

HCTDA Board Meeting Minutes
June 5, 2024
Continuation of May 22, 2024 Board Meeting
Lake Junaluska Bethea Welcome Center

Members/Staff Present: Dr. Shelley White, Chuck Dickson, Jeff Hillis, Natalie Hawkins, Kristian Owen, Chad King, Jennifer Best, Mike Huber, Angie Frisbee, Scot Blair, David Francis, Jeremy Boone, Kelsie Baker, Gail Mull, Corrina Ruffieux, Ashley Rock-Rice, Hayley Printz, Alycin Ray

Members Absent: Jim Owens

Guests Present: Jeanne Forrest, Robin Black, Terryll Evans, Sam Dunbar, Natalie Walker, Lisa Conard, Lindsey Godwin

1. **Call to Order** – Vice Chair Dr. Shelley White
 - Meeting called to order at 9:00 AM
2. **Introductions**
3. **Public Comment Session (12 minutes total, limit 3 minutes per person)**

Robin Black highlighted the success and growth of the Labor Day Festival since its start in 1906. Jeanne Forrest thanked the TDA Board for delaying the Canton grants award, noting that the longstanding festival should be self-sustaining by now. Natalie Walker, Canton's finance officer, explained that due to the mill closure, the town faces a \$1.4 million budget gap for FY 24-25, making it unable to sustain the festival without community help. Lisa Conard stated the need for progressive thinking, suggesting the parade be reimaged to benefit local businesses. Sam Dunbar presented data on the festival's success and listed other town events. Terryll Evans cited her recent successful event with over 3,000 attendees and expressed her support for the Town of Canton in producing an event on that large of a scale.

4. **New Business**
 - **Canton Grants | VOTE**

Corrina Ruffieux presented the funding recommendations from the Product Development Committee to the HCTDA Board and then answered questions from Board members.

After discussion, Chuck Dickson made a motion to approve the Product Development Committee recommendations as follows, Natalie Hawkins seconded the motion. Gail Mull recused herself from voting.

- Canton Labor Day Festival – Fund at \$10,000
- Pioneer Heritage Festival – No funding
- Passport to Canton - Fund at \$5,000 with stipulations*
- Weekend Wedding Getaway - Fund at \$5,000 with stipulations*

*Passport to Canton and Weekend Wedding Getaway applications are conditionally approved with these stipulations to be provided in advance of moving forward with the program and no later than July 15, 2024:

- They submit the requested marketing plan in the template provided;
- They provide letter(s) of support from all participating or associated partners;
- They submit mock-ups of all ads for prior approval from the HCTDA.

Jeff Hillis and Angie Frisbee opposed the motion with all else voting in favor. Motion passed.

Jeff Hillis clarified that he opposed the vote because he felt that they should be discussed and voted on individually.

A point of clarification was made that as ex-officio members, Jennifer Best, David Francis and Kristian Owen do not vote.

5. Next TDA Board meeting is June 26, 2024
6. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 9:29AM.