

Explore ASHEVILLE

Buncombe County Tourism Development Authority

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

Explore Asheville Convention & Visitors Bureau – 27 College Place, Asheville

Board Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, September 25, 2019

- Present (Voting):** Gary Froeba, Chair; Himanshu Karvir, Vice Chair;
Andrew Celwyn, Chip Craig, James Poole, Tom Ruff
- Absent (Voting):** Leah Ashburn, John Lockett, John McKibbon
- Present (Ex-Officio):** Asheville City Councilwoman Julie Mayfield
- Absent (Ex-Officio):** Buncombe County Commissioner Joe Belcher
- CVB Staff:** Stephanie Brown, Marla Tambellini, Dianna Pierce, Glenn Cox,
Pat Kappes, Jennifer Kass-Green, Jonna Sampson,
Hannah Dosa
- BC Finance:** Don Warn, BCTDA Fiscal Agent
- Advertising Agency:** No one was in attendance from 360i
- Guests:** Richard Kort, McGuire, Wood & Bissette/BCTDA Legal Counsel
Mike Konzen, John Kasman; PGAV
Chris Cavanaugh, Magellan Strategy Group
Jim Muth, BCTDA Immediate Past Chair & Beaufort House Inn
Kit Cramer, Samantha Cole; Asheville Area Chamber of
Commerce
Demp Bradford, Madison Davis; Asheville-Buncombe Regional
Sports Commission
Jane Anderson, Asheville Independent Restaurant Association
Chris Corl, City of Asheville/U.S. Cellular Center
Kathi Petersen, KP Communications
John Beatty, North Carolina Restaurant & Lodging Association
Sharon Tabor, Black Mountain - Swannanoa Chamber of
Commerce
Bob Michel, Asheville Homestay Network
Maria Pilos, Johnson Price Sprinkle
Jackie Fitzgerald, Rocio Alviter; Poder Emma Community
Ownership
Jason Sandford, Ashvegas
Holden Mesk, Sunshine Request

Executive Summary of Meeting Minutes

- Chairman Froeba called the joint meeting of the BCTDA, Public Authority and BCTDA, Nonprofit Corporation, to order at 9:01 a.m.
- Minutes from the August 28, 2019 BCTDA regular monthly meeting were approved with a 6-0 vote.
- The August 2019 financial statements were reviewed and approved with a 6-0 vote.
- James Poole was welcomed and introduced as a new member of the BCTDA, appointed by Asheville City Council on September 24.
- In her President's Report, Ms. Brown briefly reviewed recent Explore Asheville CVB and industry metrics and events and answered all related questions.
- Mike Konzen, John Kasman and Chris Cavanaugh provided an update on the Tourism Management & Investment Plan process.
- Three Tourism Product Development Fund contract amendment requests were presented and approved with separate 6-0 votes.
- Ms. Kappes shared renderings of how the BCTDA will be recognized for Tourism Product Development Fund project grants at the Center for Craft's National Craft Innovation Hub, the WNC Nature Center, The Wortham Center, and the Asheville Art Museum.
- An update from Asheville City Councilwoman Julie Mayfield was heard.
- Under Miscellaneous Business, Sharon Tabor spoke about the need for U.S. Census workers and Demp Bradford spoke about an upcoming Southern Conference event.
- The joint meeting of the BCTDA, Public Authority and BCTDA, Nonprofit Corporation, adjourned at 10:27 a.m.

Call of the Joint BCTDA Meeting to Order

Chairman Froeba called the joint meeting of the Buncombe County Tourism Development Authority (BCTDA), a Public Authority and BCTDA, a Nonprofit Corporation, to order at 9:01 a.m. and welcomed everyone. The visitors in attendance introduced themselves.

Approval of Meeting Minutes

Mr. Karvir made a motion to approve the August 28, 2019 regular meeting minutes as presented. Mr. Ruff seconded the motion. There was no discussion and with all in favor, the motion carried 6-0.

The minutes are on file with the Explore Asheville Convention & Visitors Bureau (CVB).

August 2019 Financial Statements

Mr. Warn reviewed the August 2019 financial statements. There were no questions.

Mr. Craig made a motion to approve the August 2019 financial statements as presented. Mr. Karvir seconded the motion. There was no discussion and with all in favor, the motion carried 6-0.

The August financial statements are on file with the Explore Asheville Convention & Visitors Bureau.

Welcome New BCTDA Board Member

Chairman Froeba welcomed James Poole, General Manager of the Foundry Hotel, to the BCTDA board, having been appointed last night by Asheville City Council. Mr. Poole is the city's appointee representing an owner or operator of hotels, motels, bed and breakfasts, or vacation rental management companies, with 100 or fewer rental units. Mr. Poole was appointed to a three-year term expiring August 31, 2022.

President's Report

Destination Dashboard, Quick List & CVB Staff Recap

Ms. Brown briefly reviewed metrics from the Destination Dashboard and Quick List and answered all related questions. Ms. Pierce provided insight on the sales team's fiscal year-to-date metrics and gave an overview of current meetings market trends, along with outreach strategies and initiatives being implemented by her departmental staff. A brief discussion centering on the Meetings Development Fund, bid fees, available data, and hotel compression took place.

Ms. Brown said staff is looking into comparable destination performance metrics to further understand local and national tourism trends. She added next month, Ms. Tambellini and the 360i team will provide an update on how the advertising campaign is tracking, and Katie Button will share results related to the Chow Chow culinary festival.

Mr. Craig said it would be interesting to know many new vacation/short-term rental properties are coming online. Ms. Brown responded that Elizabeth White, Explore Asheville's Director of Web and Analytics, is researching various STR data resources and she will ask her to include this metric during the evaluation process.

In response to a question asking if Buncombe County has seen an increase in the number of properties/accounts paying occupancy tax, Mr. Warn said he will look into it and report back to the board.

The CVB Staff Recap, Destination Dashboard, Quick List, financial statements, board meeting minutes, agendas, and relevant research reports can be found on ExploreAshevilleCVB.com.

Tourism Management & Investment Plan Update

With Phase 1 (Assessment) of the Tourism Management & Investment Plan (TMIP) wrapping up and Phase 2 (Discovery) beginning, Ms. Brown said it's a good time to give a status update on this year-long process. Mike Konzen, John Kasman and Chris Cavanaugh shared a PowerPoint presentation highlighting TMIP progress to date. They reviewed the objectives, deliverables, resources, surveys, and public engagement opportunities that were part of Phase 1 and provided an overview of TMIP elements that will be included in Phases 2, 3 and 4. During and after the presentation, Mr. Konzen, Mr. Kasman and Mr. Cavanaugh answered all related questions. A brief discussion centering on details related to how the Phase 1 surveys were executed took place.

It was noted that an in-depth report on Phase 1 findings will be presented at the Tourism Management Forum, scheduled Wednesday, October 23, from 6:00 to 7:30 p.m., at A-B Tech's Ferguson Auditorium. The public is invited.

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

More information about the Tourism Management & Investment Plan may be found at ExploreAshevilleCVB.com/TMIP.

Tourism Product Development Fund Contract Amendments

Ms. Kappes shared a PowerPoint presentation outlining three Tourism Product Development Fund (TPDF) project contract amendment requests and examples of BCTDA donor recognition elements at TPDF projects.

Contract Amendment – City of Asheville/US Cellular Center

Ms. Kappes said the first request being presented is for the City of Asheville's US Cellular Center project to change the completion date from November 2019 to January 2020. She said the delay is due to a contractor ordering the incorrect HVAC equipment. Ms. Brown and Chris Corl answered questions posed by board members related to this request.

Mr. Craig made a motion to amend the City of Asheville's TPDF grant contract for the US Cellular Center's Theater Creation and Meeting Room Project, to extend the completion date from November 2019 to January 31, 2020, as requested. Mr. Celwyn seconded the motion. There was no discussion and with all in favor, the motion carried 6-0.

Contract Amendment – LEAF Community Arts/LEAF Global Arts

Ms. Kappes said the LEAF project is on track to be completed on time by February 2020. She said that while standard TPDF contracts call for three equal payment disbursements during the construction cycle, LEAF had negotiated a different percentage of payments in the original contract: Phase 1 – 56 percent; Phase 2 – 21 percent, and Phase 3 – 23 percent. Since a contractor had a medical emergency that caused a slight delay, LEAF representatives are requesting a change in the disbursement percentage for Phases 1 and 2 so that they can submit for their first payment at a lesser amount. This change will not affect the completion date. Ms. Brown and Ms. Kappes answered all questions related to this request.

Mr. Karvir made a motion to approve an amendment to the LEAF Community Arts' TPDF grant contract for the LEAF Global Arts Center, changing the disbursement percentages for Phase 1 from 56 percent to 30 percent, and Phase 2 from 21 percent to 47 percent, as requested. Mr. Celwyn seconded the motion. There was no discussion and with all in favor, the motion carried 6-0.

Contract Amendment – Center for Craft/National Craft Innovation Hub

Ms. Kappes said the Center for Craft was awarded a grant for \$975,000, which represents 1/3 of the total construction cost of the project. She said everything is complete except for a "parklet," which turns two parking spots in front of the Center into

a small park. During the construction process, it was discovered that the Center sits on historic training ground and the parklet completion date will be set back, possibly up to 18 months, to allow staff time to engage with the community to develop this small area to showcase its historic significance. Project representatives are requesting to remove completion of the parklet from the project scope to allow them to submit for full payment of the grant. Ms. Brown noted the parklet was not a room generating part of the project. A brief discussion on this request took place with Ms. Brown and Ms. Kappes answering all related questions.

Mr. Craig made a motion to amend the Center for Craft's TPDF grant contract for the National Craft Innovation Hub to remove the parklet from the project scope. Mr. Celwyn seconded the motion. There was no discussion and with all in favor, the motion carried 6-0.

The three contracts will be amended and executed and kept on file with the Explore Asheville Convention & Visitors Bureau.

TPDF Project Donor Recognition

Ms. Kappes concluded her presentation by sharing renderings of how the BCTDA will be recognized by TPDF project grant recipients at the Center for Craft's National Craft Innovation Hub, the WNC Nature Center, The Wortham Center, and the Asheville Art Museum.

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

Asheville City Council Update

Councilwoman Mayfield reported on recent city-related business, including Asheville City Council approving a moratorium on new hotels that could last up to one year, an upcoming vote on October 22 regarding voting districts and election primaries, reassessment of short-term rental regulations, and e-scooters. She answered questions related to the hotel moratorium and how it may impact projects at various stages of development. Councilwoman Mayfield noted she did share information regarding the Tourism Management & Investment Plan in response to comments heard at last night's meeting related to tourism.

Chairman Froeba thanked Councilwoman Mayfield for the update.

Buncombe County Commission Update

Commissioner Belcher was not in attendance at the meeting, therefore, no Buncombe County Commission Update was given.

Miscellaneous Business

Sharon Tabor provided packets with information related to the 2020 US Census and encouraged everyone to spread the word about available Census jobs. She noted every person counted is worth \$1,600 per year to Buncombe County and it is important that the jobs be filled as soon as possible. More information may be found at 2020census.gov.

Demp Bradford said that board members will be receiving invitations to the Southern Conference Tip-Off Luncheon on October 7 and encouraged everyone to attend.

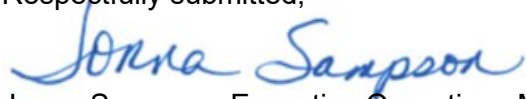
Comments from the General Public

There were no comments from the general public made at this meeting.

Adjournment

Mr. Craig moved to adjourn the meeting and Mr. Celwyn seconded the motion. A vote was taken and with all in favor, the motion carried 6-0 and the meeting adjourned at 10:27 a.m. The BCTDA will next meet on Wednesday, October 30, 2019, at 9:00 a.m., in the Board Room of the Explore Asheville Convention & Visitors Bureau.

Respectfully submitted,



Jonna Sampson, Executive Operations Manager