

## **TOURISM BOARD MINUTES**

Tuesday May 21, 2013

Chairman Wall established a quorum and called the meeting to order at 5:40 p.m. Present were Jackie Wall, Grace Evans, Suzanne Gwaltney and Sandi Beal. Marsha Paplham was absent.

Members of the public in attendance were Commission Larry Summers, Mayor Bill Sage, Dee Sage and Kyle Stevenson from Camp Don Lee.

Minutes from the April 9<sup>th</sup> Special Meeting were reviewed. Grace Evans motioned to accept minutes as written. Motion was seconded by Sandi Beal. Motion passed.

The board asked Larry Summers for a progress report on signage for Oriental through the D.O.T. Larry reported that he had not pursued the matter but that he would begin a dialog with the D.O.T. immediately.

The board reviewed the previously budgeted \$3,000 allowance for Croakerfest fireworks. Suzanne Gwaltney motioned that the board keep the \$3,000 allowance for fireworks in the budget as previously approved in the April, 2013 meeting. Motion was seconded by Grace Evans. Motion passed.

Meghan (Palko) Bliss was approved at a previous board meeting to replace resigning Crystal Garrett as the board's PR person. At the time of that approval, Meghan's requested hourly rate was \$10. In a subsequent email to Jackie Wall, Meghan requested an hourly rate of \$23 per hour. After discussion, Jackie Wall moved that the board hire Meghan on a 90 day trial basis at \$20 per hour while simultaneously advertising the position locally. Sandi Beal seconded. After discussion, the motion was amended to change the rate to \$15 per hour. Motion passed.

Larry Summers was asked to present the tourism board's long range plan to the town council at their next meeting.

There was brief discussion about the visitoriental.com website. No motions resulted.

There was brief discussion about Martin Brossman's social media workshop that the tourism board funded. Attendance at the evening session was reported at 39. Those who attended expressed great satisfaction with the results of the workshop.

Suzanne Gwaltney moved that Commissioner Larry Summers request the Town Council's formal approval at their next meeting to designate Oriental as the official site for Cycle NC 2014. Motion was seconded by Sandi Beal. Motion passed.

There was discussion about proposed bicycle races. Doug Sligh, president of the Oriental Express Bicycle Club, is interested in partnering with the tourism board to hold regular bicycle racing events. It was agreed that Kyle Stevenson and Grace Evans would work

with Doug to further the idea. Grace will contact authorities about widening roads for the safety of cyclists and Kyle will talk with Doug about the event in general.

Kyle Stevenson was formally introduced to the board. He is an E.C.U. graduate in commercial and sustainable tourism. Kyle expressed interest in working with the tourism board and the town of Oriental in promoting tourism. He was asked if he would submit his observations and suggestions to the board in the next few months. Kyle agreed.

The board discussed Terry McCune's video services for a YouTube channel for Oriental events. Terry's rate is \$20 per hour to video and \$20 per hour to edit. There would be a 1 hour minimum for either service per event. Suzanne Gwaltney will get rates from another videographer. Nothing further was decided as the long range plan has not yet been approved by the town council.

There was discussion about reinstating "Loose on the Neuse" as "Music on the Neuse." While no motions were made, it was decided that the board would develop the music series only if overnight guests could be drawn to Oriental.

Jackie Wall suggested that Oriental host an annual "Old Time Festival" in Oriental to celebrate the music of Doc Watson. While no motions were made, it was agreed that Jackie Wall and Sandi Beal would research the idea and present a proposal to the board.

The board decided to have the June meeting on Tuesday, June the 25<sup>th</sup> instead of on the regularly scheduled date of June 18<sup>th</sup>.

With nothing further to discuss, Grace Evans moved to adjourn. Seconded by Suzanne Gwaltney. Meeting was adjourned.