

# ASHEVILLE

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**Buncombe County Tourism Development Authority**  
Asheville Area Chamber of Commerce Boardroom

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## **Board Meeting Minutes**

Wednesday, July 27, 2016

- Present (Voting):** Paula Wilber, Chair; Jim Muth, Vice Chair; Leah Ashburn, John Ellis, Gary Froeba, Himanshu Karvir, John Lockett, John McKibbon
- Absent (Voting):** Chip Craig
- Present (Ex-Officio):** Buncombe County Commissioner Joe Belcher, Asheville City Councilwoman Julie Mayfield
- Absent (Ex-Officio):** None
- BC Finance:** Jennifer Durrett
- Advertising Agency:** Josh Mayer, Michelle Clarke; Peter Mayer Advertising Agency
- CVB Staff:** Stephanie Brown, Marla Tambellini, Glenn Cox, Pat Kappes, Brooke Ptaszek, Jonna Reiff, Jason Tarr
- CVB Staff Absent:** Dianna Pierce, Tom Roberson
- Guests:** Kit Cramer, Asheville Area Chamber of Commerce  
Demp Bradford, Asheville Buncombe Regional Sports Commission  
Bob McMurray, Black Mountain–Swannanoa Chamber of Commerce  
Jane Anderson, Asheville Independent Restaurant Association  
CeeCret Allen, CAYLA Intern  
Rick Bell, Engadine Inn  
Richard Gray, Greater Ft. Lauderdale CVB  
Andrew Celwyn, Herbiary  
Haley Mahoney, City of Asheville  
Lacy Cross, Entegra Bank  
Mike Cronin, Asheville Citizen-Times

### **Executive Summary of Meeting Minutes**

- Chairwoman Wilber called the meeting to order at 9:07 a.m.
- Minutes from the June 29, 2016 BCTDA meeting were approved with an 8-0 vote.
- The preliminary June 2016 financial reports were reviewed and approved with an 8-0 vote.

- In her Executive Director report, Ms. Brown reviewed recent lodging statistics, informed the board of another TPDF project now under consideration in Phase II of the 2016 funding cycle, and provided an update on two initiatives included in the BCTDA's Strategic Plan.
- Ms. Brown provided an overview of the CVB's Community Engagement Plan.
- Demp Bradford introduced himself as the new Executive Director of the Asheville Buncombe Regional Sports Commission and reviewed the organization's history, goals, and initiatives planned for the future.
- Josh Mayer and Michelle Clarke provided an advertising agency update highlighting results of the spring media campaigns and also presented new creative.
- Reports from Asheville City Councilwoman Julie Mayfield and Buncombe County Commissioner Joe Belcher were heard.
- Under Miscellaneous Business, Ms. Cramer encouraged board members to attend the chamber's upcoming legislative events and Mr. McMurray invited everyone to participate in happenings occurring in Black Mountain.
- Under Comments from the General Public, Haley Mahoney, with the City of Asheville, encouraged the BCTDA and CVB to participate in and promote the Asheville Workplace Challenge.
- The meeting adjourned at 11:00 a.m.

### **Call of BCTDA Meeting to Order**

Chairwoman Wilber called the regular meeting of the Buncombe County Tourism Development Authority (BCTDA) to order at 9:07 a.m. and welcomed everyone. The visitors in attendance introduced themselves.

### **Approval of Meeting Minutes**

Mr. Muth made a motion to approve the June 29, 2016 regular meeting minutes as presented. Mr. Karvir seconded the motion. There was no discussion and with all in favor, the motion carried 8-0.

The minutes are on file with the Asheville Convention & Visitors Bureau.

### **Preliminary June 2016 Financial Reports**

Ms. Durrett reviewed the preliminary June financial reports, noting they will change significantly after expenses and revenue processed in July are accrued back to FY 2015-16. She said the final July reports will be presented at the same time as the annual audit, which will most likely occur in October.

Occupancy tax revenue received in June for May sales totaled \$1,236,996. June expenditures totaled \$2,088,269. YTD revenues exceeded expenditures by \$2,188,654, and includes twelve months of expenditures and eleven months of revenue. June expenditures for Tourism Administration: \$248,764; Professional Services: \$311,814; General Tourism: \$1,415,863; Motorcoach: \$4,657; Meetings and Conventions: \$52,457; Convention Services: \$1,978; Public Relations: \$47,085; and International: \$5,652. There is currently \$2,007,642 in undedicated dollars in the Tourism Product Development Fund (TPDF).

A brief discussion centering on Airbnb collections and dollars available in the TPDF fund took place. Ms. Durrett reported on properties delinquent on paying occupancy taxes and answered all related questions.

Mr. McKibbin made a motion to approve the preliminary June 2016 financial reports as presented. Mr. Lockett seconded the motion. There was no discussion and with all in favor, the motion carried 8-0.

The financial reports are on file with the Asheville Convention & Visitors Bureau.

### **Executive Director Report**

#### *June Visitor Index*

Ms. Brown briefly reviewed numbers from the June Visitor Index and answered all related questions.

The June Visitor Index is on file with the Asheville Convention & Visitors Bureau and is posted on [AshevilleCVB.com](http://AshevilleCVB.com).

#### *June CVB Staff Recap and Quick List*

The June CVB Staff Recap and Quick List were not reviewed at this meeting, however, were provided to the board and are on file with the Asheville Convention & Visitors Bureau.

#### *Lodging Stats*

Ms. Brown shared a brief PowerPoint presentation that included slides highlighting Buncombe County lodging sales by month and property type, along with other hotel metrics as compared to destinations in Asheville's competitive set. During the presentation, Ms. Brown answered all related questions. A brief discussion took place centering on growth in property categories, the impact the increase in supply will have on occupancy rates, market trends, competitive environments, impacts of the Presidential election, ROI, and the benefits of county-wide marketing for hotels located outside of the downtown area.

The PowerPoint presentation is on file with the Asheville Convention & Visitors Bureau.

#### *TPDF Funding Cycle Update*

Due to a technical glitch, Ms. Brown said the CVB staff and TPDF committee were just recently made aware of an application for TPDF funding from the Asheville Community Yoga Center that was not received with the other applications in Phase I. She said the organizers were able to prove that the application was submitted on time and the Committee met this morning to review the initial information provided and voted to move the project onto Phase II. Ms. Brown said the request is for \$650,000 and with this addition, nine projects will be evaluated for funding.

### BCTDA Strategic Plan Update

Ms. Brown updated the board on two of the BCTDA's strategic plan initiatives currently moving forward in this fiscal year. She said Mr. Cox is working to establish a tourism/hospitality training program to be implemented in 2017 after completing first quarter research and creating a stakeholder advisory committee.

Additionally, the CVB staff is reviewing a proposal to develop a plan to quantify the effectiveness of the BCTDA's advertising program. Ms. Brown said dollars are available in the contingency line and she will present a proposal at the August board meeting, with the goal to implement the plan in September.

Chairwoman Wilber said it is prudent to evaluate the effectiveness of the BCTDA's advertising efforts and she looks forward to reviewing the proposal. She thanked Ms. Brown for her Executive Director report.

### Community Engagement Plan

Ms. Brown shared a PowerPoint presentation highlighting elements of the CVB's Community Engagement Plan, which includes new and ongoing efforts to engage with elected officials, industry partners, and other community stakeholders. She said this is a formal BCTDA Strategic Plan initiative designed to educate partners on the free marketing services available to them, communicate the BCTDA's program of work, and share the economic impact of tourism to a wider audience. Ms. Brown reviewed components related to collateral support, editorial placements, community engagement, community service, government relations, partner engagement and other opportunities. She added Ms. Kappes is working with the CVB team to redesign [AshevilleCVB.com](http://AshevilleCVB.com), which will soon include information and documentation related to workforce development and BCTDA meetings, among other navigational and visual enhancements. It was noted that a local chapter of the North Carolina Restaurant & Lodging Association has been formed.

Ms. Brown received feedback and answered questions throughout the presentation. Chairwoman Wilber thanked Ms. Brown for the report and encouraged anyone wanting to serve on a BCTDA Advocacy Committee to contact her.

The PowerPoint presentation is on file with the Asheville Convention & Visitors Bureau.

### Asheville Buncombe Regional Sports Commission Update

Demp Bradford introduced himself as the new Executive Director of the Asheville Buncombe Regional Sports Commission. He gave a brief overview of his background, the history of the organization, and then shared initiatives the ABRSC will implement to continue to aggressively develop Asheville as a sports tourism destination on a national level. Mr. Bradford said in the coming months he will give a formal presentation outlining the ABRSC's strategic plan and vision that is currently in development and noted a facilities analysis will also be completed. He reviewed some of the larger events and partnerships that are fostered by the ABRSC and its volunteer base and answered all related questions.

Chairwoman Wilber thanked Mr. Bradford for the update.

### **Advertising Agency Update**

Ms. Tambellini introduced Josh Mayer and Michelle Clarke from the Peter Mayer Advertising Agency. Mr. Mayer and Ms. Clarke shared a PowerPoint presentation highlighting overall spring campaign performance metrics, followed by numbers broken down into the four campaign categories to include Brand, Segment, Midweek and Allegiant Air. Also shared were examples of the refreshed “*Let the Magic Find You*” creative campaign, including print, banner, rich media, out-of-home, food, music, art and outdoor advertising components.

During and after the presentation, questions were answered related to: Asheville’s partnership with Allegiant, BWI flight statistics, online initiatives, an upcoming ExploreAsheville.com web traffic audit, and visitor profiles.

Chairwoman Wilber congratulated Mr. Mayer and Ms. Clarke on a job well done specific to the campaign results and new creative and a round of applause was received.

The PowerPoint presentation is on file with the Asheville Convention & Visitors Bureau.

### **Asheville City Council Update**

Councilwoman Mayfield reported on city-related business, including Council’s approval to continue moving forward on the bond referendum and the positive support it has received to date, enforcement efforts specific to short-term rentals, and collaborative steps being taken to examine police policies related to racial tension.

Chairwoman Wilber thanked Councilwoman Mayfield for the report.

### **Buncombe County Commission Update**

Commissioner Belcher reported on county-related business, including the upcoming opening of three new schools and the Family Justice Center, progress on the HHS building and parking deck, and recent approval of the Buncombe County budget. A brief discussion took place regarding the Enka Ball Fields, the TPDF application related to the Enka/Candler bridge, and the need to connect the dots on county wellness initiatives, facilities and funding requests with the ABRSC and CVB.

In response to Councilwoman Mayfield’s question regarding the John B. Lewis soccer fields, Ms. Brown said the timing to replace the artificial turf is unknown due to the need to reopen the bid process.

Chairwoman Wilber thanked Commissioner Belcher for the update.

### **Miscellaneous Business**

Ms. Cramer invited board members to attend the Elected Officials Reception in the Visitor Center on Thursday, August 18, at 5:30 p.m., and the Legislative Wrap-Up Breakfast at Rhubarb on Wednesday, August 31, at 8:00 a.m.

Mr. McMurray encouraged everyone to attend the Spartan Race and Sourwood Festival taking place in Black Mountain in August.

### **Comments from the General Public**

Haley Mahoney, with the City of Asheville's Office of Sustainability, encouraged the BCTDA and CVB to participate with the city and other local businesses in the [Asheville Workplace Challenge](#).

### **Adjournment**

Chairwoman Wilber thanked everyone for attending and the meeting adjourned at 11:00 a.m. The BCTDA will next meet on Wednesday, August 31, 2016, at 10:00 a.m. (note time change), in the Boardroom of the Asheville Area Chamber of Commerce. Chairwoman Wilber also reminded board members to mark their calendars for the BCTDA Annual Meeting, scheduled Wednesday, September 28, from 3:00-6:00 p.m., at Lioncrest at Biltmore.

Respectfully submitted,

Jonna Reiff  
Executive Operations Manager