

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

March 19, 2008

The Gatlinburg Department of Tourism Special Events Work Group met on March 19, 2008 at 2:00 p.m. in the Board Room of the Administrative Office. **The following members were present:** Mr. Kevin Tierney, Mr. Darrel Whitchurch, Ms. Shanda Worthington, Ms. Jackie Leatherwood, Mr. Dennis McAvoy Mr. George Hawkins, and Mr. David Perella.

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. George Hawkins called the meeting to order.

TUNES AND TALES UPDATE

The budget of this year's Tunes and Tales is going to be cut by about half. Mr. George Hawkins listed some of the changes that would be made to this year's Tunes and Tales: the costumes will be wash and wear, the event will be handled in-house rather than including Imagination House, the performers will cover 10 to 12 areas and will be rotated in and out of those areas, the event will end the 2nd week of August making it 2 two weeks shorted than last year.

Mr. Tierney questioned if there could be an exception to the law during Tunes and Tales that there cannot be any inventory when selling on the streets so that we could get arts and crafts back into the downtown area. The group discussed having the Arts and Crafts Community sign up for one week to demonstrate and sell their items and be a part of Tunes and Tales. Mr. Tierney commented that even if they couldn't sell inventory, they could still be paid to sit and demonstrate their work for the time period they signed up for.

Mr. George Hawkins will check into the law of selling inventory on the streets and update the group at the next meeting.

There was also discussion about possibly moving Tunes and Tales into the spring months to get people into Gatlinburg during the off season. This may be discussed further in the future.

Tunes and Tales will run June 13th thru August 9th.

RIBFEST

This year's Ribfest has been moved back to River Road but will be in the same format that we have used in the past. Mr. Hawkins announced that they are currently trying to get vendors to sign up at the moment. The group agreed that there has to be more incentive for the businesses to get involved as vendors. **It was decided that in order to convince businesses to get involved, vendors who sign up by April 3rd will have their names placed on the Ribfest t-shirts and that the booths have the option to cook any type of barbeque.**

Group members agreed to work on finding vendors and convincing businesses to get involved.

PROMOTING EVENTS

Ms. Jackie Leatherwood commented that she would like to have a printed poster of events available to hang in her lobby so that her guests could plan for future visits. The printed material makes a conversational piece that is good advertising for the guests that are already in Gatlinburg and interested in returning in the future. Mr. George Hawkins will work on the posters. **The printed material will be distributed quarterly and include any events that are open to the public.**

NEXT MEETING

The next Special Events Work Group Meeting is TBA. The Agenda will include: a Tunes and Tales update and the future of Ribfest.