

**Tryon Tourism Board**  
*(Tryon Tourism Development Authority)*  
**Minutes**  
**March 3, 2025**  
**4:30 P.M.**

Chairman Mason-Freeman called the meeting to order at 4:30 pm at the Tryon Town Hall with four members present. A fifth member, Allan Casavant, arrived at 4:37 pm.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Maria Mason-Freeman, Chairman; Bill Crowell, Tryon BOC Rep; Melanie Jackson; Steven Siler; and Allan Casavant (arrived 4:37 pm);

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** John Vining, Vice-Chairman;

**STAFF PRESENT:** Meg Rogers, Secretary; and Tracey Daniels, Website/Social Media Contractor

**Approve Minutes from February 3, 2025**

Minutes from the February 3, 2025 regular meeting were reviewed. Jackson made a motion to approve the February 3, 2025 regular meeting minutes as presented. Siler seconded the motion. Motion was approved by a vote of 4 to 0.

**Request to change agenda to move website social media update to beginning of meeting**

Request by Tracey Daniels to move her website-social media update report to beginning of meeting so she could leave early for another meeting was approved.

**Website & Social Media**

Tracey Daniels presented a brief oral update report for March 6, 2025.

**Social Media Status Report-ExploreTryon Facebook Page**

- 17 new followers (organic-no ads), 20,000 views, 60 clicks to website
- 9 unfollowed (probably due to Facebook account deletions from political boycott)

**Miscellaneous**

- Tracey Daniels and Steven Siler to attend DIY Marketing Conference in Asheville, NC on March 17-18, 2025. Daniels got 50% discount through First Peak Tourism.
- Daniels would be attending VISIT-NC 365 Conference in Hickory, NC on April 6-8, 2025, \$800 registration fee funded by a VISIT-NC grant received by Polk Tourism. Daniels would be representing Tryon in a Stronger Together: Best Practices in Marketing, Promotion & Collaboration panel and attending sessions on advocating for your destination, building relationships, world tourism, exploring cultural & experiential trails and other breakout sessions that fit with Tryon's interests.
- Daniels would be attending a meeting on March 4, 2025 at 3 pm with two other Town of Tryon representatives (Jim Fatland, Tim Daniels and/or Lourdes Gutierrez) in Columbus at the Womack Building to get an update on the status of the County TDA. Rogers and Crowell briefly reviewed changes involved if County TDA was approved. Pros and cons were discussed briefly.

**Approve Financial Report for February 2025**

The Tryon Tourism Development Fund FY 2024-2025 financial report for February 2025 was reviewed. Tryon Tourism Development Fund FY 2024-2025 Revenues as February 28, 2025 totaled \$ 11,492.88 (41.49%). Tourism Development Fund FY 2024-2025 expenditures as of February 28, 2025 totaled \$ 15,820.44 (57.11%). Fund balance as of February 28, 2025 was \$ 51,156.91.

Siler reported that the recent Tryon Fire Alliance/Tryon Fire Department Guns & Hoses Chili Cookoff fundraiser event in downtown Tryon on the 4<sup>th</sup> Friday of February was very successful and brought a large crowd of visitors. A downtown International Food Festival was being planned for June 2025 and a Pizza Cook-off was being planned for April 12, 2025. Food festivals could make downtown Tryon a food destination for tourism. Siler stated his intention to submit a proposal requesting funding at a future meeting for food event advertising targeting markets distant enough to encourage overnight tourism.

Siler was concerned that some short-term rental (STR) providers within the Tryon jurisdiction were not collecting and remitting occupancy tax to the Town of Tryon. Siler offered to check on developing a STR registration system for the Town of Tryon to make sure Tryon was collecting all occupancy taxes possible. In the past, Polk County Tourism has shared info with the Tryon Tax Collector on STRs that are registered by the County that are within the town limits of Tryon. Mason-Freeman suggested that digital occupancy tax report filing could make it easier for providers to comply.

Status of Pine Crest Inn renovation was discussed briefly. Developer hoped to have Pine Crest Inn restaurant opened within a few months.

Casavant made a motion to approve the February 2025 Tourism Financial Report as presented. Jackson seconded the motion. Motion was approved by a vote of 5 to 0.

**Approve Audit Contract Amendment for Time Extension**

Secretary Rogers reported that the audit contract for the Tourism Fund needed to be amended for a time extension. Jackson made a motion to approved the amendment to the audit contract for time extension. Siler seconded the motion. Motion was approved by a vote of 5 to 0.

**Fiscal Year 2025-2026 Budget Discussion**

The members voted unanimously to table discussion of the FY 2025-2026 Budget until after the update on the County TDA decision from Polk County.

**Saluda Grade Trail Update**

The Tryon committee created to develop plans to make Tryon ready for the Saluda Grade Trail had met and their recommendations included: free-standing bathrooms, bicycle racks, signage for downtown merchants, bicycle repair station, & water fountain adjacent to the trail. Concerns about homeless people camping along the trail were discussed briefly.

**SWOT Analysis Update – Work Plan Discussion**

The need for development of a cohesive downtown design and décor plan was discussed very briefly.

**Other**

**TDDA Representatives Comments** – Denny Crowe and Ms. Harriet Hudson from Tryon Downtown Development Association (TDDA) executive committee asked to be advised on downtown decoration proposals and plans before they were submitted to the Tourism Authority or other boards for approval and/or funding. TDDA supported a cohesive downtown style, but wanted to be fully informed on proposed décor decisions and purchases before actual funding requests were submitted or approved. Crowe and Hudson were concerned that the design committee was exceeding its mandate and implementing purchases without approval by the TDDA Executive Committee. Design vs. décor and the relationship of the two concepts was noted. Casavant suggested scheduling joint meetings to support better communication and collaboration.

**Confirm Date for Next Regular Meeting**

The next regular meeting of the Tryon Tourism Development Authority was scheduled for Monday, April 7, 2025 at 4:30 pm at Tryon Town Hall, McCown Room. The meeting date was confirmed.

**Adjourn**

Mason-Freeman adjourned the meeting at 5:30 pm.

**Prepared by**

**Approved:**



Meg Rogers  
Secretary

Maria Mason-Freeman  
Chairman