

**Berea Tourism Commission Minutes
Business Session
Wednesday, September 9, 2020**

VIDEO TELECONFERENCING MEETING PER KRS 61.826

Business Session

Called to order at 3:32PM, Dale Ballinger presiding.

Commission Members Present:

- Ahmad Reynolds
- Charles Arnold
- Charles Saunders
- Dale Ballinger
- Linda Ross
- Patrick Huston
- Rick Thomas

Support Staff Present:

- Donna Angel
- Nancy Conley

Visitors Present:

- Bruce Fraley
- Bill Rice
- Devin Johnson

Motion by Charles Arnold

Charles Arnold moved, to move agenda item #6 Artist Accelerator Update - Rick Thomas from the bottom of the agenda to #3 on the agenda; seconded by Charles Saunders. Motion passed unanimously.

Approval of August 12, 2020 Meeting Minutes

Patrick Huston moved to accept the August 12, 2020 meeting minutes; seconded by Rick Thomas. Motion passed unanimously.

Artist Accelerator Update - Rick Thomas

Rick Thomas provided an overview of the Artist Accelerator round table discussion of the past, present and future which was held September 4, 2020 - 3PM at the Mitchell Tolle Building. - All committee members were present for the September 4th meeting. The committee talked about and agreed that the Folk Arts and Crafts Capital of Kentucky was an important part of Berea's Brand. There is a desire to have working artists as part of Berea's marketing strategy. A lot goes into the Experience Berea marketing strategy such as the working artists, the trails and so forth. The Commission needs to do a better job explaining what Tourism does - get Berea College, Kentucky Guild of Artists and Craftsmen, Berea Arts Council and the entire community behind what we do in the future. Designation of historic district may help with future plans. There may be grants available that could help to accomplish this goal and be able to afford it. Charles Saunders added that local artists want us to create something to showcase their art/craft as well. Local artists could help with the program and provide mentorships. Rick Thomas continued to explain that we want to explore all ideas and avenues. Not just looking at how to attract art and craftspeople but how to support the ones that are already here. Linda Ross added that the former artist accelerator fellows have a lot of ideas and a lot of people are prepared to work together.

Right Place Media Updates - Bill Rice and Devin Johnson

Devin Johnson shared that the billboard artwork is scheduled to go up next week depending on weather. This is the double stacked structure just south of I-75 exit #76.

Bill Rice confirmed that the ½ page full color ad for the KY Visitor's Guide has been approved and sent in. The search engine marketing Google ads are up and running and are performing above expectation. Messaging/ads can be changes throughout the year. These are the paid ads that pop up when certain key words are searched.

Berea Bucket List Challenge campaign started this week. It has been posted on Facebook and Instagram and is advertised on the front page of the Berea Citizen.

Banner Ads are currently focused on outdoor activities since that's what people are searching for. The messaging can be changed as the keyword searches change throughout the year.

Overall message in marketing is Experience Berea because it encompasses all of Berea - everything Berea has to offer.

Rick Thomas would like an update on the progress of the Mountain Bike trail in Berea; Donna will check on this.

Director's Report - Donna Angel

Nancy Conley is filling in for Megan. Megan is on vacation.

- 1.) Welcome Center visiting tourist # 913 for August:
- 2.) Facebook Engagements #16,682 vs. August 2019 of #18,061
- 3.) Kentucky Department of Tourism report for 2019 vs 2018 Visitors spending growth, for Madison County @ 4.6% or 1.7% increase over 2018: Share of State 1.7%
- 4.) We celebrated the "Grand Opening" of a new business in Old Town: *A Little Southern Class Florist*, owner Jessica Cox, great turn out w/a special thanks going out to Terry Fields, Top Drawer Gallery and Tim Wade of the Cabin for their support and attendance. Excellent foot traffic in Old Town, with *Q's Cooking food truck* and *Door Prize Giveaways* at the Florist all day along with packed lunch bags to go:
- 5.) There was a special Mural dedication to artist, Jaylin Stewart, from Louisville for her painting of *Mary Merritt* on the "Old Town Shops" building owned by Ms. Jeanie Hogg at Washington & Broadway, the first African America nurse at Berea Hospital: A special thank you goes out to Ms. Jeannie Hogg and her son Dr. Edd Hogg for this great contribution to Berea. Nancy Conley represented our Tourism office at the event.
- 6.) We are very proud to announce that the Berea Craft Festival was inducted into the "Hall of Fame" of Kentucky Living magazine as a "NEW" inductee of the "Best of the Best Arts & Crafts Fairs" categories: A very special "thank you" goes out to Melissa Gross for her work on the Berea Craft Festival for all these years:
- 7.) Special recognition goes out to Warren May, as he was showcased in the Kentucky Monthly magazine, highlighting his dulcimers and promoting Berea Folk Arts and Crafts: Great article, he made Berea proud by sharing all of Berea's great assets and accomplishments for everyone:
- 8.) Scharme Price, Tourism staff, shared: We had a "tourist visitor from Maine" to compliment Berea on being the most COVID-compliant city they had visited. He and his family were scared to travel and had seen many places that made them uncomfortable and feel unsafe. He came in specifically to tell us that he appreciated Berea's efforts to be safe. They loved their visit because of that secured feeling.
- 9.) I received a wonderful call from Ms. Sally Lenox, of Florida: Ms. Lenox makes knitted hats for children every year and sends them to a different city/state: This year she selected Berea, KY. I assured her, we would get w/the school guidance counselors & resource centers and see that all children (1000) would be given to the children in need:
- 10.) Right Place Media visited Berea and spent time being introduced to some of the local merchants in Old Town and their services and products: Very active on getting us up and going on the billboards and a (8) week Bucket List challenge, while

working on creating a new web site for us, along with preparing our ad for the KY Visitors Guide for 2021:

- 11.) Kentucky Historic Preservation Review Board Meeting is scheduled for October 13, 2020: This will be a regular Ky Heritage Council board meeting that will hear the presentation by Rachael Kennedy on behalf of Berea:
- 12.) I would like to extend a compliment to Patrick Huston and Boone Tavern: They hosted two retreats recently, one from Richmond, Leadership Madison County and the 2nd from KY State Leadership: Great convention business: Great business for the Berea economy.
- 13.) MANAGERS REPORTS

Communications Manager Report: September 2020

Megan has compiled and distributed Berea information including:

- Managing VisitBerea.com.
- Creating and distributing the Berea Biz Weekly newsletter to Berea Tourism & Economic Development Stakeholders.
- Creating and distributing the monthly newsletter to visitors.
- Creating content and campaigns for newsletters and social media.
- Scheduling daily promotional social media posts for Tourism & Economic Development.
- Managing all social media platforms (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube).
- Analyzing and reporting analytics on all social media platforms.
- Building community relations with local businesses.
- Fulfilling media requests.
- Mailing out visitor guide requests & recording them in our data.
- Answering info emails from VisitBerea.com.
- Stepping in for front desk reception duties including, keeping the front desk manned, answering the phone, assisting with any questions the caller may have, greeting visitors as they arrive into the Welcome Center, giving them Berea information, and assisting them with any questions they may have, putting together grab & go bags, and collecting daily welcome center data (number of visitors, phone calls, and grab & go bags).
- Megan is also very excited to be in the process of creating a (socially distanced) Halloween event/ social media campaign, getting the final details in order for this year's Christmas storefront decorating contest/social media campaign, and assisting Donna with creating ways to make Berea more festive for both the upcoming fall & winter seasons!

Program Manager Report for August 2020:

Nancy continues to research opportunities for in person and virtual learn shops: Staying healthy-compliant remains the issue: Nancy reports that most of the Instructors for the past MTG classes are NOT comfortable teaching live workshops this year:

Virtual Learnshops for Educators - July 21 - 23, 2020

- Created and sent post event survey to patrons, reviewed survey responses, ensured responses were shared with instructors
- Created and sent post event survey to instructors, reviewed responses
- Finalized statistics, revenue and expense files
- Sent patrons professional development certificates
- Uploaded videos of Virtual Learnshop sessions to YouTube and provided link to patrons for them to reference as needed

Virtual Singing Bird Music School Offerings - August 1 -2, 2020

- Created and sent post event survey to patrons, reviewed survey responses, ensured responses were shared with instructors
- Created statistics, revenue and expense files (waiting on August Credit Card Fees to finalize files)
- Sent patrons professional development certificates on an as needed basis

Other

- Brainstormed and researched in person and virtual workshop options including ZOOM pricing; discussed list of questions and ideas with Director
- Created and provided Director with Make It, Take It, Give IT event overview and timeline summary; attended workshop/fall and winter brainstorming meeting with Director and Vallorie Henderson
- Worked with team to clean and organize spaces at the Broadway Center Building, Berea Hotel Building and Green Cottage
- Assisted with daily cleaning and sanitation of Berea Welcome Center
- Staff front desk at the Berea Welcome Center as needed

Convention Specialist Connie Mondine Report for August 2020:

Connie reports the confirmation of the Collette Travel Bus with 16 people still plan to arrive Berea – Old Town on September 17th, @ 9:30 am: There will be 2) demonstrators for the arrival and lunch at Boone Tavern: Visitors are from the West Coast and across the nation. Next Stop is TN, no overnight visit: Demonstrators, Michelle Weston, Tim Wade

Ad Designer Specialist Scharme Price Report for August 2020:

Scharme designed brochures for the Old Town shop owners, listing all the current open businesses with new store hours, to be given to customers for referrals to other stores: Scharme designed a laminated outdoor sign for the “John Carloftis Garden”: She also continues to work on upgrading the directional business signs around Old Town and College Square trying to update to current listings:

Questions for Donna Angel

Ahmad Reynolds asked if we have the creative from previous ad agency. Charles Arnold added, that when the previous contract was issued that he believes it stated that we

retained the rights to all creative. Even if we don't use it we would catalog it. Donna Angel will follow up on this.

Farmers Market Request - Dale Ballinger

Farmers market request to use the inside of the Tolle Building beginning November 1, 2020 to April 1, 2021 on Saturdays from 9AM-2PM this allows one hour for set up and one hour for cleanup. Ten or less vendors will use the space. This would be curtesy - no revenue for use of building. Construction of the pavilion may be happening; would only be able to use parking on the left side of the building and possible parking at the Reynolds Insurance company. Do we have insurance coverage for such building use? Donna will follow up on insurance.

Charles Arnold moved to move forward and allow Farmers Market to use the facility; Ahmad Reynolds seconded. Motion carried unanimously (6-0) - note Rick Thomas was not present for the vote.

Motion by Patrick Huston to Adjourn

Patrick Huston moved to adjourn; Linda Ross seconded. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 4:37PM.