



**Buncombe County Tourism Development
A Joint Meeting of the Public Authority and Nonprofit Corporation**

Explore Asheville— 27 College Place, Asheville

Board Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, February 22, 2023

Present (Voting): Kathleen Mosher, Chair; Brenda Durden, Vice Chair, Matthew Lehman, HP Patel, Elizabeth Putnam, Larry Crosby, Michael Lusick, Scott Patel

Absent (Voting): Andrew Celwyn

Present (Ex-Officio): Asheville Vice Mayor Sandra Kilgore

Absent (Ex-Officio): Buncombe County Commissioner Terri Wells

Staff: Vic Isley, Jennifer Kass-Green, Tiffany Thacker, Penelope Whitman, Julia Simpson, Josh Jones, Ashley Greenstein, Glenn Ramey, Mike Kryzanek, Marla Tambellini, Jay Tusa

Legal Counsel: Sabrina Rockoff, McGuire, Wood & Bisette/BCTDA Attorney

In-Person Attendees: Katie Stadius, Zartico
John Ellis, Prior BCTDA Board Member
Crystal Camacho, Virtelle Hospitality
Kit Cramer, Asheville Area Chamber of Commerce
Sharon Tabor, Jason Burk; Black Mountain-Swannanoa Chamber
Randy Claybrook, Asheville Bed & Breakfast Association
Chris Smith, Asheville Buncombe Regional Sports Commission
Jason Sanford, Ashvegas.com

Online Attendees: Andrew Celwyn, BCTDA Board/Herbiary
Sha'Linda Pruitt, Mickey Poandl, McKenzie Provost, Emily Crosby,
Whitney Smith, Khal Khoury; Explore Asheville Staff
Jim Muth, TPDF Committee
Chip Craig, GreyBeard Realty
Lacy Cross, Movement Bank
Koree Case, MMGY Global
Chelsey Hett, Love The Green
Chris Corl, City of Asheville
Sarah Kilgore, Kessler Collection
Garrett Raczek, Thrive Asheville
John Harbin, WLOS

Executive Summary of Meeting Minutes

- Mosher called to order the joint regular meeting of the BCTDA, Public Authority and BCTDA, Nonprofit Corporation, at 9:00 a.m.
- Minutes from the January 25, 2023, BCTDA meeting were approved with an 8-0 vote.
- The January 2023 financial reports were reviewed and approved with an 8-0 vote.
- Jennifer Kass-Green provided an FY23 expense forecast update.
- With an 8-0 vote, Brenda Durden, Himanshu Karvir, and Kathleen Mosher were appointed to the BCTDA Board Development (Nominating) Committee.
- Vic Isley provided her President & CEO's report.
- Tourism Product Development Fund (TPDF) updates were presented.
- Updates from Asheville's Vice Mayor Sandra Kilgore were heard.
- Mosher provided an update on behalf of Commissioner Terri Wells.
- With an 8-0 vote, the BCTDA meeting adjourned at 10:03 a.m.

Call to Order of the Joint BCTDA Meeting

Mosher called to order the joint regular meeting of the Buncombe County Tourism Development Authority (BCTDA), a Public Authority, and BCTDA, a Nonprofit Corporation, at 9:00 a.m.

Mosher said the meeting was being livestreamed. She noted that the agenda and meeting documents are on [AshevilleCVB.com](https://www.ashevillecvb.com) and were emailed to everyone who registered via Zoom by 8:00 a.m. Additional materials, including the PowerPoint, are posted after the meeting.

Approval of Meeting Minutes

Durden made a motion to approve the January 25, 2023, regular meeting minutes as presented. Putnam seconded the motion. There was no discussion. A vote was taken; with all in favor, the motion carried 8-0.

Financial Reports

Buncombe County Assistant Finance Director Mason Scott who is serving as interim BCTDA fiscal agent was absent. Jennifer Kass-Green presented the January 2023 financial reports.

Kass-Green noted an edit made on page 5 of the financials in the committed for event support line under fund balances, it was incorrect in the version sent to the board in advance.

After brief discussion about bed and breakfast performance and fund balance investment options, Lehman made a motion to approve the January 2023 financial reports as presented. Crosby seconded the motion. A vote was taken; with all in favor, the motion carried 8-0.

FY23 Expense Forecast Update

Jennifer Kass-Green reviewed the updated FY23 revenue projection of \$36.7 million, which was adjusted after an additional month of collections. Kass-Green told the board that staff reduced \$2.1 million of budgeted expenses for the year due to the updated revenue forecast for FY23. She said this revenue and expense reduction still results in the need to use additional \$600,000 from fund balance. Kass-Green said no board action was required. There were no questions.

BCTDA Board Development Committee Appointments

Mosher said this year's BCTDA Board Development (Nominating) Committee members are appointed as follows: Brenda Durden, Himanshu Karvir, and herself (committee chair).

Lusick made a motion to approve the BCTDA Board Development Committee appointments. Crosby seconded the motion. There was no discussion; with all in favor, the motion carried 8-0.

President & CEO Report

Vic Isley presented lodging occupancy for January compared to previous years. Isley noted the settling in vacation rentals trend lines. She shared news of the direct flight from AVL to Phoenix and announced that Tina Kinsey from the airport will join the April meeting to give an update.

Isley concluded her report with a reminder that the Monthly Highlights and Destination Performance reports are posted on AshevilleCVB.com.

Tourism Product Development Fund (TPDF) Updates

TPDF 20-Year Anniversary

Tiffany Thacker reported that TPDF had invested nearly \$60 million in 46 projects in 20 years, gave examples of grant recipients, and played a video to celebrate the legacy of the fund.

Thacker said annual reports on TPDF are provided every year. This year, Explore Asheville partnered with Zartico, a data and analytics platform, to further demonstrate impact and usage of TPDF projects. Thacker introduced Katie Stadius, director, strategic advisors, of Zartico.

TPDF Project Usage Report

Stadius explained that Zartico tracks geolocation and outlined the usage report's methodology, which studied use of TPDF projects by visitors and residents. Stadius highlighted takeaways.

The findings included that a strong resident, specifically Buncombe County resident, presence was observed at TPDF sites; that TPDF projects attracted a higher-quality visit, likely including an overnight stay; that the number of both visitors and residents at TPDF projects has increased year over year; and that visitors to TPDF projects also go to other points of interest and disperse to areas throughout the county. Stadius and Isley fielded all questions.

Annual TPDF Projects Update

Thacker said 23 in-development, completed, or pre-construction TPDF projects submitted updates. Thacker explained contractual reporting requirements depending on project phase.

Thacker relayed that construction delays and other challenges impacted some projects in development. She noted that Montford Park Players decided to relinquish their \$125,000 grant due to stalled progress. Thacker also shared trends in room night estimates, revisions to completion timelines, and the current TPDF financial summary. There were no questions.

Penelope Whitman provided information on the Black Cultural Heritage Trail and Wayfinding Program, both projects are funded by TPDF investment but managed by Explore Asheville.

Asheville City Council Update

Vice Mayor Kilgore reported on recent city-related business, including council's discussions about funding for updates to McCormick Field and I-26 improvements.

Isley added that a request for TPDF support of McCormick Field may come to the board; due to the size of the project, it would qualify for the Major Works Pathway. She anticipates Chris Corl from the city coming to a future meeting with more information. The board would decide whether to refer the request to the TPDF Committee to evaluate and make a funding recommendation.

Buncombe County Commission Update

On behalf of Commissioner Wells, who was absent, Mosher read out two updates: all county expenditures are under budget and that Governmental Relations Firm Ward & Smith assisted in development of 2023 Legislative Agenda, which commissioners approved on February 7.

Miscellaneous Business

There was no miscellaneous business discussed at this meeting.

Comments from the General Public

Call-In Public Comments

Mosher said members of the public could sign up to call in comments during the in-person BCTDA meeting. She reported that no requests to virtually speak had been received as of the February 21 deadline at 12:00 p.m.

In-Person Public Comments

No one signed up to share in-person public comments at this meeting.

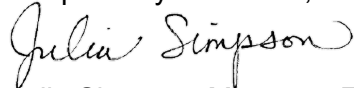
Adjournment

HP Patel moved to adjourn the meeting, and Putnam seconded the motion. With all in favor, the motion carried 8-0. The meeting adjourned at 10:03 a.m.

The PowerPoint presentation and relevant documents are on file with Explore Asheville and are posted on AshevilleCVB.com.

The next joint BCTDA meeting will be held on Thursday, March 23, 2023, beginning at 9:00 a.m., in the Explore Asheville Board Room, located at 27 College Place in Asheville. The BCTDA Annual Planning Session will be held on Friday, March 24, 2023, beginning at 8:30 a.m., at Grand Bohemian, located at 11 Boston Way in Asheville.

Respectfully submitted,



Julia Simpson, Manager, Executive & Strategy