

Explore ASHEVILLE

Buncombe County Tourism Development Authority

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

Via Zoom Webinar due to the COVID-19 Pandemic/State of Emergency

Board Meeting Minutes

Thursday, March 24, 2022

- Present (Voting):** Kathleen Mosher, Chair; Brenda Durden, Vice Chair; Andrew Celwyn, Larry Crosby, Matthew Lehman, HP Patel, Leah Ashburn, Michael Lusick, Scott Patel
- Absent (Voting):** None
- Present (Ex-Officio):** Buncombe County Commissioner Robert Pressley
- Absent (Ex-Officio):** Asheville City Councilmember Sandra Kilgore
- CVB Staff:** Vic Isley, Marla Tambellini, Jennifer Kass-Green, Jonna Sampson, Julia Simpson
- BC Finance:** Don Warn, Buncombe County/BCTDA Fiscal Agent
- Legal Counsel:** Sabrina Rockoff, McGuire, Wood & Bisette/BCTDA Attorney
- Online Attendees:** Chip Craig, GreyBeard Realty
Glenn Cox, Kathryn Dewey, Hannah Dosa, Marshall Hilliard, Pat Kappes, Sarah Kilgore, Sarah Lowery, Holly Oakley, Kathi Petersen, Charlie Reed, Whitney Smith, Dodie Stephens; Explore Asheville Staff
Kit Cramer, Asheville Area Chamber of Commerce
Demp Bradford, Madison Davis; Asheville Buncombe Regional Sports Commission
Tina Kinsey, Asheville Regional Airport
Stephanie Moore, Center for Craft
Scott Kerchner, Virtelle Hospitality
Jim Muth, John Ellis; Past BCTDA Board Members
Lacy Cross, Movement Bank
Angel Holloway
John Boyle, Asheville Citizen-Times
Sunshine Request

Executive Summary of Meeting Minutes

- Chairwoman Mosher called the virtual joint regular meeting of the BCTDA, Public Authority and BCTDA, Nonprofit Corporation, to order at 9:00 a.m.
- Minutes from the February 23, 2022, BCTDA meeting were approved with an 8-0 vote.
- The February 2022 financial statements were reviewed and approved with an 8-0 vote.
- Ms. Isley provided her President & CEO's report.

- With an 8-0 vote, the revenue objective for the BCTDA's FY23 budget was set at \$40,806,000, representing a 12% increase over FY22 projected revenue.
- An update from Buncombe County Commissioner Robert Pressley was heard.
- Chairwoman Mosher reported there were no emailed public comments, nor requests to speak, received for this meeting.
- With a 9-0 vote, the BCTDA meeting adjourned at 9:38 a.m.

Call of the Joint BCTDA Meeting to Order

Chairwoman Mosher called the virtual joint regular meeting of the Buncombe County Tourism Development Authority (BCTDA), a Public Authority and BCTDA, a Nonprofit Corporation, to order at 9:00 a.m. She said the agenda and meeting documents are provided on AshevilleCVB.com and the recording and additional materials will be posted after the meeting.

Board Member Roll Call: Board members responded as Chairwoman Mosher called roll verifying nine BCTDA members were virtually in attendance. Mr. Scott Patel joined the meeting at 9:15 a.m., per the webinar attendee report, and Councilmember Kilgore was absent.

Approval of Meeting Minutes

Mr. Celwyn made a motion to approve the February 23, 2022, regular meeting minutes as presented. Vice Chairwoman Durden seconded the motion. There was no discussion and with all in favor via a roll call vote, the motion carried 8-0.

Financial Reports

Mr. Warn reviewed the February 2022 financial reports. There were no questions.

Mr. Crosby made a motion to approve the February 2022 financial reports as presented. Mr. Lehman seconded the motion. There was no discussion and with all in favor via a roll call vote, the motion carried 8-0.

President & CEO Report

Ms. Isley recognized outgoing VP of Administration Glenn Cox, who is retiring on March 31 after serving in his role since August 2015. Ms. Isley noted Mr. Cox was instrumental in establishing Explore Asheville as an independent nonprofit organization.

Industry Metrics

Ms. Isley reviewed recent occupancy lodging metrics and provided comparisons to prior years.

Other Updates

Ms. Isley concluded her report by sharing information on upcoming partner events, including the Everyone Welcome LGBTQ+ Diverse Audience Training on March 30, and the Black Travelers Diversity Training scheduled on May 18 as part of Explore Asheville's Tourism Summit.

The Monthly Highlights and Destination Performance reports are posted on AshevilleCVB.com.

FY23 Budget Process

Finance Committee Report

Ms. Ashburn, BCTDA Finance Committee chair, said the committee has met on two occasions to review scenarios and trends to help formulate an FY23 revenue objective recommendation. The committee consists of former BCTDA member Chip Craig, Mr. Lehman, and herself. Ms. Ashburn said trends have been hard to predict due to the pandemic and the committee will be making a budgetary recommendation based on the information they currently have available.

Next, Ms. Ashburn, Mr. Craig, and Mr. Lehman shared insights on the positive trends they are experiencing in their individual businesses, representing a brewery, vacation rentals management company, and hotel, respectively.

Trends & Budget Projections

Ms. Isley shared a PowerPoint presentation that focused on many trends and variables that can have an impact next year's budget. Noting the challenges that come with creating a budget with many unknowns, she shared three different budget scenarios that were presented to the finance committee for discussion. These scenarios included "upside, baseline, and downside" projections, and Ms. Isley presented occupancy tax forecasts associated with each one.

Establish Revenue Objective

Ms. Ashburn thanked Ms. Isley and said based on the forecast information reviewed and presented, the finance committee's recommendation is to establish a revenue objective of \$40,806,000 for FY23, which represents a 12% increase over FY22 projected revenue.

Ms. Isley said that based on the decision the board makes today, staff will prepare two different budget scenarios: one following the current 75% to 25% operating/TPDF split, and one following the proposed 67% to 33% operating/TPDF split that would go into effect if the occupancy tax bill is passed in the upcoming short session that begins on May 18. There were no questions.

Mr. Lehman made a motion to accept the recommendation of the BCTDA's Finance Committee and establish the FY23 revenue objective at \$40,806,000, which represents a 12% increase over FY22 projected revenue. Vice Chairwoman Durden seconded the motion. There was no discussion and with all in favor via a roll call vote, the motion carried 8-0. Due to connectivity issues, Mr. Celwyn was not present at the time of the vote.

Asheville City Council Update

Councilmember Kilgore was absent from today's meeting, therefore, an Asheville City Council update was not provided.

Buncombe County Commission Update

Commissioner Pressley reported on county-related business, including the recent Southern Conference Basketball Championship, the upcoming Billie Jean King Cup where the United States will host Ukraine, and the upcoming closing date to apply for ARPA funds.

Chairwoman Mosher thanked Commissioner Pressley for his report.

Miscellaneous Business

There was no miscellaneous business discussed at this meeting.

Comments from the General Public

Live Public Comments

Chairwoman Mosher said members of the public were invited to sign-up to verbally share live comments during today's virtual BCTDA meeting. She reported that as of yesterday's 12:00 p.m. registration deadline, no requests to speak had been received.

Written Public Comments

Chairwoman Mosher said members of the public were invited to submit comments via email to Reply@ExploreAsheville.com through 4:00 p.m. on Wednesday, March 23, 2022. She reported there were no written public comments received by the deadline.

Adjournment

Chairwoman Mosher requested a motion to adjourn.

Ms. Ashburn moved to adjourn the meeting and Mr. Celwyn seconded the motion. There was no discussion and with all in favor via a roll call vote, the motion carried 9-0 and the meeting ended at 9:38 a.m.

The PowerPoint presentation and relevant documents are on file with the Explore Asheville Convention & Visitors Bureau and are posted on AshevilleCVB.com.

Chairwoman Mosher said the BCTDA's Annual Planning Session will be held in-person on Friday, March 25, 2022, beginning at 8:30 a.m., at The Inn on Biltmore. She added the session will be live-streamed via Zoom, and anyone wanting to attend in-person will need to register by noon today.

The next joint BCTDA meeting will be held on Wednesday, April 27, 2022, beginning at 9:00 a.m., in the Explore Asheville Board Room, located at 27 College Place in Asheville.

Respectfully submitted,



Jonna Sampson, Executive Operations Manager