

# Saluda Business Association Minutes

*October 8th, 2024*

Members Present:

Brianne Haas, Tom Haas, Lynn Casey, Anne Stewart, Misty Davis, Missy Orr, Debi Thomas, Shelley Delay, Kasey Watkins, Emily Lamar, Susan Cannon, Stephanie Winterrowd, Marc Balzar, Chamblis Stuber, Risa König

I. Call to Order

- Made by Emily Lamar.

II. Approval of Previous Minutes:

- Previous Meeting Minutes. Motion to approve. Motion Seconded. Motion passes.

III. Treasurer's Report: Rhonda Woodberry

- No present. No report given.

IV. Marketing: Emily Lamar (reach her via [promotions@saluda.com](mailto:promotions@saluda.com))

- Putting the brochure on hold. A lot of the featured businesses are in flux and we would like to wait until there is a more clear idea of where everyone is at.
  - The idea is to still get the brochure out in the next couple of months, but once things have settled a bit.
  - Please reach out if you have any questions or concerns.
- The biggest question is what we would like to do moving forward.

Marketing for the fall? Is Saluda open? What/who is open?

- It is brought up that we should focus on marketing and linking up this region and area, especially on social media. Reaching out to other towns around us that are still able to support tourism and are planning on events, etc. for the season.
- The idea is furthered by suggesting we keeping up to date with each other and businesses on a platform, such as ConstantContact.
- Members present gave an update on where their businesses are at:
  - GR BBQ is not in great shape. Aiming for open in the next 2 months. Hopefully, by December. Currently in need of more specialized work.
  - Saluda Moon Glass Studio and Gallery is not open, currently. Susan Cannon provided that luckily there is no damage, but a lot to do to get everything clean and back in shape. Maybe she will open this coming week of the 14th, to offer studio time. But, more than likely the gallery will not be open in October.
  - Oaks Bed and Breakfast, is still waiting on permits to come through. Luckily no damage, but they are seeing what the rest of town is doing before they decide if they should be open during October or wait.

- Spring Creek Interiors is fine. Opened today.
- Orchard Inn opened as soon as they had power (Friday), and will open the restaurant on Thursday. They will remain open, to offer their staff income, throughout the season. Luckily, there's been minimal damage, but it's still a process.
- Heartwood is currently closed. We are trying to figure out how to open. "With this climate and lack of tourism. The 40th anniversary would be in March of 2025. When Heartwood does open, it will be a limited amount (3 days or so a week).
- Wildflour is open and luckily only had loss due to power, but no damage otherwise.
- The Purple Onion is opening tomorrow, for regular hours. Limited menu and staff. No music on Thursday, but we will on Saturday. Luckily, we only had minimal water damage, though we lost a lot of product.
- The S.P.O.T. is going to wait a few weeks while we sort everything with the Purple Onion.
- Edward Jones is fine, however there are no phones, because Spectrum is down. The home office has been told it'll be weeks.
- It is brought up that, while we have NO idea what this October will do, I think it will behoove the area to have the tourists and look-y-loos have a place to be directed to.
- It is also brought up that outside people don't know what our roads look like, and that will be big in getting people to feel like they can come here. That it is safe.
- It is also brought up also that travelers are unaware of what kind of accommodations are available.
- There is also a government issued ban on travel, to this area of the state which will impact us highly. \*\*\*As of the date these minutes have been forwarded, 13. October. 24, the travel ban for Saluda area of Polk County has been lifted. NCDOT link of map **here**.\*\*\*
- It is pointed out that, basically, we do have a lot to offer for people, without them traveling further in. But it needs to be marketed. It is up to us now to make the best of this.
- It is mentioned that a member looked on the website for Sky Top orchard and their website had a pop up that told the public that "Yes, we are open. We have a staff we need to keep. Please come, we are picking. This is how to get here." And the website listed the roads available to use to get to their orchard. The member went and was amazed to see how many cars where there and how many had plates from out of state.

- Pushing for “Shop Local,” pick us and our employees, not just something from Amazon or otherwise. “Come support us” for this season to help tourism. Focusing on what to do to make things better and “stronger” rather than focus on the despair and how tired we are.
- As far as we’ve heard, there isn’t any extra hold up for the Rails to Trails, since their funding is very different and already allocated (at least by SC) for the Trail.
- Emily Lamar is making a big “Thank you” post for Saluda and its community. Please reach out to her if there’s anyone that should be included. She doesn’t want to miss anyone!
- Suggestions for things to drum up interest in Saluda:
  - Pop-ups for artists in town
  - Marketing Saluda as the doorway to the Mountains, as the foothills, starting to pump life blood and support back to our wonderful Appalachia and communities.
  - Supporting events and things to do in our areas. Some normalcy.
  - Looking for opportunities to partner with Asheville, other areas around us, to support each other and get things back up and running.
  - Making sure we market paths for people to use to get to our town (directions, roads, etc.)

\*\*The consensus is that Saluda is open and we should advertise that we are to get as much foot traffic as possible.

#### V. Membership: Amy Wood

- No present. No report given.

#### VI. SDF, Visitor’s Center, & Art’s Fest

- Nothing brought up, as focus remains on what Saluda’s next steps are immediately.

#### VII. New Business

- Starting “Saluda Strong Fridays Together” that will be funded by the city, which will hopefully pull people into town throughout the year. Using the Park, and other spaces around town.
- New Grant for businesses in Saluda.
  - SDF has put in \$10000
  - Otherwise we have raised \$20000 additional funds (via donation.)
  - Basically, this is for any Saluda Business that needs funding for staffing, clean up, and other financial hardships.
- Saluda Depot has cancelled their Golf Tournament. Unfortunately, the roads are not clear to Brights Creek. They were also light on involvement and interest for the Tournament.
- Dawn Jordan, the agricultural economic development director (Farmers’ Market), would like to explore the idea of doing some kind of pop-up

market for the Holiday season in December. The Winter Farmers' Market did not do as well this past year and she is trying to think of what to do this coming season. She would like input and also wanted to check on what other events are going on so she didn't coincide with any other events in town.

- Mark Powers and Mountain song would like to host a choir event at the end of Home Town Christmas, with the church and time to be determined. They would like to confirm that the businesses and town are alright with it.
- FEMA is at the Ingles in parking lot in Lake Lure (108 Lake Lure.)

#### VIII. Old Business

- Halloween Stroll is October 25th, 4:30pm -6:30pm
- Home Town Christmas, December 13th, 5pm-7pm
- Mountain Song was set to do the Karaoke fundraiser. They are still going to hold the Karaoke event, but not as a fundraiser (next Saturday 19th, 6pm - 7pm, and Susan Cannon's Gallery.)
- Call to nominate Volunteer of the Year, and also for nominating committee and officers.

#### IX. Adjourn

- Moved to adjourn.
- Next SBA meeting is set for November 5th, 2024.