



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

UNCA Sherrill Center, Ingles Mt. View Room – 227 Campus Drive, Asheville

Board Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, June 28, 2023

- Present (Voting):** Kathleen Mosher, Chair; Matthew Lehman, HP Patel, Larry Crosby, Andrew Celwyn, Michael Lusick, Scott Patel
- Absent (Voting):** Brenda Durden, Vice Chair; Elizabeth Putnam
- Present (Ex-Officio):** Asheville Vice Mayor Sandra Kilgore, Buncombe County Commissioner Terri Wells
- Staff:** Vic Isley, Jennifer Kass-Green, Tiffany Thacker, Julia Simpson, Penelope Whitman, Mike Kryzaneck, Ashley Greenstein, Josh Jones, Ali Wainright
- BC Finance:** Mason Scott, Buncombe County/BCTDA Interim Fiscal Agent
- Legal Counsel:** Sabrina Rockoff, McGuire, Wood & Bissette/BCTDA Attorney
- In-Person Attendees:** Chris Corl, Debra Campbell; City of Asheville
Brian DeWine, Asheville Tourists
Lucious Wilson, Wedge Brewing Co.
Randy Claybrook, Asheville Bed & Breakfast Association
Chris Smith, Asheville Buncombe Regional Sports Commission
Roy Harris, Community Member
Robert Sponder, Parks Hospitality
Meghan Rogers, Asheville Independent Restaurant Association (AIR)
Olivia Ward, OnWard Digital Media
Barbara Durr, Asheville Watchdog
Greg Parlier, Francis O'Connor, Chase Davis; Mountain Xpress
- Online Attendees:** Marla Tambellini, Sha'Linda Pruitt, Mickey Poandl, Connie Holliday, Charlie Reed, Carli Adams, Kimberly Puryear, Tina Porter, Emily Crosby, McKenzie Provost, Anna Harris, Nick Kepley; Explore Asheville Staff
Tina Kinsey, Asheville Regional Airport
John Ellis, Prior TDA Board member
Chip Craig, Greybeard Realty
Jim Muth, TPDF Committee
Timothy Love, Buncombe County
Madison Davis, Asheville Buncombe Regional Sports Commission
Scott Kerchner, Virtelle Hospitality
Zach Wallace, Asheville Area Chamber of Commerce
Garrett Raczek, Thrive Asheville
Megan Shields, Korree Case; MMGY Global
Joel Burgess, Citizen Times

Executive Summary of Meeting Minutes

- Mosher called to order the joint regular meeting of the BCTDA, Public Authority, and BCTDA, Nonprofit Corporation, at 9:04 a.m. Introductions were made around the room.
- Minutes from the May 31, 2023, BCTDA meeting were approved with a 7-0 vote.
- The May 2023 financial reports were reviewed and approved with a 7-0 vote.
- With a 7-0 vote, the Board Development Committee's FY24 officer nominations were approved.
- The FY24 meeting schedule and December meeting cancellation were approved with a 7-0 vote.
- Vic Isley provided her President & CEO's report.
- The public hearing on the FY24 BCTDA budget ordinance opened and closed with no members of the public requesting an opportunity to speak.
- The budget ordinance adopting the BCTDA's FY24 operating, earned revenue, and Tourism Product Development Fund (TPDF) and Legacy Investment From Tourism (LIFT) Fund administrative budgets was approved with a 6-1 vote.
- The TPDF Committee's recommendation for McCormick Field was presented.
- Vice Mayor Sandra Kilgore and Commissioner Terri Wells provided updates.
- Public comments were heard.
- With a 7-0 vote, the BCTDA meeting adjourned at 10:49 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 9:04 a.m.

Mosher said the meeting was being livestreamed. She noted that the agenda and meeting documents are on 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.

Introductions were made around the room. Mosher thanked the hosts at UNC Asheville.

Approval of Meeting Minutes

Celwyn made a motion to approve the May 31, 2023, regular meeting minutes. Lusick seconded the motion. There was no discussion. A vote was taken; with all in favor, the motion carried 7-0.

May 2023 Financial Reports

Mason Scott, BCTDA interim fiscal agent, presented the May 2023 financial reports. Scott was asked if investment income would be shown on monthly financial reports; he confirmed it would go forward.

Crosby made a motion to approve the May 2023 financial reports as presented. Lehman seconded the motion. A vote was taken; with all in favor, the motion carried 7-0.

FY24 BCTDA Board Officer Nominations

On behalf of the BCTDA Board Development (Nominating) Committee, Mosher presented the following slate of FY24 officer nominations: BCTDA Chair, Brenda Durden; BCTDA Vice Chair, Matthew Lehman; Treasurer (BCTDA Nonprofit only), HP Patel.

Lusick made a motion to approve the nominations for FY24 officers for BCTDA Chair, BCTDA Vice Chair, and Treasurer of the BCTDA Nonprofit, as presented. Celwyn seconded the motion. There was no discussion and with all in favor, the motion carried 7-0.

Approval of BCTDA FY24 Meeting Schedule

Scott Patel made a motion to approve the FY24 meeting schedule as presented, including cancelling December's meeting. Celwyn seconded the motion. There was no discussion. A vote was taken; with all in favor the motion carried 7-0.

President & CEO Report

Vic Isley shared that Lucious Wilson was appointed to the BCTDA by the Asheville City Council for a 3-year term that begins September 2023, and Brenda Durden was reappointed by the Buncombe County Board of Commissioners through August 2026.

Isley recognized recent awards received by Explore Asheville, asked everyone to save the date for the Summer Social on August 1, and listed local events that Explore Asheville supported in June and July.

Isley reviewed lodging occupancy and lodging demand compared to previous years. Isley reported visitors spending estimates year-over-year through May. Isley addressed an inquiry about a report that indicated Asheville's vacation rental revenue was down and said she plans to provide a detailed mid-year analysis in July. Isley supplemented industry metrics with research on national travel trends from Destination Analysts and US Travel Association, and she flagged local impacts of the behavioral shifts.

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

Public Hearing on FY24 Proposed Budget Ordinance

Jennifer Kass-Green, vice president of culture and business affairs, said the FY24 proposed budget ordinance was presented on May 31 and a public hearing date was set for June 28. The proposed budget ordinance has been available on AshevilleCVB.com and public notice was published in the Asheville Citizen Times on June 11. Kass-Green recapped the budget highlights and allocations.

Mosher opened and closed the public hearing on the proposed FY24 budget ordinance at 9:33 a.m., noting that no one from the public signed up to provide input on the budget.

Approval of BCTDA FY24 Proposed Budget Ordinance

Crosby made a motion to approve the FY24 budget ordinance as presented, and HP Patel seconded the motion. Celwyn stated that he would be voting against the budget and reiterated the perspective he shared in the May meeting that Explore Asheville personnel compensation could be better aligned with the city and county; Celwyn also expressed an issue with Explore Asheville having incentive pay.

Discussion followed with clarifying information and countering viewpoints. Concerns were shared about the reduced marketing budget and the importance of investing wisely to stay relevant. Crosby then motioned again to approve the FY24 budget ordinance as presented, and Lehman seconded. There was no further discussion. A vote was taken; the motion carried 6-1; Celwyn opposed.

A request for more information about the creation of a workforce development program was made. Isley provided an overview of the plans and said more detail would be presented in the August meeting.

Tourism Product Development Fund (TPDF) Committee – Major Works Pathway Recommendation

Tiffany Thacker, director of grants, recapped the McCormick Field funding request from the city.

Thacker said the TPDF Committee recommended investing \$22.95 million (including a \$1.95 million grant reallocation of the Coxe Avenue Green Street grant and \$1.4 million of debt service per year for 15 consecutive years) contingent on additional terms that they outlined. Thacker responded to questions with support from Chris Corl from the city. BCTDA action was postponed until the July meeting.

Marketing Update

On behalf of Marla Tambellini, senior vice president of marketing, Isley shared demand stimulation efforts and highlighted recent campaigns and initiatives that aligned with each strategic imperative.

Asheville City Council Update

Vice Mayor Kilgore reported on recent city-related business, including successes of the downtown cleanliness and safety initiative and the fire department's community responder program.

Buncombe County Commission Update

Commissioner Wells reported on recent county-related business, including the approved budget.

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. No requests to speak virtually were received as of the June 27 deadline at 12:00 p.m.

In-Person Public Comments

Barbara Durr asked about the tourism dip, potential for trend reversal, implications to revenue projections, and possible causes.

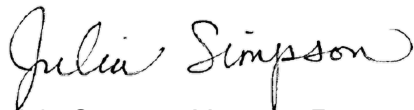
Adjournment

Crosby made a motion to adjourn the meeting, and Celwyn seconded the motion. With all in favor, the motion carried 7-0. The meeting was adjourned at 10:49 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 Wednesday, July 26, 2023, beginning at 9:00 a.m., in the Explore Asheville Board Room, located at 27 College Place in Asheville.

Respectfully submitted,



Julia Simpson, Manager, Executive & Strategy