

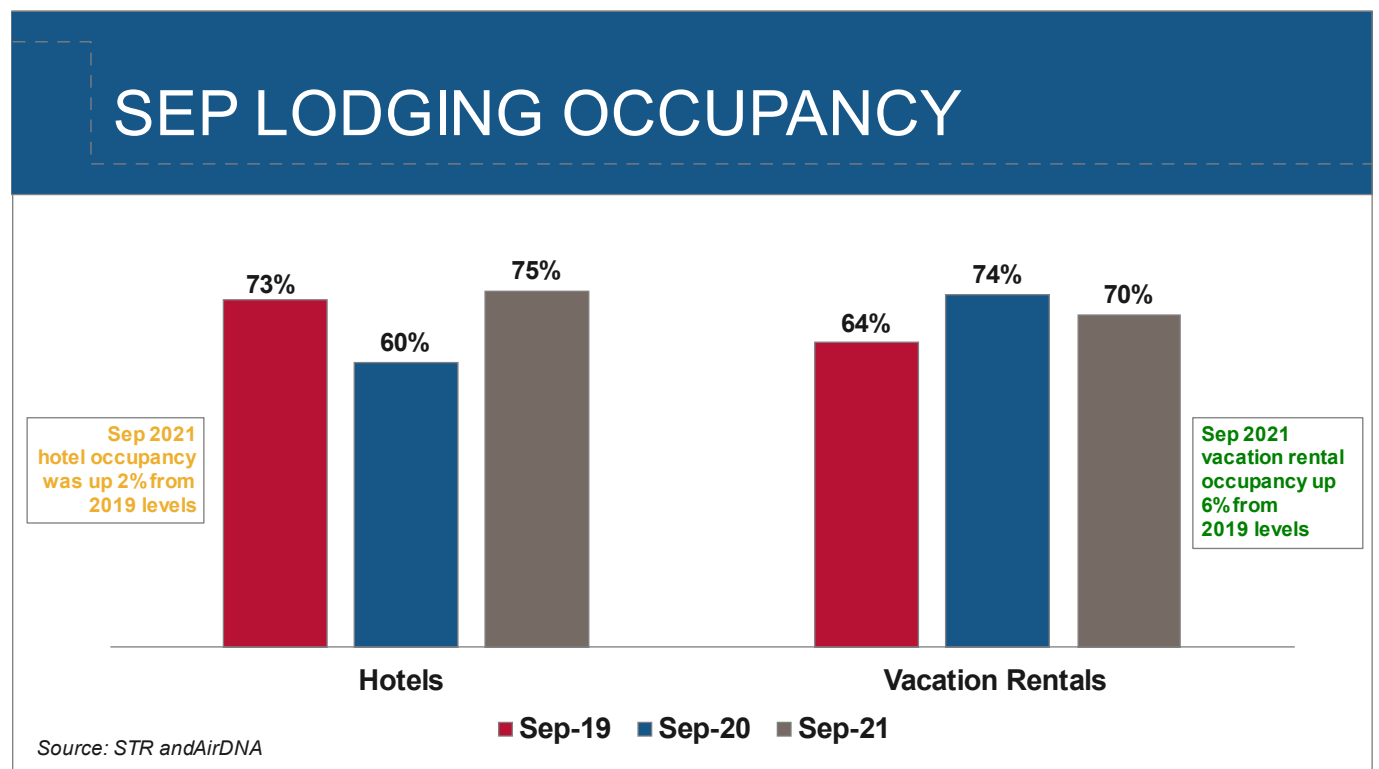
October 27, 2021

To: Buncombe County Tourism Development Authority

From: Vic Isley

Subject: President & CEO's Report of September 2021 Activities

September hotel occupancy reached 75% in 2021, fifteen percentage points higher than 2020 and up two percent from 2019 levels. Short-term vacation rentals reached 70% this September, off four points from 2020 but up six percent from the benchmark year of 2019.



## **SEPTEMBER BY THE NUMBERS**

- During September, the sales team posted 487 personal contacts (down 21%). September sales activities generated 65 sales leads (up 132%) and 54 convention bookings (up 500%), representing 4,855 rooms (up 157%). Three months into the fiscal year, year-to-date bookings are up 78 percent and room nights represented are up 120 percent.
- CVB sales leads generated 50 group events in September (up 285%), with corresponding revenue of \$2,521,673 (up 1,835%). The services team assisted 57 groups (up 235%).
- The PR team landed 36 significant placements in September (down 16%), with 61 media touchpoints (up 17%). The publicity value of print and broadcast placements totaled nearly \$296k with reach of over 2.7 million (up 261%). Online placements added \$3.3 million in value and reach of more than 1.7 billion (up 52%).
- ExploreAsheville.com attracted 679,673 visits (up 44%), including 503,958 to the mobile site (up 59%). Our Facebook fan base total is 303,277 (up 2%) and video views totaled 52,703 (up 25%).
- In September 2021, there were 2,319 Asheville Visitor Guide requests compared to 2,724 the previous year.
- Online hotel reservations totaled 74 room nights (down 30%) with total room revenue of \$15,706 (down 6%).
- The Asheville Visitor Center welcomed 15,421 visitors (up 70%), and the Pack Square Park Visitor Pavilion remains closed. The Black Mountain Visitor center welcomed 3,631 visitors (up 3%).

## **LODGING & AIRPORT RESULTS**

- Buncombe County Finance reported lodging sales totaling \$54,215,796 in August (up 56%).
- Smith Travel Research reported hotel occupancy of 72.6 percent during August (up 30%). The average daily room rate was \$179.23 (up 31%), and RevPAR (revenue per available room) was \$130.06 (up 71%). Room demand increased 35 percent with 196,953 rooms sold.
- AirDNA reported short term rental occupancy of 74 percent (down 1.5%), ADR of \$113.98 (up 13%), and RevPAR of \$84.30 (up 12%). Total demand for short-term rentals increased 19 percent to total 154,940 rooms sold.
- Passengers at the Asheville Regional Airport increased 157 percent to total 141,577 in August.

## **Deliver Balanced Recovery & Sustainable Growth**

### Community Engagement

- BCTDA Annual Meeting: The Annual Meeting was held on September 15, from 3:00 – 6:00 p.m. at Thomas Wolfe Auditorium at Harrah's Cherokee Center - Asheville. The keynote was provided by motivational speaker and author Kevin Brown. Bob Patel was awarded the William AV Cecil Award and outgoing board members were recognized. A video featuring local partners was produced exemplifying the "Heart of Hospitality" theme. Catering was provided by The Food Experience and entertainment by Ryan Ashley Poet, Virtuous and Nex Millen as DJ. 177 attendees were in attendance.

- Earned Revenue Events Funding: The Festivals & Cultural Events Support Fund Grant Cycle for events taking place in the 2022 calendar year is underway. Thirty-three funding requests totaling \$161,600 have been received. The Festivals & Cultural Events Grant Review Committee will meet in October to assess the submissions and provide funding recommendations to the BCTDA.
- Sponsorships: Sponsorship applications are accepted year-round and reviewed on a quarterly basis. Recent sponsorship funding was awarded to the Asheville Museum of Science for Under the Stars, Leadership Asheville for the Fall Breakfast Buzz Series, the Asheville Area Arts Council for the Creative Sector Summit, and UNC-Asheville for the African Americans in Western North Carolina & Southern Appalachia Conference: Reparations, Revelations, & Racial Justice and The Path Forward.

#### Sales Activities

- Trade Shows: Sales staff attended the following trade shows in September.
  - Prevue Visionary Summit: Tina attended Prevue Visionary Summit in Litchfield Park, Arizona, and conducted 25 one-on-one appointments with incentive meeting planners and attended networking events. Asheville was a sponsor at this event.
  - TEAMS: Tina attended and exhibited at the TEAMS Conference and Expo, a sports conference, in Atlantic City, New Jersey.
- IMEX America Prep: The Sales Team is planning for IMEX, the U.S.'s largest meetings trade event, on November 7 – 11. Coordination efforts for this show included drafting promotional and creating profiles. Marshall and Connie, along with three industry partners, will attend; normal attendance for this trade show is between 15,000 and 18,000 people.
- Site Visits: Site visits were conducted with Democratic Attorneys General Association, North Carolina Association of Electric Cooperatives, 2022 MAGIC Goodwill Conference, and American Public Works Association.
- Industry Meetings: Sales staff attended the following industry meetings in September.
  - ConferenceDirect: Marshall attended the ConferenceDirect All Partner Meeting in Orlando, FL. In addition to meeting with associates, opportunities to host future ConferenceDirect events in Asheville were discussed.
  - Blue Ridge Parkway Association: Beth attended the Blue Ridge Parkway Association meeting.
  - North Carolina Sports Association: Tina attended the North Carolina Sports Association Membership Meeting.
- Partner Engagement: Sales staff attended the ribbon cutting of Element Asheville Downtown.
- MMGY & Meetings Media Planning: Marshall presented recent database research and new vertical markets the team is targeting for meetings business that align with EDC efforts.
- LinkedIn Contest: The sales team promoted a glass pumpkin giveaway (from N.C. Glass Center) to increase followers and engagement with Explore Asheville Meetings & Conventions through a post and sales' P2P outreach.
- 48-Hour FAM Update: Eleven meeting planners are confirmed attending the November 16 – 19 FAM, leaving one last spot open. Participation opportunities were assigned to interested and available meeting space hotel partners.
- Email Marketing: Carli put together an e-newsletter promoting unique venues, the 2022 48-Hour Experience dates (meeting planner FAM), and the new Element Hotel opening that was sent out to the meeting planner client database.
- Convention Service Highlights: Visitor information, attendee giveaways, and VIP welcome amenities were delivered to 12 groups in September.
- Recognition: Explore Asheville is nominated for the *2021 Smart Meetings CVB Platinum Choice* award, an honor that goes to the destinations that help elevate meetings around the world.

## Advertising

- Monocle Paid Content Partnership: Committed to a partnership with this global media brand that will include a 20-page print editorial feature, 4 full-page ads and email newsletters. Partnership provides opportunity to align community benefit through content that intersects with economic development goals, group business and leisure hospitality.
- Paid Search: September paid search generated 104k clicks with an average CPC of \$0.50 (vs \$1.53 travel industry average). Average time on site was 1:49 and an average of 2.28 pageviews per visit with CVR of 69.47.
- Visitor Guide: Progress is continuing with the 2022 edition of the Visitor Guide. In September, we received 2 (of 3) batches of stories for review and provided feedback. Ad sales continue and are trending towards selling out.
- Asheville Championship: Tournament sponsorship commitment will include commercial airtime, sense of place bumpers, kayak giveaway media activation at participating schools, LED graphics on display boards, logo integration in promotional materials and event tickets.
- Neighborhoods/Towns Dispersal: Launched [new microsite for the River Arts District](#) on ExploreAsheville.com that includes a promotional video, rotating artist profiles and business features.
  - Digital Map: Finalizing design for new digital map that will live on the homepage of ExploreAsheville.com to further assist with dispersal and geographical info for visitors.
- Fall Color Report: Launched Fall Color Report on ExploreAsheville.com on September 28 and shared via email and social.

## Public Information

- Local Media & Other Coverage:
  - *Asheville Citizen Times*: [Asheville tourism jobs bouncing back? Yes, but companies still can't get enough workers](#) #BCTDA #LocalNews #RecoveryFund This was the cover story of the Sunday, September 5, newspaper; it was also shared in *Mountain Area Works*, the newsletter of the Mountain Area Workforce Development Board.
  - *Mountain Xpress*: [Tourism recovery grant recipients reflect one year later](#) #BCTDA #LocalNews #RecoveryFund This was also published in the daily [e-newsletter](#).
  - *Capital At Play*: [Tourism Growth](#) #BCTDA #LocalNews #RecoveryFund
  - WLOS/WMYI: [Buncombe County TDA's emergency fund helps 394 businesses during pandemic](#) #BCTDA #LocalNews #RecoveryFund

## Public Relations

- Media Site Visit Support:
  - A writer with *Johnny Jet* stayed at Cumberland Falls Bed and Breakfast Inn and experienced a "Hike Bike Kayak" tour.
  - Sandra Chambers is working on a fall story for Allegiant's *Sunseeker* magazine. Team is planning for her visit and sharing dispersal angles to get her moving around the region.
- Recent Clips:
  - [Girl's Night In \(Newsletter\)](#) #CVBClip
  - *Lonely Planet* | [5 Asheville neighborhoods you need to visit now.](#) #CVBClip

## Encourage Safe & Responsible Travel

### Sales Activities

- Convention Services COVID Update: Carli and Glenn continued providing COVID and mask mandate updates to meeting planners. Since small hand sanitizers were introduced as an attendee giveaway in May, more than 1,700 have been delivered or are scheduled to be delivered to meeting planners for attendees.

- COVID Resources: Kathryn worked with a planner to gather COVID tools to share with her group (Duke University) in order to carry on with their October 2021 program at The Omni Grove Park Inn.
- U.S. Travel Association's *Let's Meet There* Campaign & Advocacy: A [new fact sheet](#) providing a science-driven case for the return of business travel includes one of Explore Asheville's safe meeting case studies after staff submitted our resources to the association. The fact sheet is a primary tool being used in a major media push to ensure business leaders and decision-makers across all industries understand the latest scientific data that proves it is safe to resume in-person, professional gatherings.
  - **Exhibitor Online:** [Business and Industry Leaders Make Case for Return of Business Travel, Meetings, Exhibitions and Events](#)

#### Advertising

- Paid Content Partnerships:
  - Park2Park: Finalized edits of full episodes, teasers and cutdowns in advance of launch for both episodes. Episodes will launch on Outside TV on October 3 (mountain biking episode) and October 17 (bouldering episode).
  - Matador Partnership: Finalized Jacob Moon content, which focuses on tips for outdoor photography while being sustainable. Content will be rolling out on Facebook, Instagram and YouTube with efforts driving to a custom landing page on ExploreAsheville.com.

#### Content/Web

- Pledge for the Wild: Created new [landing page](#) for Pledge for the Wild on EA.com.

#### Public Information

- Local Media & Other Coverage:
  - Global Sustainable Travel Council monthly newsletter: [Asheville Joins GSTC](#) #BCTDA
  - [AVL Today](#): 3Ws/Bear Public Health Campaign with materials available through Explore Asheville. #LocalNews
  - Asheville Tea Company mentioned EA [in this newsletter](#) about a community partnership they've formed with Asheville GreenWorks – an idea that came about when they met each other at the Explore Asheville Sustainability Resource Fair.
  - *Asheville Citizen-Times*: ["Answer Man" column on Enka Recreation Destination](#) mentioned #BCTDA funding support
  - *Mountain Xpress*, *AVL Today* and other local media publicity of Thrive Asheville's [Ideas To Action Leadership Forum on Sustainable Tourism](#) at which Vic was a featured speaker.
- CVB Social Media: Posts included pre-publicity of the Park2Park segment airing on Oct. 3; sharing energy efficient workshop for businesses and nonprofits hosted by Blue Horizons Project, an exhibitor at the EA Sustainability Resource Fair
- Public Safety: Team continuing to respond to citizen/visitor concerns about local safety protocols
- COVID-19:
  - A [COVID Alert](#) was sent regarding vaccination legalities. Stats: 1,845 delivered; open rate 34.9%; 643 unique opens.
  - The Coronavirus Resource Page on ExploreAshevilleCVB.com is continually updated.
  - Promoted "COVID's Impact on the African American Community" community webinar on social media.

#### Community Engagement

- 3 W's Bear Safety Campaign: Collateral supply was replenished in response to continued requests from partners.

## Public Relations

- Fall Color Forecast: Press release was distributed to nearly 300 media contacts via PR Newswire, with a total pickup of 116 and a potential audience of 135 million. Team conducted follow-up pitches, info sharing and site visit queries with numerous journalists in response.
  - Fall Color Report Consumer E-blast was sent on September 15 to drive email sign-ups and promote [consumer-facing forecast blog report](#) (lifted from PR release).
- Story Support: Query and spa pitch development for Kelly Merritt, special emphasis on sustainability highlights and B&Bs.
- Recent Clips
  - #CVBClip: *ShermansTravel.com* | [What It's Like to Visit Asheville Right Now](#)
  - #CVBClip: *Fodor's & MSN* | [15 Best Fall Foliage Trips in North America](#)

## Engage & Invite More Diverse Audiences

### African American Heritage Trail

- Survey Extension: The community engagement effort was extended from the month of September into mid-October to increase participation in the survey.
- Engagement Efforts:
  - The story panels are on display at the YMI's Community Impact Center and available online through October 17.
  - The YMI hosted open hours throughout the month including during Goombay Festival and the weekly Sankofa Market; and Pat and Researcher Flo Jacques hosted three online viewing session/webinars. Dewayne Barton of Hood Huggers Tours was contracted to assist in the community outreach efforts.
  - Pat presented project updates to the Public Art Commission, Leadership Asheville's class on history day, and the Tourism Working Group. Planning is underway in coordination with Aisha Adams on developing a process for creating an advisory committee to review the feedback gathered through this community engagement effort and provide direction on next phase of development.
- Public Information:
  - [Press release](#) sent to media on September 2.
  - [News alert](#) sent to partners on September 3. Stats: 1,804 delivered; open rate 32.7%; 579 unique opens
  - Media coverage: *Mountain Xpress*: [Blazing a Trail](#); cover story of *AVL Today*: [Forging a Trail](#); [Capital At Play newsletter](#) #BCTDA #Local News
  - Posts on CVB social media.

### Sales Activities

- Conference: Connie attended the 2021 Annual Conference of the International Gay and Lesbian Travel Association (IGLTA) in Atlanta, Georgia.
- Site Visit: Conducted a site visit with Compete Sports Diversity Women's Summit 2022.
- Industry Meeting: Tina attended the inaugural North Carolina Diversity Summit.
- Webinar: Carli attended the Event Service Professionals Association (ESPA) webinar "Diversity, Equity & Inclusion: A look at Intentional & Meaningful DEI for Services."

### Advertising

- Paid Content Partnership:
  - Matador Partnership: Finalized all Phil Calvert content, which focuses on Asheville's good vibes and black culture. Content will be rolling out on Facebook, Instagram and YouTube with efforts driving to a custom landing page on ExploreAsheville.com.

## Public Relations

- Media Site Visit Support:
  - Pitch to *Good Morning America* for “Rise and Shine” live at Biltmore Estate about the resurgence of the wedding industry in Asheville. Shoot date is October 13.
  - Planning for “Chuck’s Big Adventure”, a traveling news show from *WTHC/NBC* in Indianapolis, Indiana. Outreach to Star Watch Night Vision Tours, The Bush Farmhouse, BAD Craft, Joyride Slingshot Rentals, Folk Art Center, NC Arboretum, Double D’s Coffee Bus, Asheville Pinball Museum and Black Mountain Chamber of Commerce (Sharon Tabor).
- Outreach:
  - Pitched news of new Benne on Eagle chef, Ophus Hethington, with recent site visit contact Rachel Friedman securing inclusion in Asheville story. Hethington has an interesting backstory and brings new point-of-view to Benne.
- Story Support:
  - *ShermansTravel*: Rachel Freidman visiting for *ShermansTravel*. Multi-pillar visit included elements of dispersal (Black Mountain and RAD Greenway biking tours) and diverse storylines around experiences on The Block.
  - Thrillist: Shared some Asheville insights and updates with a writer working on a series of LGBTQ+ travel pieces for Thrillist.
  - Lonely Planet: Multi-pillar ideation and info sharing for Amy Balfour of Lonely Planet for Asheville parks and gardens story, including dispersed points of interest and Burton Street Peace Garden.
  - Signature Bride Magazine: Assisted Mariette Williams from Signature Bride Magazine with ideas for Asheville destination wedding hotels/activities. Supplied info regarding new Benne on Eagle chef, Mountaintop to Rooftops Tour and Joyride Slingshot Rentals. Media attended Cambria FAM (Explore Asheville supported).
  - TripSavvy: Assisted Lawrence Ferber from TripSavvy with images from Asheville LGBTQ bars and Blue Ridge Pride.
- Recent Clips:
  - #CVBClip *Passport Magazine* | [Design Hotels Around the World](#)
  - #CVBClip *Passport Magazine* | [Traveling with Pets](#)
  - #CVBClip *OUTvoices* | [Super, Natural Asheville, North Carolina](#)

## Web/Content

- Hispanic Heritage Month: Created new blog post story on Latinx-owned Businesses in Asheville in both [English](#) and [Spanish](#), written by Adriana Chevala of Hola Carolina. Businesses and owners included in the post were Adriana Chevala/Hola Carolina, Elio Gonzales/Miss Gay Latina Asheville, Cecilia Marchesini/Cecilia’s Kitchen and Francisco Troconis/Contemporaneo Gallery.
- Goombay Festival: Shot imagery and video b-roll at Goombay Festival to build up asset portfolio for future promotions.

## Promote & Support Asheville’s Creative Spirit

### Community Engagement

- Partner Updates: Six new partners were added in September: Tayse of Di Islands, Asheville Urban Art Photo Tour, Douglas Ellington House, TownePlace Suites Asheville Downtown, Herschel’s, and S&W Market.
- One-on-One Wednesdays: Four one-on-one sessions were held in September.
- Listing Updates: 249 calendar event listings were processed, and 35 partner listings were updated, including 8 Attractions, 2 Cabins/Vacation Rentals, 10 Food & Drink, 10 Hotels/Motels, 4 Retail, 0 Venue, and 1 Wedding Service.

- Visitor Guide Distribution: 2,319 Individual Out-of-Market requests were fulfilled and 1,188 books (or 27 cases) of In-Market deliveries were made to five industry partners; and 5,148 books (or 117 cases) of Out-of-Market deliveries were made to 20 welcome centers, AAA offices, etc.

#### Sales Activities

- Partner Meeting: The sales team met with local caterers of the Asheville Catering Collective to brainstorm ways to collaborate in the future and discuss what unique experiences these caterers can offer to meeting groups.
- Content Update: Carli refreshed articles about Asheville's Unique Venues, Wellness Activities for Groups, and Team Building Adventures.
- Group Tours: Beth updated the Scenic and Holiday sampler itineraries for tour groups.

#### Advertising

- Paid Content Partnership - Garden & Gun: Finalized components of a 2-year partnership that will include print advertising, paid social, experiential activations, sponsorship of the Made in the South Awards, a holiday social giveaway, and creation of a 2-day "Creative Spirits Experience" in Asheville.

#### Public Information

- Press Release: [Sept. 1: Info Session on Buncombe County TDA Grant Program for Local Festivals & Cultural Events](#)
- Local Media & Other Coverage:
  - [Asheville.com](#) and Hendersonville.com coverage of Festivals & Cultural Events grant program. #BCTDA #LocalNews
  - Assisted WLOS-TV in connecting with a local artist for an upcoming story, also made personal outreach regarding Festivals & Cultural Events Fund information session.
  - Various news coverage of Asheville Holiday Parade mentions Explore Asheville sponsorship.
  - *AVL Today* coverage of the South Slope Mural Trail recognized Explore Asheville.
- CVB Social Media: Posts on Festivals & Cultural Events Fund information session.
- Best Foodie City Award: Asheville was awarded Best Foodie City for the fourth consecutive year by the readers of *Trazee*.

#### Public Relations

- Site Visit Support:
  - Pitched to *Good Morning America* for "Rise and Shine" live in Asheville regarding Tourism Jobs Recovery Act (report stats, US Travel award and partner case studies). The shoot will be in October.
  - Partnership with LEAF to support music media on destination music city stories at fall festival, ahead of big anniversary in 2022.
- Story Support:
  - *AARP*, *Southern Living*, *Our State*, *Charlotte Parent*, *Midtown Magazine*, *Samantha Brown's Places to Love*, *Travel Awaits*, *American Art Collector Magazine*, NC Film Office scouting support, *Simply Recipes*, and freelancer with *USA Today*.
- Outreach:
  - Media contact response to fall news created opportunity to pitch news for a story in luxury outlet *Barron's*. Developed a multi-pillar pitch brief in response.
  - Pitch to freelancer for *Local Palate* with Asheville area and Black Mountain culinary storylines.
  - Pitch to Larry Bleiberg freelancer for *USA Today*. Shared Biltmore news regarding Olmsted's 200<sup>th</sup> birthday celebration and new Olmsted walking trail.
- Recent Clips



- #CVBClip: *Lonely Planet* [17 things to add to your must-do list in Asheville, North Carolina](#)
- #CVBClip: [Real Simple 10 Surprisingly Affordable Destinations for Fall Travel](#)
- #CVBClip: *Lonely Planet* | [From Hiking Trails to Brewery Tours, the 17 Best Free Things to Do in Asheville](#)
- #CVBClip: *Thrillist* | [The 16 Most Essential Craft Breweries in Asheville](#)
- #CVBClip: *Garden & Gun* | [Asheville: At a Glance](#)
- #CVBClip: *Travel + Leisure* | [The Top 15 Cities in the United States](#) & *Yahoo.com* (with more Asheville content, [linked here](#)) \*While voted on by readers, the content was written by a writer the PR Team has been in touch with.

## Run a Healthy & Efficient Organization

### Exec Office

- BCTDA Board Meeting: At the September 29 virtual BCTDA meeting, three new board members were welcomed to the board after being appointed by Asheville City Council: Larry Crosby, The Foundry Hotel; Matthew Lehman, Grand Bohemian Hotel Asheville; and Michael Lusick, FIRC Group, Inc. Vic shared an update on occupancy metrics and a BCTDA Annual Meeting recap, The PowerPoint, recording, and other docs [can be found here](#). The next BCTDA meeting will be held virtually on October 27.
- Board Member Orientation: An in-person board member orientation was held for the three new board members appointed by Asheville City Council.
- County BCTDA Appointments: The Buncombe County Board of Commissioners reopened the application timeline for two BCTDA vacancies and three additional candidates applied by the September 20 deadline. On October 5, the commissioners interviewed the applicants and appointed HP Patel and Scott (Sagar) Patel to 3-year terms.
- New BCTDA Staff Members:
  - Julia Simpson was hired in the role of Administrative Assistant and started on September 8.
  - Michael Poandl was hired in the role of Public Relations Manager and started on September 20.
  - Sha'Linda Pruitt was hired in the role of Public Relations Coordinator and started on September 20.
- Building the Team: Interviews continued for two remaining open positions. Successful interviews were held for the Community Engagement Manager position and a new, more proactive outreach strategy began for the Research Analyst position.
- PTO Policy: A conversion proposal and policy document was begun as we consider the organizational and Team Member impact of converting paid sick and vacation leave to paid Personal Time Off (PTO).
- Remote Working Policy: A policy document was drafted for initial review that would create a platform for staff to develop a plan to work remotely in coordination with their supervisor.
- COVID Policy: The revised COVID Policy Guide for the Explore Asheville team that was provided on August 30 remained in effect throughout the month of September.
- Team Building Staff Retreat: Plans are underway for facilitated all-team and leadership retreats scheduled October 19-20. Birkman assessments were completed in August/September and a team culture survey will be done in October. The results will serve as the foundation of the retreats to be interactively shared with all 27 team members.
- Total Rewards Statement: The individual Total Rewards Statements for all team members employed at Explore Asheville in FY21 have been completed and are undergoing a thorough and final review before being shared with the team.

- FY22 Budget: Began preparing FY22 budget documents for first quarterly review to take place with department heads, as well as high level-review during November director's meeting.

#### Public Information

- BCTDA Annual Meeting:
  - Pre-publicity: Media advisory sent on September 13 resulted in coverage in [Mountain Xpress](#) and in Asheville Downtown Association's and AIR's newsletters.
  - Post-publicity: *Mountain Xpress*: [TDA holds in-person annual meeting](#). #BCTDA (Story was also promoted via their daily e-newsletter).
  - CVB Social Media and ExploreAshevilleCVB.com: Several pre- and post-publicity posts about the meeting, including one by the Small Business & Technology Development Center sharing content from a special edition newsletter produced after the annual meeting (see below).
  - Cecil Award: Press Release: ['Accidental Hotelier' Honored with Top Tourism Leadership Award by Buncombe County TDA](#) This was picked up by *AVL Today* and Asheville Area Chamber of Commerce newsletter. #BCTDA #LocalNews
- BCTDA Monthly Board Meeting + Board Members:
  - *Mountain Xpress*: [Commissioners slated to appoint key board members](#). [Mountain Xpress Coverage](#) of new board members as part of City Council meeting highlights. #BCTDA
  - [Mountain Xpress daily newsletter](#): Opening letter addressed potential changes in legislation and pending appointments to BCTDA.
  - Media Advisory for monthly board meeting sent on September 27 and picked up by *Mountain Xpress* and *AVL Today*.
  - *AVL Today*: Coverage of board appointments to be made by City Council.
- CVB/BCTDA Newsletters/News Alerts/Invitations:
  - Three notices sent for the 2021 Annual Meeting (in addition to coverage in monthly newsletters). Total stats: 5,532 delivered; average open rate 33%; 1,779 unique opens.
  - [CVB September Newsletter](#): Published September 13. Stats: 1,833 delivered; open rate 31.6%; unique opens: 580
  - [Special Edition Newsletter](#) with highlights of Annual Meeting sent on September 22. Stats: 1,793 delivered; open rate: 34.3%; 615 unique opens.
  - [Tourism Community Update](#) newsletter with BCTDA meeting highlights sent on September 29. Stats: Delivered: 1,834; open rate: 47.5%; 872 unique opens.
  - All e-newsletters and alerts sent from Public Information during this report period covering all pillars: 14,641 emails delivered with average open rate of 35% and 5,079 unique opens.

 <p><b>Deliver Balanced Recovery &amp; Sustainable Growth</b></p> <p>Balance resident and visitor needs, recognizing the necessary role that sustainable, long-term growth of travel has in achieving a healthy, collective economy.</p> <p>Focus on the quality of each visit to our community – balancing growth across the seasons, business and leisure travel, and throughout Asheville and Buncombe County.</p>	 <p><b>Engage &amp; Invite More Diverse Audiences</b></p> <p>Extend a genuine invitation to Black travelers and other diverse audiences including LGBTQ visitors – connecting them with local neighborhoods, businesses and entrepreneurs – creating more opportunities for all to win.</p> <p>Support product development, place making and community connections, enabling new experiences and business opportunities throughout our community.</p>
 <p><b>Encourage Safe &amp; Responsible Travel</b></p> <p>Engage residents and visitors with shared values to care for and respect natural, cultural and human resources vital in delivering quality guest experiences.</p> <p>Collaborate with community organizations, local businesses and environmentally focused partners to support the sustainability and growth of our outdoor economy.</p>	 <p><b>Promote &amp; Support Asheville's Creative Spirit</b></p> <p>Share stories of creators and makers who help differentiate our destination through food and drink, visual and performing arts, experiences and more.</p> <p>Support product development, place making and community connections, enabling new experiences and business opportunities throughout our community.</p>