

Avery County Economic Development Committee

March 26, 2018

Minutes

The Avery County Economic Development Committee (EDC) met at 5:00 pm on Monday March 26, 2018 at the Avery County Commissioners Board Room at the Avery County Administrative Complex, located at 175 Linville Street, Newland, NC 28657.

Present for the meeting were:

Roy Reynolds, Ken Walter, Susan Siirila, Tim Phillips, Phillip Barrier, Carmen Lacey, Larry Hazen.

Absent were:

Trey Oakley, Mark Parlier.

The meeting convened at 5:03 pm and was moderated by Ken Walter.

A motion was made by Carmen Lacey to approve the February 2018 minutes, a second was made by Roy Reynolds & the motion was approved unanimously.

Mr. Barrier provided a handout to the group showing current budget proposals. A proposed budget for EDC expenditures of \$40,900.00 has been prepared and will be presented to the County Commissioners for approval. Copy attached.

Mr. Hazen went over the information contained in the proposal. He shared information with the group about what the money would be used for. He noted that he has traveled with the billboard company representatives, and that we are planning to move ahead with a goal of placing a billboard on highway 421 between Wilkesboro and Boone. The plan is to lease the first billboard for the last two months of this fiscal year-May and June, then for the entire next fiscal year beginning in July. The image presented on the billboard will change four (4) times, with the changing of the seasons.

Regarding placing a similar billboard on highway 321 between Lenoir and Blowing Rock, Mr. Hazen stated that plans therefor had not been finalized. Mr. Hazen and Mr. Barrier stated that before proceeding, a public hearing on the utilization of funds had to be held. Mr. Phillips offered information about the public hearing forum. Mr. Barrier stated that a proposed date for said hearing would be April 12, 2018.

Other matters related to the placement of the above-noted billboard to be located between Blowing rock and Lenoir will be addressed at the next marketing meeting.

Mr. Hazen advised that we are planning to move forward with advertising placement in Our State magazine, and stated that our advertisement is planned to appear in the July issue of the

magazine. He stated that he had not heard from Carolina Mountain Life magazine, but that he will re-contact them for more information.

Ms. Lacey stated that Getty Images will not be purchased. She and Mr. Hazen noted that instead of purchasing images to be used in our advertising, that we would instead be using photographs available from local photographers. Specifically, photographs available from Sally Woodring and Todd Bush are being considered for use in our advertisements.

Mr. Hazen stated that the reasons for choosing Our State and Carolina Mountain Life magazines for printed advertisements included the readership and radius that their publications reach. Carolina Mountain Life magazine can reach readers in a one to two hour drive radius of Avery County. Our State magazine has nationwide coverage, and even some international readers.

Mr. Barrier shared a printed copy of a proposed billboard, showing a photograph by photographer Sally Woodring.

Mr. Hazen stated that we will need to look at digital advertising. He noted that County IT representative Dennis Holland is working on a Facebook page. Mr. Holland will set up the page, and Mr. Hazen will be the editor. Mr. Hazen stated that he has talked with Cole Finch, who has agreed to do some graphic work for us, and that his fee has already been addressed, and will be reasonable.

Mr. Barrier stated that the information that will come from the public hearing, slated for April 12, 2108, will cover actions for the next six (6) months. He stated that EDC members are encouraged to invite business owners and people from the community to said hearing, in the hope that they could advocate for the use of the budget as proposed.

Mr. Barrier stated that counsel (county attorney) is working on the trademark for the new county logo.

Mr. Hazen stated, that regarding the budget, that we have no money allocated for image costs. He stated that we will pay Cole Finch for services before July 2018. Mr. Hazen suggested adding a line item to the budget for next year, specifically setting aside money for such needs as images, printing, etc. He suggested a budget amount of \$1,500.00. He stated that we need money to pay for photographs. Ms. Lacey stated that we should have money from other items that would be usable. Mr. Hazen asked if we needed to budget money for printing. Ms. Lacey and Mr. Barrier advised that monies from other budget items could be used. Mr. Barrier stated that, for example, money labeled for supplies could be used for such needs.

Mr. Walter raised the issue of applicants for the two additional seats on the EDC that have been approved. In April 2018, the County Commissioners, granted approval for two additional members to be added to the EDC group. Thereafter, there was an open period for applications for interested individuals to apply. All EDC members were emailed copies of the applications.

However, one application was omitted from the email. The omitted application was from Mr. Richard Honeycutt. Mr. Walter advised that Mark Parlier had offered his resignation from the group, and that a third person will need to be selected to fill his position.

Mr. Barrier suggested that we focus on filling the two additional positions, approved in February, and thereafter work on filling the vacancy left by Mr. Parlier's resignation. Discussion followed regarding the applicants for the positions. Mr. Walter shared results of a quick survey he conducted by email.

The group agreed with the selection of the following applicants:

- (1) Melynda Pepple, Avery County Chamber of Commerce
- (2) Jesse Pope, Grandfather Mountain

Discussion followed regarding candidates for the third open position.

The group unanimously approved Richard Honeycutt for the third position.

Mr. Walter will prepare and deliver letters setting forth this information to Mr. Barrier, who will then pass along the information to the County Commissioners. Mr. Barrier reminded the group that the final decision is up to the County Commissioners.

Mr. Barrier stated that regarding high speed internet, that requests for proposals are still out.

He stated that he and Tommy Burlison have met with individuals who may be looking to purchase the old Cannon Memorial hospital building. He noted that the company representatives have requested complete confidentiality.

Ms. Lacey inquired about the old IRC building. Mr. Barrier stated that he had no new updates, but that he intended to call for more information on the project.

Mr. Walter asked Ms. Siirila if she had success in communicating the Keith Deveraux, High Country Council of Governments, regarding grant writing. She indicated that she had not, and that during her recent visit to HCCOG Mr. Deveraux did not have enough time to discuss.

Mr. Reynolds discussed the purchase of business cards. He noted his intent to purchase, at his own expense, business cards with no county seal and a blank back. Mr. Barrier advised that the county can print such cards once the trademark on the logo is completed. He stated that once we get the trademark in place, that we can use the template, and print the type of card Mr. Reynolds would prefer in-house. Mr. Hazen stated that we may have other printing needs. He suggested that we look at using Mid-Atlantic Printers in Lenoir, if the budget is approved in July.

Mr. Walter advised that there will be an upcoming seminar on the opioid crisis in Avery County, to be held at the Best Western in Banner Elk. Ms. Lacey asked about how to register and pay for the event. Mr. Barrier advised that he assumed that one would pay upon registration.

Mr. Barrier spoke about the issue of a visitor's center at the Avery/Watauga County lines. He shared information about a visitor's center located in Wilkes County, and stated that he would like to see a similar center near our county.

Mr. Barrier stated that a program called Tarheel Baseball and Softball is now available. This is a program for areas that do not have little league baseball available, and many surrounding counties are participating. For Avery County, this is under the direction of Avery County Parks and Recreation.

Mr. Walter stated that on May 4, 2018, there will be a multi-county event for the mentally challenged. This program is similar to Special Olympics. This will be the first time Avery County has hosted such an event.

Mr. Reynolds had no report from the Newland Planning Committee.

Mr. Hazen stated that he had met with Melynda Pepple, and that we (EDC) are on the same page with the Chamber of Commerce as far as helping the county. He had attended a Leadership Avery meeting last week, and noted that it was good group of people, well organized, etc.

Mr. Hazen and Mr. Walter will meet with representatives of the May Coalition, along with Zach Burnop. The May Coalition has business start-up money available.

Mr. Barrier noted that the Avery County Airport located at Brushy Creek Road in Avery County has received grant money to re-build their terminal. What is planned is a log cabin structure.

The next meeting is scheduled for April 30, 2018 at 5:00 pm.

Ms. Lacey made a motion to adjourn at 6:10 pm. A second was offered by Mr. Hazen and approved unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan P. Siirila
March 27, 2018

Budget Line Item Justification

Department 4900

Line Item 4900.1400 TRAVEL

Current Year Budget \$ 2,000.00

Req. F/Y 2018/19 \$ 2,000.00

Provide justification with detailed calculations to support your request.
Attach any quotes or supporting documentation available.

<i>Description</i>	<i>Unit Price</i>	<i>Quantity</i>	<i>Total</i>
Workshops and meetings	2,000.00	1	\$ 2,000.00
Grand Total			\$ 2,000.00

Budget Line Item Justification

Department 4900

Line Item 4900.3300 SUPPLIES

Current Year Budget \$ 1,000.00

Req. FY 2018/19 \$ 500.00

Provide justification with detailed calculations to support your request.
 Attach any quotes or supporting documentation available.

<i>Description</i>	<i>Unit Price</i>	<i>Quantity</i>	<i>Total</i>
General supplies	1.00	500	\$ 500.00
Grand Total			\$ 500.00

Budget Line Item Justification

Department 4900

Line Item 4900.5400 CONTRACTED SERVICES

Current Year Budget \$ -

Req. F/Y 2018/19 \$ 2,500.00

Provide justification with detailed calculations to support your request.
Attach any quotes or supporting documentation available.

<i>Description</i>	<i>Unit Price</i>	<i>Quantity</i>	<i>Total</i>
Media consultant	1,000.00	1	\$ 1,000.00
Consultanting fees	1,500.00	1	\$ 1,500.00
Grand Total			\$ 2,500.00