

# 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, February 27, 2019

- Present (Voting):** Jim Muth, Chair; Gary Froeba, Vice Chair; Leah Ashburn, Andrew Celwyn, Chip Craig, Himanshu Karvir, John Luckett, John McKibbon, Tom Ruff
- Absent (Voting):** None
- Present (Ex-Officio):** Asheville City Councilmember Julie Mayfield  
Buncombe County Commissioner Joe Belcher
- Absent (Ex-Officio):** None
- BC Finance:** Don Warn
- CVB Staff:** Stephanie Brown, Marla Tambellini, Dianna Pierce, Pat Kappes, Glenn Cox, Jonna Sampson, Sarah Kilgore, Dodie Stephens
- Guests:** Richard Kort, McGuire, Wood & Bissette, BCTDA Counsel  
Mike Konzen, Andy Struckhoff, John Kasman; PGAV  
Chris Cavanaugh, Magellan Strategy Group  
Kit Cramer, Layton Hower; Asheville Chamber of Commerce  
Bob McMurray, Black Mountain/Swannanoa Chamber of Commerce  
Robert Foster, Biltmore Farms Hotels & TPDF Committee  
Ken Stamps, Navitat & TPDF Committee  
David McCartney, Arras Hotel & TPDF Committee  
Demp Bradford, Asheville Buncombe Regional Sports Commission  
Jane Anderson, Asheville Independent Restaurant Association  
Debra Campbell, Cathy Ball, Joey Robison, Sam Powers; City of Asheville  
Ron Storto, Past BCTDA Chair & ABRSC Board Member  
John Ellis, BCTDA Finance Committee  
Chris Corl, US Cellular Center Asheville  
Peter Pollay, Mandara Hospitality  
Dawn Chavez, Asheville GreenWorks  
Dave Nutter, Retired City Planner  
Michael Jubane, Biltmore Farms Intern  
Rick Bell, Inn at Engadine  
Tim Love, Buncombe County  
Robin Gregory, Asheville Homestay Network  
Susan Russo-Klein, Roberts & Stevens

Dillon Davis, Asheville Citizen-Times  
Brooke Randle; Mountain Xpress  
Jason Sandford, Asheville  
Holden Mesk, Sunshine Request  
Kim King and Videographer, WLOS

### **Executive Summary of Meeting Minutes**

- Chairman Muth called the joint meeting of the BCTDA, Public Authority and Nonprofit Corporation, to order at 9:04 a.m.
- Minutes from the January 30, 2019 BCTDA regular meeting were approved with a 9-0 vote.
- The January 2019 financial statements were approved with a 9-0 vote.
- In her President's Report, Ms. Brown shared the FY 2019-20 BCTDA board meeting schedule and plans for the March annual planning retreat and meeting.
- Following a PowerPoint presentation by PGAV and Magellan Strategy Group outlining the Tourism Management & Investment Plan proposal, the BCTDA approved this Tourism Product Development Fund year-long initiative with an 8-1 vote.
- A public budget hearing to consider five FY 2018-19 budget ordinances and resolutions took place, followed by the unanimous approval of them with a 9-0 vote.
- David Rollo and Angie Arner from 360i shared a PowerPoint presentation highlighting the upcoming spring media plan.
- An update from Asheville City Councilwoman Julie Mayfield was heard.
- Mr. McMurray, Mr. Karvir and Mr. Bradford shared items of interest under Miscellaneous Business.
- The joint meeting of the BCTDA, Public Authority and Nonprofit Corporation, adjourned at 11:07 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 9:04 a.m. and welcomed everyone. The visitors in attendance introduced themselves.

Chairman Muth extended congratulations to Leah Ashburn for winning the *Dancing with the Local Stars* dance competition to benefit the American Cancer Society on February 24, and to Chip Craig for completing his 20<sup>th</sup> consecutive Mount Mitchell Challenge.

Commissioner Belcher mentioned he needs to leave today's meeting at 10:15 a.m.

### **Approval of Meeting Minutes**

Mr. McKibbin made a motion to approve the January 30, 2019 regular meeting minutes as presented. Mr. Karvir seconded the motion. There was no discussion and with all in favor, the motion carried 9-0.

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

## **Financial Reports**

Mr. Warn reviewed the January 2019 financial statements. He reported that the balances related to the Tourism Product Development Fund (TPDF) do not include the budget ordinances that will be presented today. Ms. Brown added the budget ordinances will exhaust all available TPDF dollars through FY 2018-19.

Mr. Craig made a motion to approve the January 2018 financial statements as presented. Mr. Lockett seconded the motion. There was no discussion and with all in favor, the motion carried 9-0.

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

## **President's Report**

Ms. Brown said that with today's full agenda, she will forego giving a full President's report. She noted the FY 2019-20 board meeting schedule has been provided in the books and calendar appointments will be sent. Ms. Brown said the BCTDA's annual planning retreat will take place on Thursday, March 21, in the Seely Pavilion at The Omni Grove Park Inn, beginning at 8:30 a.m., and the regular meeting is scheduled for Friday, March 22, at 9:00 a.m., in the Explore Asheville Board Room. She concluded her report by encouraging everyone to review the Staff Recap and Destination Dashboard.

Chairman Muth thanked Vice Chairman Froeba for hosting the retreat on March 21.

### **CVB Staff Recap, Destination Dashboard & Quick List**

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

## **Tourism Management & Investment Plan**

Ms. Brown said the Explore Asheville staff has been collaborating with the PGAV team to move the Tourism Management & Investment Plan (TMIP) forward. She encouraged board members to review the press release, scope of work, and FAQ documents provided in the board books.

Mike Konzen, Andy Struckhoff, John Kasman, and Chris Cavanaugh shared a PowerPoint presentation outlining their combined organizational expertise and the TMIP plan's objectives, four-phase planning process, engagement priorities, and professional fee schedule. It was noted that this year-long initiative builds upon the rigorous application-based process that has been established by the BCTDA to evaluate opportunities for Tourism Product Development Fund (TPDF). This will be done by bringing public entities, tourism officials and the community together with data resources to develop a framework to guide long-term investment. Since its inception in 2001, the Fund has granted \$44 million to 39 projects, including sports fields, theaters, parks and greenways.

Ms. Brown said payment of the \$440,000 in professional fees, plus expenses, will span two fiscal years and staff will request approval of a \$250,000 budget resolution today to cover FY 2018-19 costs. The remainder will be included in the FY 2019-20 proposed budget, to be presented to the BCTDA in May.

Questions posed by board members were answered during and after the presentation and input was received. It was noted that the timeline will need to be fluid due to many unknown variables, however, the goal is to have the TMIP completed by April 2020, in advance of the TPDF funding cycle.

On behalf of Asheville City Council, Councilwoman Mayfield said she appreciates this new evolution of the Tourism Product Development Fund via the Tourism Management and Investment Plan, which will further strengthen the city's partnership with the BCTDA. New City Manager Debra Campbell echoed her sentiments and said she believes the Plan will help foster her vision of "collaboration and coordination to have a collective impact."

Commissioner Belcher also supported the TMIP, adding it is necessary to provide equity amongst the districts and socio-economic factions as the Plan moves forward.

As a former TPDF committee member who participated in six funding cycles, Mr. Karvir said he is excited about this new evolution of the TPDF, which will include approving grants, working with city and county, being proactive, and collaboratively working towards the implementation of a strategic plan that will be good for the community.

As Chair of the TPDF committee, Robert Foster said the projects that have been funded to date have had a tremendous impact on the community and he's proud of what's been accomplished. He said the upcoming transformational changes and increased partnerships with the city and county that TMIP will bring will make the Fund even more successful and better for the community, and he fully endorses the Plan.

Mr. Celwyn expressed three concerns related to the TMIP that centered on cost, scope, and end results. For these reasons, he said he will not be supporting the TMIP as presented today. Chairman Muth thanked Mr. Celwyn for his well-thought-out comments and participation on the board. Councilwoman Mayfield added she hopes everyone will keep an open mind about challenges the community is facing as the TMIP moves forward. Ms. Ashburn said this is a great step that the BCTDA can take right now.

When the discussion ended, Chairman Muth called for action. Mr. Karvir made a motion to accept the Tourism Management and Investment Plan proposal as presented by PGAV and Magellan Strategy Group. Ms. Ashburn seconded the motion. A vote was taken and with eight members voting for and Mr. Celwyn against, the motion carried 8-1.

Chairman Muth thanked Mr. Konzen, Mr. Struckhoff, Mr. Kasman and Mr. Cavanaugh for the presentation, and board members for approving the Tourism Management and Investment Plan. Ms. Brown said the motion approved the proposal and the board will vote to approve the budget resolution following the public hearing.

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

Additional information: <https://www.ashevillecvb.com/bctda-approves-funding-to-lead-yearlong-community-engagement-process-to-plan-for-community-investments/>.

**Public Hearing to Consider Budgetary Amendments and Ordinances**

Chairman Muth called the public hearing to consider the budget ordinances and resolutions that were posted on ExploreAshevilleCVB.com on February 15 to order at 10:06 a.m. He said he will read the descriptions aloud and then the public will have the opportunity to ask questions and provide input.

Chairman Muth asked the board to turn to the documents provided in the board books and said the following budget resolutions and amendments are being considered:

**From the Tourism Product Development Fund:**

- a. Budget amendment in the amount of \$70,000 to the TPDF administrative budget for Wayfinding Maintenance, approved by the BCTDA on 11.28.18.
- b. Budget project ordinance in the amount of \$9,485,000 to establish budgets for the six TPDF projects awarded in the 2018 funding cycle, approved by the BCTDA on 10.31.18.
- c. Budget project ordinance in the amount of \$2,250,000 to establish the budget for the Buncombe County/Woodfin Greenway & Blueway project, approved by the BCTDA on 06.28.17.
- d. Budget amendment in the amount of \$250,000 to the TPDF administrative budget to fund the Tourism Management & Investment Plan.

**From Fund Balance:**

- e. Budget amendment in the amount of \$500,000 to supplement the Executive Office Budgetary Contingency and Marketing Contingency Budgetary lines, and additional Marketing expenses.

Chairman Muth asked if there was anyone present who would like to comment on the resolutions or ordinances. As no one in attendance requested to be heard, Chairman Muth closed the public budget hearing at 10:08 a.m.

**Action Items**

Following the public hearing, Chairman Muth called for action. Mr. Craig made a motion to approve the five budget ordinances/resolutions as presented:

	Document	Purpose	Total	From	Per Line	To: Cost Center/Ledger or Spend Category/Program
a.	Resolution	Wayfinding Maintenance	\$70,000	TPDF Occ Tax	\$70,000	Wayfinding Maintenance
b.	Ordinance	2018 TPDF Projects	\$9,485,000	TPDF Occ Tax	\$6,000,000 \$975,000 \$800,000 \$705,000 \$905,000 \$100,000	TPDF Project - 2018 Buncombe County Government - Enka Recreation Destination TPDF Project - 2018 Center for Craft - National Craft Innovation Hub TPDF Project - 2018 Eagle Market Streets Dev. Corp. - YMI Cultural Center Improvements TPDF Project - 2018 LEAF Community Arts - LEAF Global Arts Center TPDF Project 2018 NC Aroretum Society - Garden Lighting & Parking Enhancements TPDF Project - 2018 River Front Development Group - African-American Heritage Museum at Stephens-Lee Recreation Center
c.	Ordinance	2017 TPDF Project	\$2,250,000	TPDF Occ Tax	\$2,250,000	TPDF Project - 2017 Buncombe County Government - Woodfin Greenway & Blueway
d.	Resolution	TPDF Tourism Management & Investment Plan	\$250,000	TPDF Occ Tax	\$250,000	TPDF Professional Services/TMIP
e.	Resolution	Executive & Marketing Contingency & Expenses	\$500,000	Appropriated Fund Balance	\$95,000 \$55,000 \$100,000 \$25,000 \$125,000 \$100,000	Marketing/Budgetary Contingency/Advertising Marketing/Postage/Advertising Marketing/Ad Production/Advertising Marketing/Professional Services/Advertising Marketing/Market Research Executive Office/Budgetary Contingency

Mr. Celwyn seconded the motion. There was no discussion and with all in favor, the motion carried 9-0.

The resolutions and ordinances will be executed by Chairman Muth and kept on file with the Explore Asheville Convention & Visitors Bureau.

### **Creative & Positioning Presentation**

Ms. Tambellini introduced David Rollo and Angie Arner from 360i, the BCTDA's new advertising agency of record. Mr. Rollo and Ms. Arner expressed their excitement about working on Team Asheville and shared a PowerPoint presentation highlighting the agency's culture and advertising successes. They also shared the BCTDA's upcoming spring media plan, which included an overview of the data science and processes behind the selection of target audiences and markets for the campaign, and the development of new creative assets from existing footage. Also presented was a concept video created by the 360i team.

During and after the presentation, Mr. Rollo and Ms. Arner answered all related questions.

Chairman Muth commended Mr. Rollo and Ms. Arner for their efforts, stating it's very impressive what 360i has accomplished in the short amount of time they have been on board.

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 the approval of a Down Payment Assistance Policy that will provide a total of \$1.4 million to qualifying individuals and families to help purchase a home, and the approval of a resolution to possibly re-establish a passenger rail connection in Western North Carolina.

Chairman Muth thanked Councilwoman Mayfield for the update.

### **Buncombe County Commission Update**

Commissioner Belcher had left the meeting due to scheduling conflict, however, had asked Councilwoman Mayfield to announce that the swearing in of new County Manager Avril Pinder will take place on March 5. Ms. Brown added that Ms. Pinder had previously served on Wilmington's TDA board.

### **Miscellaneous Business**

Bob McMurray said he is looking forward to the BCTDA's annual planning retreat, which marks the 25<sup>th</sup> and final one he will attend, since he will be retiring as Executive Director of the Black Mountain-Swannanoa Chamber of Commerce in June.

Mr. Karvir said Ms. Cramer had to leave the meeting early, however, asked him to encourage board members to participate in the Asheville Area Chamber of Commerce's legislative visit to Raleigh, April 9-10.

Demp Bradford thanked the BCTDA for its support of Fed Cup and gave board members a commemorative cup as a token of the Asheville Buncombe Regional Sports Commission's gratitude. He added Southern Conference is just over a week away and he is looking forward to the tournament, which will include thousands of local children participating in the Downtown Dribble on Saturday and city and county school students attending games on Thursday and Friday.

### **Comments from the General Public**

There were no comments from the General Public made at this meeting.

### **Adjournment**

Following the sharing of the video of Leah Ashburn's *Dancing with the Local Stars* first-place dance performance, Chairman Muth adjourned the meeting at 11:07 a.m. The BCTDA will next meet on Thursday, March 21, 2019, beginning at 8:30 a.m., for its Annual Planning Retreat at The Omni Grove Park Inn, followed by the March board meeting on Friday, March 22, at 9:00 a.m., in the Board Room of the Explore Asheville Convention & Visitors Bureau.

Respectfully submitted,



Jonna Sampson, Executive Operations Manager