

**Montgomery Regional Tourism Development Council**

**Meeting Minutes**

**May 23, 2013**

**I. Call to order**

Krishna Chachra, Chair, called to order the regular meeting of the **MTDC** at **9:00 a.m.** at the Odd Fellows Hall on 203 Gilbert Street, Blacksburg.

**II. Present**

Krishna Chachra (v)	Chair-Blacksburg town Council Representative
Tom Norman (v)	Vice Chair-Blacksburg Hotel Representative
Jim Politis (v)	Board of Supervisors Representative
Marc Verniel	Blacksburg Town Manager
Craig Meadows	Montgomery County Administrator
Henry Showalter (v)	Christiansburg Town Council Representative
Connie Hale (v)	Riner Restaurant Representative
Lisa Bleakley	Executive Director, Tourism
Ruth Richey	Montgomery County Public Information Officer
Eric Johnsen (v)	Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce Representative
Heather Browning	Town of Blacksburg Community Relations Manager
Steve Sandy	Montgomery County Planning
Taylor Chandler	Tourism Intern, VTC
Cara Salinas	Tourism Intern, UCF

<b>Guests:</b> Todd Christenson	Ex. Director, Southwest Virginia Cultural Heritage Foundation
Jack Hinshelwood	Ex. Director, The Crooked Road
Diana Blackburn	Ex. Director, 'Round the Mountain
Villem Alango	CIO, Ovela Group
Carl Pucci	COO, Ovela Group

**Absent**

Barry Helms	Christiansburg Town Manager
Melissa Richards (nv)	Virginia Tech Representative
Scott Sink (v)	Blacksburg Agritourism Representative
Becky Wilburn	Town of Christiansburg Public Information Officer
Diane Akers	Blacksburg Partnership

**III. Approval of minutes-** August 23, 2012; September 27, 2012; November 27, 2012; February 28, 2013; March 28, 2013; April 25, 2013. Motion to approve by Eric Johnsen, second by Jim Politis.

**IV. Presentations:**

1. Rhonda Morgan, Ex. Director of Blacksburg Museum and Cultural Operations. Oversight transfer from Town to the Blacksburg Museum and Cultural Foundation. Includes 16 Squares, Alexander Black House, Old Town Hall, St. Luke and Odd Fellows Hall, Blacksburg Museum and Cultural Center
2. SWVA Brand, The Crooked Road and 'Round the Mountain background and opportunities as a contributing member.
  - a. Takeaways include: Outdoor Recreation (Appalachian Spring) marketing. Montgomery County and the towns are positioned to be a "gateway" and "basecamp" to activities along the New River and beyond. Another idea includes networking Downtown theaters such as the Lyric in Blacksburg and the theaters in Radford and Galax. Possible Grants through NEA.

- b. Wise Inn is being constructed in Wise VA and is projected to open in 2014.
  - c. September 19-20, 2013- Creative Conference in Abingdon
  - d. "Stay an extra day and (this) is why!"
3. TCR: Blacksburg Square Dance and Market Jam applying for affiliation. Artists in the area: John Hollingsworth (Autoharp), instrument makers in this region. Afterschool program: Advisory board, workshops, Ex: Abingdon 2012
4. Ovela
- a. Discussion- Company introduction. Working with Montgomery County Planning Department on new mapping/GIS system. Discussion of Tourism Website
    - i. Constellation Destination serves dual purpose of desktop ap and mobile ap.
    - ii. Nothing to install or update for the user.
    - iii. Only need the URL to see.
    - iv. Can be shared with Near Field Communication or QR code.
    - v. Format sizes to any device.
    - vi. Uses/integration include: Mapping, self-guided tours, integrated video, gamification, social media, weather/news, reservations.

**V. Next meeting: 9 a.m. on Thursday, July 18 at Montgomery Museum and Lewis Miller Regional Art Center**

**VI. Adjournment**

Krishna Chachra, Chair, adjourned the meeting at 11:30 a.m.

Minutes submitted by: Lisa Bleakley

Minutes approved by: