

Benton County Tourism and Recreation Corporation

November 18, 2020 – Warsaw Community Building Council Chambers

MEETING MINUTES

Suzie Brodersen
Jessi Kendall
Rick Renno
Susan Kyle

Tim Blankinship
Christine Letcher

Lynette Stokes, Executive Director

Meeting was called to order at 4:32 p.m.

Minutes from September 23, 2020 meeting were approved via email previously. No motion was needed.

Administrative matters were discussed such as lodging tax numbers year-to-date and non-paying lodge updates were given by Stokes. Discussion followed regarding non-paying lodges: Headwaters, Hidden Lake and Reel & Trigger and the status of the county attorney regarding collection efforts and potential lawsuits.

Stokes gave updates on the Profit and Loss Statements for the period of September 1-October 31, 2020, and motion was made for acceptance of the financials by Blankinship and seconded by Kendall. The motion was unanimously approved.

Review of the Balance Sheet with motion made for acceptance of the Balance Sheet by Letcher and seconded by Blankinship. The motion was unanimously approved.

Stokes proposed a new marketing plan valued at \$24,560 to advertise and promote chamber and city events through additional marketing that includes radio and digital billboard instead of the annual tourism grant of \$5,000. The advantages and disadvantages were discussed and reviewed and motion was made by Kendall and seconded by Letcher to accept the new marketing proposal in place of the annual tourism grant of \$5,000. The motion was unanimously approved.

Stokes gave an update on a grant that was awarded to tourism through the Show Me Cares Act Grant for COVID-related marketing of \$32,894, which included print, radio, and PPE supplies for safe events (masks and hand sanitizer, hand washing and hand sanitizer stations). A total of \$28,291 was submitted to the MO Division of Tourism for reimbursement.

Stokes gave an update on a grant of \$2,987 from the Benton County Community Foundation for Butterfield stagecoach signage and brochures, which are being completed now by Birdman.

Stokes gave an update on a grant applied for through the Benton County Community Foundation that would help cover costs of the new Ambassador Program and Warsaw Walking Tour that was denied.

The FY2021 proposed budget was reviewed and discussion followed regarding the need to outsource some of the marketing duties such as graphic design, social media management and newsletters. Updates will be given via email as we obtain more quotes. Once Stokes gets approval from the contributing entities (county, cities), she will bring the proposed budget back to the board for their approval. No motion needed.

Stokes gave updates on the following programs being done by Stokes with joint efforts with the University Extension Office: Ambassador Program, Barn Quilt Square Tour, Warsaw Walking Tour. Stokes is working with the Trulaske School of Business marketing interns this semester on the Bicentennial celebrations for 2021 and on free listings with the MO Division of Tourism. Stokes is working with the Economic Developer on the housing study through RDG and will be part of a new broadband study committee. Stokes is also working on a MPAN grant through the City of Warsaw for interpretive trail signage.

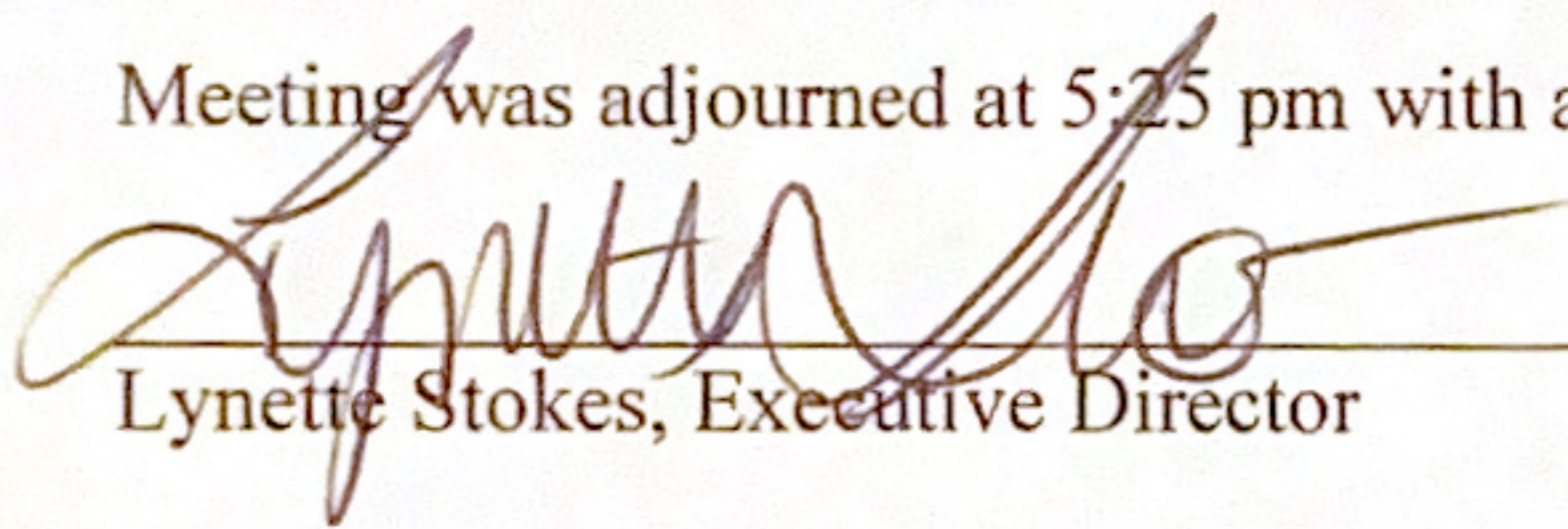
Stokes addressed the need for a tourism study to go along with the housing study and that in order to draw investors and new business to our area as well as evaluate our current and future marketing efforts, the importance of having actual statistics to determine our target demographics and visitor counts is critical. Stokes will research options for the tourism study and follow-up on progress at the next meeting.

Osage Lakes Greenway updates were given by Stokes regarding the grant for signage and brochures on the Butterfield Stagecoach and the MPAN signage above regarding efforts for the greenways.

There was no other business.

The next Commission meeting will be held on **January 20, 2021 at 4pm** at the Warsaw Community Building (Council Chambers).

Meeting was adjourned at 5:25 pm with a motion by Letcher and seconded by Renno.



Lynette Stokes, Executive Director