. 84 tickets had been sold as of March 15th, for a total of \$6,836. Registration went live on March 6th.
 - The Festival of Learnshops will be held July 7-23. There are 149 different Learnshops, 318 sessions, and 56 new Learnshops. There are 67 instructors, including 17 new instructors. Prices range from \$5-\$550, and 1hour to four days. This year 2 Learnshops will take place at the Berea Craft Festival, the Market Basket and Tie-Die.
- Group Tour Report:
 - February 18th, Connie hosted 51 Brown Fellows from Centre College and the University of Louisville for hands on classes with 5 artists. This brought in over \$2,000 for the artists. They had lunch at Noodle Nirvana and had a tour of the Eco Village and other areas of the College. 30-40 other Brown Fellows made brooms at the College and ate at Papa-Lenos.
- Art Accelerator:
 - The call for the Arts Accelerator program has gone out. There is a meet and greet on March 28th at 5:30 for anyone interested in the program. There will be an informal presentation on the program at Gallery 123.
 - Tim Wade has developed some new products to add to the gallery, and has entered into 9 craft shows this year.
 - All of the fellows are getting ready for The Kentucky Crafted Market April 21-23.
- Admin:

- We are seeking Tourism Ambassadors to assist in providing historical tours to visitors from May to October. These are part time and make \$8.25 an hour.
- Berea was published as one of the *1000 Places to See in the United States & Canada Before You Die* by Patricia Schultz. This is a 3rd edition New York Times Best Seller.
- Visitors from Lindsbord, KS will be here April 4-7.
- Upcoming:
 - The Berea Victory Garden Blitz will be held on Saturday, March 25th
 - The Berea Sweep-In from Justin Burton will be on April 1st
 - The Spring Skill Share Workshop will take place on the cabin lawn on April 8th.
 - May 7-13 is Tourism Week we will be hosting a “Lunch on the Lawn” Wednesday May 10th at 12 with free hot dogs and chips.

Advertising Update – Brand Advertising Group

A full copy of the presentation is available in the minute book.

Susie Merida, Anna Hartje Butcher, and Hannah Coldiron presented the latest updates from Brand. The first, was that the 2017 Travel Planner had been shipped. 58,000 were sent to the Welcome Center, 20,000 to the Kentucky Artisan Center, 10,000 to Ad-Rack and 12,000 to Travel Info Services. She group had also just finished the installation of new billboards on I-75, and completed the print materials for the Festival of Learnshops and the Berea Craft Festival in July. Their digital campaign for February and March included promoting Berea as a unique weekend destination, and increasing awareness of the many activities available in Berea. These ads generated 389,458 impressions and 2,517 total actions between 2/1 and 2/28. Merida then showed pages for the new website, and discussed the progress being made. She said that the base of the website is essentially completed, but it still needs photos and descriptions. She also noted that the shopping cart feature was still under construction, and that the team would meet with Tourism staff to work out some kinks. In their upcoming events discussion, Brand noted that they would continue working on the website, build digital marketing, finalize the survey, create a media campaign for Learnshops, and create a media campaign for the Berea Craft Fair.

The group reported that they have used \$211,087 of the \$325,000 budget, leaving \$113,913. They noted a change in the presented budget to mark that they were \$32,082 over budget for production/printing due to a clerical error regarding printing the budget. Merida told the Commission that this was included in the original budget, but an error had been made, but that they were still on track for the fiscal year.

Arnold asked Merida to look into the cost of printing an insert for the Travel Guide. Brand informed him that it may be possible, but that thousands of guides were drop shipped across the country, that it would be difficult to place an insert into them.

Tourism Promotion and Guide Guidelines

These we discussed at the Commission meeting in February, and during the work session prior to the meeting. Reynolds discussed the changes agreed upon by the Commission.

Gastineau made a motion to pass the guidelines and expand the section, under events on the second page of the general promotion guidelines, "Events promoted must relate to tourism and have a draw for visitors to Berea. These events include: artist workshops, concerts open to the public, craft fairs, craft sales, dances, demonstrations, exhibitions, fairs, holiday events, shows, and speakers (i.e. Convocation Speakers at Berea College)," to include adventure tourism, ecotourism and sports tourism. As well as change the statement, under events, "Events to be listed in the Travel Guide are signature events in Berea and must have been in existence for a minimum of three years. Signature events are events that have been a large draw for tourists for at least three years. The final decision for signature events will be given to the Executive Director of Berea Tourism," to state, "one to three years." Robertson seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

AMP Levitt Update- Ali Blair

Blair and Jereme McQueen of Mountain Tech Media presented on the upcoming Levitt AMP Berea Music Series coming this summer. McQueen discussed the rebranding of the First Friday website and social media outlets to cover the Levitt AMP Series. He noted that they will use video clips to get people excited for the event, and will update the site weekly. He discussed the opening of vendor/sponsor registrations and the creation of a t-shirt that is available for purchase now. Then, he discussed the poster coming out for the series, and noted that it would cover the whole series and highlight "Old Town," as well as other print materials including banners, magnets, etc.

Blair then spoke about the event, and the help she was receiving from the Levitt Foundation, and previous grant recipients. She noted that they are in the processes of booking shows, but no contracts could be signed until they were approved by Levitt. April 14th is when Levitt will announce the first round of acts. She had to rename the event due to the contracting, but noted that First Friday Berea would still be the source of information. Also, she hoped that this event would diversify the art offerings in Berea.

Lindy Evans, owner of Images of Santa Claus in the Artisan Village, spoke about her concerns regarding the closing of the street at 5pm every Friday for ten weeks, as customers, shop owners, and Learnshop instructors may be affected by this in a negative manner. Evans also noted concerns of trash being placed in the Honeysuckle Vine cans. Arnold then asked Blair about moving the event. Blair noted that the event's grant funding was reliant on the location, and that she would invite Evans and other owners to remain open for the event. Blair then noted that this year, they would be working with the College's sustainability office to make it a zero-waste event, and that interns were being hired to help organize things like trash clean up. She did note that there were two issues of volunteers confusing the Tourism garbage cans for the Honeysuckle Vine cans.

Estelle Sizemore, owner of Estelle Jewelry on College Square, noted that the people who come to this kind of “hippie music festival” were not the clientele wanted, and that Levitt is not First Friday and should not be taking over Berea.

Jacque Bowling, who claimed to have no business stake in the Artisan Village, wanted to know about the emergency plans for the event, theft numbers due to large crowds and the financing/registration fees for vendors. Reynolds noted that other events, such as Spoonbread Festival brought in large crowds and closed off streets, and every event of that size would have similar issues. Blair noted that she was working the city to follow all laws, including a lane for emergency vehicles, as well as draft an emergency plan. She then noted that the fees collected went toward the matching grant, and in years past went to help fund the event. Blair stated that she wanted to be transparent with the funds, and told the Commission that last season she spent \$3,000 of her own money to keep the event going.

Gastineau noted that the cleanest he had ever seen “Old Town” was after a First Friday event.

Blair stated that this event would expand upon First Friday, and would run July 7th-September 8th on the cabin porch from 6-10.

Motion(s) from Charles Arnold

Arnold discussed that he had lived in communities where the tourism tax was used for 20 years, but did not sit on the board there. He then stated that he has been on the Tourism Commission in Berea for 9 years. He said that sports tourism has been discussed in depth over emails, and that Gastineau had mentioned \$12,000 to promote events.

Arnold made a motion to provide Parks and Recreation with \$12,000 in order to promote events.

No second was made and after discussion the motion was changed. Arnold made a motion to have a discussion concerning Parks and Recreation outside the bounds that we currently do, talking about the physical budget for next year which begins July 1st. This discussion will take place in a work session with Parks and Recreation. Gastineau seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Arnold made a motion for Tourism to form a committee to work with Parks and Recreation in order to promote and build new ball fields. Robertson seconded. The motion passed with votes from Arnold, Ballinger, and Robertson. Gastineau voted nay.

Tom Houser

Houser presented on a possible youth league baseball tournament in Berea during the last weekend of July, the 29th-30th. The event is titled “Swing for a Cure.” Houser had already created fliers and a logo for the event, but was still in the process of marketing the event. Houser said that he hoped an event like this be a good draw for Berea, and allow for photos

to be spread around the state. He hoped that, if this event was successful, it would become annual. Houser noted that there were no teams currently registered, but that he was in talks with a few teams. He is hoping that the city and residents will support this event, either monetarily or through promotion. He claimed his biggest expenses would be umpires at \$80 a game, field rental with Berea Parks and Farristown and light rental. The current budget is \$0. Finally, he hoped to raise \$8-10,000 from registration and concessions at the event with 30 teams, before expenses. The proceeds would go to the American Cancer Society and the Matt Ross Fund for sports scholarships.

Councilman Tom Schultz told the Commission that he hoped the event would happen and be successful. He called upon the City Council and Tourism Commission to support the event, and spoke about the possibility of waiving the field rental fees.

Sweep- In- Justin Burton

Burton informed the Commission of his upcoming Sweep-In on April 1st. He said that he had 26 broom makers from 13 states currently attending. The conference would run from March 30th to April 1st and would be held at the Russel Acton Folk Center. On Saturday, April 1st, there will be public workshops and people can register to attend. Burton said that this would be the first gathering of broom makers of this size in five years, and that he hoped to make it an annual event.

US 25 Yard Sale- Randy Coffey

Coffey discussed the history of the US 25 Yard Sale, and how it first began with Judy Wigginton in Wilmington, TN. He noted that this is the 6th year that the sale will come through Berea, but that it will be cut short overall. This year's sale will run from Rocky Top, TN to Richwood, KY, spanning 265 miles. He noted that the flier had already been shared hundreds of times on the host Facebook page. The dates for the US 25 Yard Sale in 2017 are June 1st-3rd. Coffey also noted that he had received sponsorship from Berea Tourism in the past to promote the event, and this year did not wish to receive cash, but did want to be included in the advertising for May. He said that he would like more locals to be aware of the event, so that Berea can have increased participation from vendors. He did note that no permits were needed to have a yard sale, and that he was working on a map to highlight public spaces for people to set up along the highway. He estimated 800-2,000 people to attend the event. In addition, he noted that he would like to have the city place signs to other events, such as L&N day, during this event to direct visitors. Finally, Coffey noted that Georgetown, Corbin, and Livingston may be looking to partner with other cities to promote the event.

Estelle Jewelry

Estelle Sizemore, of Estelle Jewelry on College Square, spoke about her dislike of the 2017 travel guide. She claimed that they were, "totally useless and ridiculous," and was upset that there were leftovers from the 2016 year sent to recycling. She was concerned about her placement in the guide, in terms of sequence and location. She claimed that Dylan

Bogard had been in her shop over a year ago before it was printed. Sizemore wanted the guides trashed and reprinted, or an insert made to correct her placement in the guide. She did note that her placement on the map is correct.

Reynolds asked if she had received an answer about her question from the mayor. Sizemore replied that she had, and read the letter aloud to the Commission. The letter stated that she had recently requested to be in the guide and was added to the end of her section for that reason. A full copy of the letter is located in the minute book.

The Commission asked Brand to look into the cost of printing an insert for the guides. The Brand representatives noted that they could do this, but reminded the Commission that many guides were shipped across the country, and that this insert would change the map as well.

Bowling then spoke about the exclusion of Hair Magic, a local hair salon where she said she had no connection, from the guide. She stated that all businesses should be included, and wanted to know why they were not included on the signs that were installed recently. She also stated that she wondered why the signs were not made in Berea.

Sizemore then asked why she was not placed on the signs. She stated that she was later added, but the addition said Estelle's Jewelry, and she was not happy with this.

Sizemore also addressed the Levitt AMP Berea Music Series, and said that "a bunch of dirty little hippies at a music festival" would not make people money.

Reynolds asked her to wrap up her comments, and to stay with her business.

Motion to Adjourn

Hensley explained a state form required to be filled out by the Commissioners.

Arnold made the motion to adjourn; Greathouse seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 6:42pm.