

**City of Sky Valley  
Marketing Committee**

**Thursday, June 5, 2014**

**10:00 AM**

**Timeshare Meeting Room, 501 Sky Valley Way**

**MINUTES**

Chairman Gurley called the meeting to order.

Those present: Gurley, Turner, Howard, Cillo, Gillespie, LaMonte, Goodgame, City Manager Lapeyrouse, City Clerk Cantrell.

**DISCUSSION ITEMS**

Mayor Goodgame said there is an estimated 150 houses for sale in Sky Valley. This has led to prices being driven down. Tax values are down resulting in city revenue reductions the last few years. The Golf Club needs 75 more members. Our goal is to create growth. We are looking for the right person to implement the marketing plan.

Chairman Gurley gave a brief history and overview of Tommy Valentine's project. She said that the cell tower is scheduled to be completed by the end of year. We have a job description for a marketing coordinator and are in the process of finding and hiring a person to implement plan.

- Website

We need to be able to drive people to Sky Valley. A great way to do this is through the website and social media. We want to have the marketing coordinator in place before we make any changes or decisions so they can be part of the process. Things we want to make sure are easy to find include info on the city, visitor info for lodging, restaurants, and activities. The committee wants to stick with the city's current site for search optimization.

- Activities

Turner and Cillo presented a list of activity ideas. The biggest obstacle we have is a lack of property. Gillespie and Goodgame are working on public access to the pavilion. A draft agreement will be presented at the Club's next board meeting. Goodgame gave an update on negotiations with Harrison Merrill in which the city would take down the old lodge in exchange for property. He is waiting on Merrill's final decision.

Steve Brett mentioned bird watching as an activity. Goodgame said that some people have stated a hiking club.

The Highlands Aerial Park has four hiking trails with free access. If someone wants to hike them, they just ask that you stop by the office and sign a waiver.

Activities mentioned include: mountain biking, archery, paddle boats, canoes, fishing. Should we stock the lakes? Fish can be obtained from a hatchery that are 9 – 12” long. DNR has smaller fish. Do we want to attract people to fish?

It was suggested that we build on fall activities since we already decorate for fall.

- Partnering with others

The committee discussed partnering with entities that are within a daytrip area from Sky Valley: Sapphire Valley, Cataloochee, Macon County, Oconee County. LaMonte suggested having someone represent Sky Valley to other groups by being a guest at meetings and events. Our cooler temps are a huge summer asset.

How do we get Timeshares involved? Goodgame has asked to be a guest speaker at a board meeting to present the marketing plan and ask them to participate. Further discussion followed about the number of people the Timeshares could attract and the Club’s work with them. The Club pays \$30,000 per year to have access to their amenities – pool, exercise room, tennis courts.

#### **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Bonnie Granlich, Scaly Mountain, said they have rented the Cabe Realty building and are using it as a small welcome center. It also has a small meeting room that could be available for use. She said she is working on a joint Sky Valley/Scaly Mountain newsletter.

Margaret Edminston presented license plates available for purchase at the Timeshares. They feature pictures of Sky Valley and are \$15.

John Hoppes said that we have 38 waterfalls in Rabun County. He volunteered to create a hiking and waterfall guide.

#### **ADJOURN**

Next Meeting: June 19 at 10:00 AM.

Respectfully submitted:



Mandi Cantrell, City Clerk