



Minutes

Tahlequah Area Convention and Visitors Bureau Regular Meeting
Thursday, September 14, 2017 @ 8:00 a.m.
Tahlequah Chamber of Commerce
123 Delaware Tahlequah, OK 74464

1. Call to Order/Roll Call

Chairman Kin Thompson called the meeting to order at 8:08 a.m. Rusty Clark took roll call: Kin Thompson, Rusty Clark, Genny Maiden, Nate King, Candy Jarvis, and Callie Chunestudy were present, no quorum. Ed Fite arrived at 8:14 and Marcus Olive arrived at 8:16. Laura Doss (Chamber Executive Director), Thomas Gardner (Interim TACVB Director)

2. Introduction of Guests

Guests introduced by the Chair included: Grant Lloyd, David Fowler, Murell Home, Manny Diaz (Ghost) of Ghost Detailing, and Mercedes Goins were present.

3. TACVB Interim Director's Report (Thomas Gardner)

Thomas presented the digital marketing report with added YouTube with Facebook participation down for the month. Thomas will send information to committee members so they can subscribe to the YouTube channel. Upcoming events include Medicine Stone 9/21-23, V-Dubs on Main 10/6-7 and Antique Ag Fest 10/6-8 on the same weekend. Big Jims last month went as well as it could have with the threat of rain, kept most of the big crowds away. Cherokee Nation Holiday – MVC was at the Heritage Center Thomas manned the MVC on Saturday and it was well received. The CVB sponsored the Holiday for \$1000 and he is not sure we got what was included in the sponsorship. Ed Fite arrived @ 8:14 am.. Thomas will speak with Bayly Wright to see what he can do for next year. New Tour Tahlequah t-shirts available. Medicine Stone, promo items ordered for giveaways. Lt Governor's Tourism summit on 10/30 at NSU. VIP tickets for committee members who wish to attend. OTIA.org for more information. Marcus Olive arrived @ 8:16 am.

4. Discussion and possible action regarding outcomes or other action on tourism Financials. (Thomas Gardner/Laura Doss)

Roll call to establish quorum: Kin Thompson, Rusty Clark, Genny Maiden, Nate King, Candy Jarvis, and Callie Chunestudy, Ed Fite, and Marcus Olive. Quorum is established.

Thomas presented financials, accompanied by working budget which includes all expenses except those that were in his expense tray and have not been submitted for payment, including t-shirts and bottle openers for Medicine Stone which will be reflected with the next disbursement Tuesday. Genny suggested that the YTD totals be corrected to reflect that all money has been spent rather than same total as the overall budget. Laura suggests adding percentages to the document. **Genny Maiden made a motion to accept financials. Callie Chunestudy seconded the motion. Roll Call: Rusty Clark, Yes; Genny Maiden, Yes; Marcus Olive, Yes; Nate King, Yes; Candy Jarvis, Yes; Callie Chunestudy, Yes; Ed Fite, Yes. Motion passed 7-0.**

5. Consideration, vote to approve, amend, discussion, or take other action on the Minutes of the August 10, 2017 regular meeting.

Callie Chunestudy made a motion to accept financials. Genny Maiden seconded the motion. Roll Call: Rusty Clark, Yes; Genny Maiden, Yes; Marcus Olive, Yes; Nate King, Yes; Candy Jarvis, Yes; Callie Chunestudy, Yes; Ed Fite, Yes. Motion passed 7-0.

Minutes amendment suggested by Grant Lloyd, "Chamber lawyer Steven Wright contacted changed to Steven Wright contacted." **Agenda item re-opened** to make amendment by Chair Kin Thompson. **Genny Maiden made motion to accept the amended minutes, corrected clerical error. Callie Chunestudy seconded the motion.**

Roll Call: Rusty Clark, Yes; Genny Maiden, Yes; Marcus Olive, Yes; Nate King, Yes; Candy Jarvis, Yes; Callie Chunestudy, Yes; Ed Fite, Yes. Motion passed 7-0.

6. Discussion about Medicine Stone RFP approval.

Thomas presented the RFP for Medicine Stone. They asked for \$3000 and the Marketing Committee approved \$2000. CVB will receive tickets, sponsorship for shuttles for the sponsorship. Medicine Stone buys out three hotels and sell packages. Should be a good weekend for hotels. First attempt at the RFP process, Thomas said the analytics should help moving forward in planning other events.

7. Discussion and possible action on the recommendation for Dave Fowler, Director of Murrell Home to fill committee seat vacated by the resignation of Amanda Pritchett (term to 2019).

Genny as governance committee recommends David Fowler as a new committee member. David introduced himself. He is the site director of the Murrell Home and Ft. Gibson Historical site and also regional director of Oklahoma Historical Society. He would like to join the committee but not as secretary. **Genny Maiden made motion for David Fowler to fill the position vacated by Amanda Pritchett for the remainder of that term. Motion was seconded by Ed Fite. Roll Call: Rusty Clark, Yes; Genny Maiden, Yes; Marcus Olive, Yes; Nate King, Yes; Candy Jarvis, Yes; Callie Chunestudy, Yes; Ed Fite, Yes. Motion passed 7-0.**

8. Discussion and possible action on filling the secretary position.

Kin Thompson opened the floor for volunteers to serve as secretary. **Callie Chunestudy volunteered. Genny Maiden made the motion that Callie Chunestudy serve as secretary of the committee. Motion was seconded by Rusty Clark. Roll Call: Rusty Clark, Yes; Genny Maiden, Yes; Marcus Olive, Yes; Nate King, Yes; Candy Jarvis, Yes; Callie Chunestudy, Abstain; Ed Fite, Yes. Motion passed 6-1.**

9. Discussion regarding outdoor sign display and payment of TACVB portion.

Thomas said that it was \$165 for the CVB portion. The sign is on loan from the Cherokee Nation. It is a \$6000 sign and our cost was for erecting the sign.

10. Discussion and possible action regarding the outdoor display and its contents.

Madison (intern) did the layout for the sign for CVB. Future discussion as how to best lay out the sign Genny said our panel looks the best. No action was taken on the content we should keep a balance of town, river and lake on our display. It would be good for the committee members to bring content in for display.

11. Discussion and possible action concerning a contract between TACVB and The Smithee Group.

Copy of contract provided. Marketing committee is concerned about the lack of delivery on their due dates. Billing issues in the beginning which have been corrected. A small calendar of deliverables with deadlines the Smithee group has set themselves is all that Thomas has received. We should be three steps in and we are still one step in. They touted that they would work as fast as we pushed them, but that has not been the case. Thomas continued, that they must be good at what they do, but we have not gotten the treatment we were promised or are paying for. Calendar begins 8/28 and we were billed for the entire month of July. The recommendation of the Marketing Committee is to not move forward with the contract. **Ed Fite moved that we not continue the relationship with the Smithee Group. The motion was seconded by Marcus Olive.** The Chair opened the matter for discussion. Candy Jarvis asked if we were under any obligation to pay for services rendered up to this point. Laura said that he stated that he didn't need a contract; it was the CVB requiring the contract. But he has been doing work. Initial conversations were in July and it was discussed to begin work 8/1. A check is in Thomas' tray ready to pay Smithee Group for the work they have done. Chamber does not have a contract or does not work with Smithee Group. Thomas' said his experience with Ben was like they were the red haired step child. Ben put Thomas in touch with his people to conference call. He and Mercedes were ready to work with them and the call lasted 8 minutes, the people he was on the call with were walking outside during the call, and another had babies in the room they acted somewhat disinterested and unprofessional. It felt like we were not a priority and it has not changed. The first digital assessment was promised by 8/28 and Thomas received it last night at 3:00 am. He said it is nothing that he and Mercedes could not have put together in 30 minutes. Candy asked if they thought we were small fish, is there a cultural difference and have you given them a warning you are going to ditch them? Laura said she was happy to contact him, Genny said he is involved in Meigs and Cornerstone so he knows the community. Thomas said it sounds like a hustle and he could pull it off himself. He provides consultation but does not do the work. Ed Fite said he is probably good with individual business but maybe not with a public entity. We should not pay for services before they are rendered since we are a quasi-governmental agency. Kin asked Mercedes what she thought: She said the schedule he gave us and the deadlines he set has not been followed

and communication was poor about missing those deadlines. She is not encouraged by the level of service we have received so far. **Roll Call: Rusty Clark, Yes; Genny Maiden, Yes; Marcus Olive, Yes; Nate King, Yes; Candy Jarvis, Yes; Callie Chunestudy, Yes; Ed Fite, Yes. Motion passed 7-0.**

12. Discussion, update, and possible action on Mobile Visitor Center go forward recommendation.

MVC subcommittee has met twice and is asking where do we want to go from here? We have the shell (body), parts that go with the shell and waiting on the motor and transmission. MVC is currently stored at the City recreation storage at the airport. When do we get the motor and transmission? The recommendation is to take a step back then go forward, get estimates of cost of taking it to finish or do we continue to trailer it. The committee wants to do more due diligence on how to proceed. Steven Wright said the motor and transmission should come soon, said Thomas. Laura wanted to caution that using City storage should be temporary, since we will be asking City employees for time when we need to access the vehicle, and that should go through Ed Carr. Genny said it was her understanding that securing the motor and transmission was Laura's responsibility that Steven Wright was not going to move forward with that responsibility. She said that was news to her but that she can take that on, actually Laura and Grant. Grant addressed Manny Diaz (Ghost), he said that he had talked to Steven and was ready to get it out. He agreed that he could have the engine and transmission at the airport at 11:00 am tomorrow, 9/15. Laura was going to make arrangements to have the City workers with a bobcat ready to remove the parts from the trailer. Grant asked about carport parking costs, the committee has not investigated those costs yet. Laura confirmed 11:00 am 9/15. Manny said he could use his trailer to move the parts tomorrow. Laura will be there.

13. Discussion and possible action regarding bids to replace windows on MVC.

Thomas called Tahlequah Glass and Northeastern Glass, and they will both come today, and both thought it would be under \$100. The windows are not all secured, going to Medicine Stone it is a good idea to keep the glass from falling out. **Genny Maiden made motion that if the cost is \$200 or less to go ahead and replace the windows. Callie Chunestudy seconded the motion. Roll Call: Rusty Clark, Yes; Genny Maiden, Yes; Marcus Olive, Yes; Nate King, Yes; Candy Jarvis, Yes; Callie Chunestudy, Yes; Ed Fite, Yes. Motion passed 7-0.**

14. Consideration, vote to approve, and discussion regarding a raise for Mercedes Goins.

Laura agrees that her talents are worth more than what we are paying her; she does not know how much was discussed. Genny said that since Thomas will be leaving, Mercedes will be picking up part of the load. Grant said that in the future personnel matters should be handled in Executive Session. Thomas' official term ends 9/30. Laura thinks that the CVB would benefit from him working past that point. Her concern with giving Mercedes a raise is that she will be here until May, and she hopes she will stay. If we increase her too much, we would hamstring paying an assistant director position what they would require. She suggested that we table the matter for budget review. **Genny made a motion to table until next month. Callie seconded the motion.** Marcus asked, if we don't grant a raise to Mercedes is that a deal breaker for her. Grant asked if she had asked for a raise. Laura said she had not asked for a raise. Genny said that the discussion stemmed from the possibility of dumping 40 hours/week of work on her. If that doesn't happen then we have a different scenario. Ed said that one of the issues recruiting is that the Chamber and CVB has a reputation of a revolving door and limited budgets. We have to stop the madness. We cannot continue to wobble around and move forward. The Chamber should not micromanage everything Laura and the CVB does. He is not sure if Thomas and Mercedes want to work here because of the way they act. Grant said Ed's point is well taken, but since Mercedes is only here until May is she the one we want to invest in. Tabling, in Grant's opinion is the best way to handle the situation. The search has gone on for many months and that is Laura's frustration. Ed says we need institutional knowledge to be able to show leadership. Rusty said that there needs to be a system and culture that we can teach and have a job that is enticing enough to get the best and brightest people that will inevitably move on, but create connections for Tahlequah everywhere that give us the reputation we want. Chairman Thompson called for a vote. **Roll Call: Rusty Clark, Yes; Genny Maiden, Yes; Marcus Olive, Yes; Nate King, Yes; Candy Jarvis, Yes; Callie Chunestudy, Yes; Ed Fite, Yes. Motion passed 7-0.**

15. Discussion about ACT for the Arts. (Callie Chunestudy)

Callie discussed the Arts Council of Tahlequah RFP process. Arts on the Avenue has been discontinued but is rolled into the Gala fundraiser. It will be a 1 day event with several artists and groups and they are asking for \$1000 for logistics and performance costs. This goes before the Marketing Committee for possible approval.

16. Discussion and possible action on Budget modification.

Re. Mobile Visitor Center. 1. Create a line item for maintenance for MVC. 2. Self-funding account separate of the Hotel/Motel tax for additional expenses. Immediately we need a budget modification, recommend that we move \$3000 from advertising and sponsorship and \$2000 from video services \$5000 would create a new line item for the MVC equipment. Three step process to approve, this committee, Chamber Board, and then the City would all have to approve. Ed Fite made a motion to approve the budget modification recommended: \$3000 from advertising and sponsorship and \$2000 from video services \$5000 would create a new line item for the MVC equipment. Motion was seconded by Callie Chunstudy. **Roll Call: Rusty Clark, Yes; Genny Maiden, Yes; Marcus Olive, Yes; Nate King, Yes; Candy Jarvis, Yes; Callie Chunstudy, Yes; Ed Fite, Yes. Motion passed 7-0.**

17. Discussion and possible action on TACVB subcommittee members.

Callie Chunstudy and Kirsty Cook have joined the Community Engagement Subcommittee; Bayly Wright joined the Marketing Subcommittee; Candy Jarvis joined the Marketing Subcommittee. David Fowler will look at the subcommittees and decide next month.

18. Committee Reports

- a. Governance/Finance (Genny Maiden) None other than the budget modification presented.
- b. Marketing (Nancy Garber) Nancy requested to step down as co chair of the subcommittee. Recommendation to break with Smithee Group. Discussed partnership with the State ABA about tour busses. Conversation about visitor's guide, how do we proceed? Green Country Marketing cost or do we need a visitor's guide, can we do the current one again? Make it smaller to decrease the cost.
- c. Community Engagement (Rusty Clark) Shared results of the surveys that Madison compiled of the board completed to be used for videos for Community Engagement. No other updates.

19. Discussion on Tour Tahlequah upcoming events - all covered.

20. Chamber Report (Laura Doss) - all is well, thank you for coming and will answer any questions of her. Job posting is done and in process.

21. New/Unforeseen

Manny Diaz (Ghost) was afforded the opportunity to speak, He said he was confused as to where the miscommunication happened and that he has an unpaid invoice. The project was pulled from him and he had submitted an invoice for the out of phase work he completed but has not been paid. He brought pictures to show of the work he did. Steven Wright has the invoice. He was never told that the project was scrapped and that there were no additional funds. But looking at this paper (budget information) it appears there are funds and the project is continuing but he has been eliminated without being given a reason why. He spent his seventh anniversary prepping the vehicle for Red Fern He has witnessed the vehicle and his advertisement on the vehicle but it has been removed. He wants to salvage the project, harvest another vehicle and take the powertrain from the other vehicle and put it under the MVC, rather than trying to go with the 60 year old engine and transmission and have a more modern vehicle and it would not have to be trailered. He wants to finish the project. This is new business since the invoice was just presented. Grant asked who gave him authority to work out of phase one. He said that Melissa (Harris) told him that there was a budget for phase one and phase two so he could proceed with the things that need to be done. He said that there were things in phase two that needed to be done before phase one could be completed. Manny told Grant, when asked, that the invoice he presented was all he thought he was owed for the out of phase work he had done. Ed Fite said he wants to be paid and wants an explanation as to why he was pulled from the project. He asked Manny if the vehicle was running Manny said it was and that he had to remove the power train to sand blast it. Why didn't we put the body on a new power train in the first place? Manny answered that the body was welded to the frame. Ed asked how would you do it now. Manny said that it would have to be cut off and welded to the new frame. Ed asked, we drove it in and it was running and drivable? Manny answered yes. The Chairman said that the information would be passed to the Chamber Board to have that discussion. There was miscommunication but our original information was that it could be drivable usable Mobile Visitor Center for \$3000 and now we are at about \$12,500 and we don't have anything we can use much.

22. Announcements

Thomas said according to the Executive Chamber board and the President it will be his last meeting and he would be remiss if he did not thank the committee for the opportunity. He will gladly help Mercedes in the transition; nothing will be lost or deleted. He feels that if it were up to this committee he would have gotten the job and it is a

sad fact that the CVB does not have as much say as they should to hire who they want or choose who the director is and that is something you should address in the future.

23. **Adjourn** Motion to adjourn from Genny Maiden made at 9:48 am.

Respectfully submitted by Rusty Clark (Vice-Chair)