

**GATLINBURG DEPARTMENT OF TOURISM
SPECIAL EVENTS WORK GROUP MINUTES**

August 19, 2008

The Gatlinburg Department of Tourism Special Events Work Group met on August 19, 2008 at 1:00 p.m. in the Board Room of the Administrative Office. **The following members were present:** Mr. Chuck Winstead, Ms. Jackie Leatherwood, Mr. Brian Myers, Mr. Kevin Tierney, Mr. Kent Cave, Mr. Butch McDade, Ms. Angela Caruthers, Ms. Vickie Simms, Mr. Dennis McAvoy, Mr. Darrell Whitchurch, Mr. Kirby Smith, Ms. Michael Kittredge, Mr. George Hawkins, and Mr. David Perella

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. George Hawkins called the meeting to order.

APPROVAL OF NOVEMBER 11, 2007 MEETING MINUTES

Approval of minutes was put on hold until next meeting date.

ELECTION OF CHAIRPERSON

The Special Events Work Group had not yet elected a Chairperson. Mr. George Hawkins nominated Mr. Kevin Tierney as Chairperson for the Special Events Work Group. The Members unanimously agreed.

MOUNTAIN FEST 2009

Mr. David Perella commented that he needed a recommendation from this Work Group to take to the Tourism Advisory Board regarding Mountain Fest. He presented the idea of tying Mountain Fest into the Tunes and Tales Kick Off for 2009. The event would take place on the weekends beginning on April 24th and would run through May 23rd. David Perella added that arts and crafts will be beefed up in the Tunes and Tales line up. Mr. Kevin Tierney addressed the subject of selling the arts and crafts products. Mr. David Perella commented that the crafters would have to be placed on private property or in the mall areas to sell because nothing can be sold on public right of way locations. The group agreed that in order for the crafters to commit, a list would need to be made of how many and where the locations would be. Mr. George Hawkins will compile the list of locations and details regarding them. **A motion was made by Jackie Leatherwood to conduct more study before making any final decisions, but that Mountain Fest be a part of Ribfest weekend (based on the list of locations that Mr. George Hawkins gets). Seconded by Dennis McAvoy. Motion Passed.** George Hawkins will be getting a list of locations and Kevin Tierney will be getting a list of interested crafters.

TUNES AND TALES

Continuing with the discussion regarding the Ribfest weekend, a further motion was made. **A motion was made by Brian Meyers to run a Spring Time Tunes and Tales on the weekends beginning on April 24th and running through May 23rd. Seconded by Jackie Leatherwood. Motion Passed.**

David Perella commented that Tunes and Tales received a lot of positive feedback this year. George Hawkins added that Tunes and Tales add to what people expect to see in Gatlinburg while they are here. The subject of adding an additional Tunes and Tales segment for fall visitors was introduced. **A motion was made by Mr. Dennis McAvoy to have Tunes and Tales run for 4 weekends beginning October 3rd and run through October 25th of this year. Seconded by Brian Meyers. Motion Passed.**

GHOST TOURS

Mr. Hawkins presented his idea of beginning a Ghost Trolley Tour for the month of October. He commented that we would paint a trolley black and charge admission. Ms. Vickie Simms added that since there are currently 2 Ghost Tour businesses in the City, we would have to talk to them and see if this City event would cause a problem. The group seemed to believe that the idea would pose a problem with those business owners. The Ghost Tour idea was tabled until further information and discussion can be held.

OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. George Hawkins presented the idea of making a Festival out of the events and demonstrations that already take place during the winter months in Gatlinburg. The event would consist of a brochure that highlighted the events taking place and present it to visitors as an actual Festival. Each individual would be responsible for their events expenses or any admission and we would simply include it in the brochure listing. Mr. Kent Cave added that we should be sure and include any events or activities available in the National Park. The Work Group agreed that this would be a way to get businesses involved and include their special events in the brochure. **A motion was made by Mr. Dennis McAvoy to take this Winter Festival idea to the Tourism Advisory Board to pursue further research on this event to perhaps include it in the Special Events List for 2010. Seconded by Michael Kittredge. Motion passed.**

The group also discussed the Holly and Shamrock Parade scheduled for St. Patrick's Day and pondered the idea of turning it into a yearly event to celebrate that holiday each year.

Butch McDade with the national Park was available to answer any questions regarding any of the National Parks 75th Anniversary Celebration events. Mr. Kent Cave went over each event and discussed what each involved and where they all stand at this point in the planning process. Mr. Darrell Whitchurch added that the City of Gatlinburg needs to merge our calendar with the National Parks Calendar on our website.

NEXT MEETING DATE

The next meeting date is scheduled for Tuesday, October 14th, 2008 at 1:00 in the Board Room.