

# Explore ASHEVILLE

Buncombe County Tourism Development Authority

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

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

**Board Meeting Minutes**  
Thursday, January 10, 2019

- Present (Voting):** Jim Muth, Chair; Andrew Celwyn, Himanshu Karvir, John McKibbon
- Absent (Voting):** Gary Froeba, Vice Chair; Leah Ashburn, Chip Craig, John Lockett, Tom Ruff (excused)
- Present (Ex-Officio):** Asheville City Councilmember Julie Mayfield
- Absent (Ex-Officio):** Buncombe County Commissioner Joe Belcher
- BC Finance:** Don Warn
- Advertising Agency:** None
- CVB Staff:** Stephanie Brown, Marla Tambellini, Glenn Cox, Pat Kappes, Dianna Pierce, Jonna Reiff, Shawn Boone, Joe Phelps, Leann Swims, Sarah Kilgore, Tina Porter
- CVB Staff Absent:** None
- Guests:** Paula Wilber, Biltmore/Past BCTDA Chair  
Richard Kort, McGuire, Wood & Bissette  
Bob McMurray, Black Mountain/Swannanoa Chamber  
Chris Cavanaugh, Magellan Strategy Group  
John Ellis, BCTDA Finance Committee  
Jane Anderson, Asheville Independent Restaurant Association  
David Nutter, Civic Planner  
John Beatty, NC Restaurant & Lodging Association  
Mariah Harbin, Party for Socialism & Liberation  
Ben Williamson, Western Carolina University  
Robin Gregory, Linda Kelder; Homestay Network Members  
Tee Anderson, Friday Staffing  
Dillon Davis, Asheville Citizen-Times  
Virginia Daffron, Mountain Xpress  
Jason Sandford, Ashvegas  
Holden Mesk, Sunshine Request

## **Executive Summary of Meeting Minutes**

- Chairman Muth called the joint meeting of the BCTDA, Public Authority and Nonprofit Corporation, to order at 9:06 a.m. He announced a quorum is not present, therefore, any action requiring a vote will be deferred to the January 30 BCTDA meeting.
- Mr. Warn reviewed the November 2018 financial reports, which will be approved at the next meeting on January 30.
- In her President's Report, Ms. Brown briefly reviewed recent Explore Asheville CVB and industry activities and initiatives and received board consensus to move forward with adding a Director of Finance position to the team.
- Ms. Tambellini announced that the firm 360i has been chosen as the BCTDA's advertising agency of record and provided background information on the selection process via a PowerPoint presentation.
- Ms. Pierce and members of the Group Sales & Services team shared a PowerPoint presentation highlighting fiscal year-to-date metrics and departmental activities.
- Councilwoman Julie Mayfield shared an update on Asheville City Council matters.
- David Nutter shared thoughts under Comments from the General Public.
- The joint meeting of the BCTDA, Public Authority and Nonprofit Corporation, adjourned at 10:21 a.m.

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

Chairman Muth called the joint meeting of the Buncombe County Tourism Development Authority (BCTDA), a Public Authority and BCTDA, a Nonprofit Corporation, to order at 9:06 a.m. and welcomed everyone. He announced that due to an unexpected travel conflict, there is not a quorum for today's meeting and actions requiring a vote will be deferred to the January 30 BCTDA meeting.

The visitors in attendance introduced themselves.

## **Approval of Meeting Minutes**

Due to the lack of a quorum, approval of the November 28, 2018 meeting minutes was deferred to the January 30, 2019 BCTDA meeting.

## **Financial Reports**

### **November 2018 Financial Statements**

Mr. Warn reviewed the November 2018 financial reports, however, due to the lack of a quorum, approval was deferred to the January 30, 2019 BCTDA meeting.

## **President's Report**

### **Request for a New Position – Director of Finance**

Based on several factors related to the growth of the Explore Asheville organization and budget, coupled with increased financial responsibilities and systemic changes that have occurred in the partnership with Buncombe County Finance, specifically utilizing the

Workday program, Ms. Brown said staff is recommending the immediate addition of a new Director of Finance position to the team. She provided insight on other staff and position changes and said the new Director of Finance would manage payables, payroll, contracts, the budget, governmental compliance and be the Workday expert. Ms. Brown said input on the job description was received from Mr. Warn and she then answered all related questions.

When finished, Ms. Brown asked if there was consensus to move forward with hiring this new position and all board members in attendance nodded in agreement.

### Other Updates

Ms. Brown briefly reviewed CVB activities and initiatives from December and answered all related questions. A discussion took place related to Councilwoman Mayfield's suggestion to coordinate a meeting between Explore Asheville, Buncombe County Finance and Mayor Manheimer and City of Asheville staff to review, understand and agree upon tourism-related numbers that are publicly shared.

The Destination Dashboard, CVB Staff Recap, Quick List, board meeting minutes and agendas and other research reports can be found on [ExploreAshevilleCVB.com](http://ExploreAshevilleCVB.com).

### **BCTDA Advertising Agency of Record**

Ms. Tambellini announced that after an extensive search process over the past several months, the firm [360i](http://360i.com) has been selected as the BCTDA's advertising agency of record. She shared a PowerPoint presentation outlining the process that was followed to make the selection, which included information about the agency, corporate stats, team members, current accounts, examples of creative work, and ways data is incorporated into efforts to reach goals and target audiences.

Ms. Tambellini said the CVB will primarily work with 360i's offices in Atlanta and New York. She then reviewed information about retainer fees and said since a quorum is not present today, she will present a budget resolution at the January 30 meeting to cover the increased costs over what is currently in the FY 2018-19 budget. In the meantime, staff will execute a 30-day agreement, which falls within the approved budget, until the resolution is approved to secure a longer-term contract.

When the presentation ended, Ms. Tambellini answered all related questions. BCTDA board members who attended the presentations by the three finalist agencies, including Chairman Muth, Mr. Karvir and Mr. Celwyn, said they agreed with the choice and each shared what impressed them about 360i.

Ms. Brown commended Ms. Tambellini on the well-executed selection plan and process. Mr. Chris Cavanaugh, with Magellan Strategy Group who participated in the search process, said he is excited about how 360i combines creative and data science to successfully execute campaigns and media plans. Ms. Tambellini thanked Director of Advertising Sarah Kilgore for her efforts related to the search and said staff is excited to begin onboarding the new agency.

The PowerPoint presentation is on file with the Explore Asheville Convention & Visitors Bureau. The full announcement can be found on [ExploreAshevilleCVB.com](http://ExploreAshevilleCVB.com).

## **Sales Update**

Ms. Pierce and sales department team members Shawn Boone, Leann Swims and Joe Phelps shared a PowerPoint presentation outlining fiscal year-to-date departmental highlights and metrics, including sales leads, top performing markets, site inspections, client connectivity, 48 Hour Meeting Planner FAMs, trade shows, signature sporting events, and group advertising and PR efforts.

During and after the presentation, Ms. Pierce answered all related questions. A brief discussion took place related to meeting space availability in the US Cellular Center and area hotels.

Chairman Muth thanked Ms. Pierce and the sales team for their efforts and the presentation, and a round of applause was received.

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

## **Asheville City Council Update**

Councilwoman Mayfield reported on city-related business, including a new maintenance contract for the US Cellular Center, forward movement on three high-impact sites to include Matthews Ford, River Arts District and Charlotte Street, goals to develop two new affordable housing sites with bond money, receipt of a \$35,000 grant from USTA for Fed Cup events held at Aston Park, and the decision to finally develop the 68 Haywood Street property, splitting costs over two budget years.

During the update, Councilwoman Mayfield answered all related questions and received input from staff and board members on the various topics.

Chairman Muth thanked Councilwoman Mayfield for the update.

## **Buncombe County Commission Update**

Commissioner Belcher was absent from this meeting, therefore, a county update was not provided.

## **Miscellaneous Business**

There was no miscellaneous business discussed at this meeting.

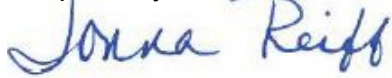
## **Comments from the General Public**

David Nutter said it is his understanding that there is an effort formulating to develop a broader policy for infrastructure, to include a longer time frame for development. He said as a retired professional city planner, he applauds such an initiative and hopes it will come to fruition.

**Adjournment**

Chairman Muth adjourned the meeting at 10:21 a.m. The BCTDA will next meet on Wednesday, January 30, 2019, at 9:00 a.m., in the Boardroom of the Explore Asheville Convention & Visitors Bureau.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jonna Reiff". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Jonna Reiff, Executive Operations Manager