



Ocoee River Recreation and Economic Development Fund Board

Marketing Subcommittee

March 4, 2026 Meeting Minutes

***9:00 a.m. Central Time / 10:00 a.m. Eastern Time**

Virtual via Teams

Hiwassee Scenic River State Park

404 Spring Creek Road

Delano, TN 37325

Roll Call:

In attendance: Angelo Giansante, Lynne McClary, Carlo Smith, Whitney Mayer, Ryan Cooke

1. Public Comment

- Lamar: "We have \$500,000 roughly to spend on marketing this area. I think it's time we put everything behind you. You have a mandate. That says we want to get rid of that website. Now that is what I think we need to follow through...it's not doing anybody any good. And if you decide to do something with that website, have it rollover to the Polk County Chamber of Commerce or the state park site. But it just needs to go away because ... not everybody going to agree with you and it's not going to work."

2. Legal Update & Refresher

- Legal team has been directed to start accurately billing our time to the ORRED fund.
- Phasing the attorneys out of subcommittee meetings, unless there's a specific legal agenda item.
- Use of State Funds
 - Funds cannot be used for private benefit (i.e., cannot directly promote or favor individual Outfitters).
 - All marketing efforts must be structured to benefit the public or the corridor, not specific businesses.
- Procurement & Contracting Requirements
 - All contracts must comply with state procurement rules.
 - Proper authorized state agents must execute contracts.

- For purchases:
 - Under \$25,000: Competitive pricing encouraged
 - \$25,000–\$100,000: Must contact at least three vendors and document due diligence
 - Over \$100,000: Formal RFP process required
 - Motions should remain broad enough to ensure compliance flexibility.
- Website & Digital Asset Compliance
 - Any active website must meet ADA accessibility requirements.
 - Tools like UserWay may be necessary to maintain compliance.
 - Even temporary continuation of a website requires adherence to these standards.
- Email & Data Usage
 - Email lists collected (e.g., via MailChimp) are state property.
 - There are legal restrictions on distributing or using these emails for direct Outfitter marketing.
 - Further clarification is required before any outreach is conducted.
- Marketing & Attribution Restrictions
 - Marketing efforts must avoid directly driving business to specific private entities.
 - Any campaigns, websites, or promotions must be structured to remain legally compliant and neutral.

3. Marketing Consultant Interviews

- Comparison between two consultant options:
 - Magellan Strategy Group- Chris Cavanaugh, Asheville, NC
 - Blue Ion / Tourism Impact Services
- Pros and cons identified:
 - **Magellan Strategy Group:**
 - Lower cost
 - More practical, actionable ideas and understanding of the market
 - Realistic timeline
 - Independent from implementation
 - **Blue Ion / TIS:**
 - More comprehensive services
 - Ability to carry strategy into execution
 - Higher cost and potential for conflict of interest

Motion made to hire Magellan Strategy Group: by R. Cooke giving A. Giansante and Ocoee River State Park the authority to execute a contract with the Magellan Strategy Group ensuring that we're compliant with the procurement rules of the state and executing any contract with the proper authorized agents of the state and the board.

Second by L. McClary

Motion passed unanimously.

4. Future Marketing Event Planning

- User Accessibility Tool (UserWay)
 - Annual fee: \$490 for ADA compliance
 - Required if website remains live
 - Risk of non-compliance if not maintained

Motion made by R. Cooke to pay the UserWay fee to keep the website compliant while deferring any decision about the website itself to the next meeting.

Second by C. Smith

Motion passed unanimously.

- **Social media & sponsorships – how to promote moved to next meeting per R. Cooke.**

5. Other Business

- Sponsorship invoice progress update: both invoices have been submitted into Edison and should have vouchers and checks sent shortly.
- Swag items during sponsorships: L. McClary will gather informational items/brochures to share with sponsor to include in swag bags

Adjournment: 12:05pm Central Time /1:05pm Eastern Time