

Buncombe County Tourism Development Authority

Rules of Decorum and Processes & Protocols for Public Comments During Regular Monthly Meetings

The Buncombe County Tourism Development Authority (BCTDA) meets monthly and posts an agenda on AshevilleCVB.com 48 hours in advance. The board invites comments from the public during these meetings as follows:

- **CALL-IN:** Members of the public can call-in their (audio-only) comments using the virtual platform utilized by the BCTDA. Those who wish to call-in their comments must sign up to speak in advance, in accordance with the Processes & Protocols below, and agree to abide by the Rules of Decorum. Speaker substitutions are not permitted.
- **IN-PERSON:** Upon arrival, members of the public attending a BCTDA meeting in-person who wish to make public comments will legibly complete the Public Comment Sign-In Sheet provided at the meeting, affirming that they have read, understand, and agree to abide by the Rules of Decorum. At the appointed time on the agenda, the board chair will invite those who have signed up to stand and share their comments.

Rules of Decorum for Public Comments during BCTDA Meetings:

- Public commenters will have up to 3 minutes to speak and agree to follow the Rules of Decorum.
- Public commenters shall refrain from personal attacks and/or threats directed towards the BCTDA board members, Explore Asheville staff, and meeting presenters and attendees.
- Public commenters agree to be civil and courteous with their language. Insults, profanity, use of vulgar language or gestures, or other inappropriate behavior are not allowed.
- Public commenters should not expect BCTDA board or Explore Asheville staff members to respond to their comments during the meeting.
- Failure to follow these rules will result in the immediate termination of the privilege of commenting, whether calling-in virtually or attending the meeting in-person.
- The chair or online moderator has the authority to enforce the Rules of Decorum.

Processes & Protocols for Call-in Comments during BCTDA Meetings:

- To sign up to share public comments during a BCTDA meeting, send an email to LiveComment@ExploreAsheville.com no later than 12 noon the day before the BCTDA meeting and include:
 - "Request to Speak at BCTDA Meeting" in the subject line
 - Your full name and organization (if applicable)
 - Your area of residence
 - Topic you wish to speak about
 - Estimated number of minutes you plan to speak (up to 3 minutes maximum)
 - Include this statement: *"I have read and understand the Rules of Decorum and Processes & Protocols for Public Comments during regular monthly BCTDA meetings and agree to abide by them."*

- Using the registration link provided on the agenda, register to attend the meeting virtually, entering the same name provided in the request email. This should be done at the same time that you send the request email.
- Anyone requesting time to speak who does not include the information outlined above, and/or does not register via the link provided on the agenda, will not be eligible to make public comments.
- Based on the amount of time allotted for public comments on the agenda, a limited number of public commenters will be approved in the order of requests received, as long as all of the above requirements are met in the requesting email. Based on time restrictions, there is no guarantee that everyone will be able to speak.
- Speakers will be notified if they have secured a call-in speaking slot. If you request a time to speak and a slot is not available, you may wish to attend the meeting in person to provide public comments.
- **If you are notified that you have been scheduled to provide virtual comments:**
 - On the appropriate date and time, use the link you received after registering to view the meeting via the online platform used by the BCTDA. You will likely receive an email reminder about an hour before the meeting.
 - When it's time for the *Comments from the General Public* agenda item, the names of public commenters signed up to speak will be shown on a slide in the order of appearance.
 - An online moderator will send a notification allowing you permission to speak. It is important to watch for and accept the permissions notification. A moderator will announce your name when it is your turn to speak.
 - You will have up to 3 minutes to share your (audio-only) comments. Please make sure to speak clearly and have background noise at a minimum. The moderator will let you know when you have 15 seconds left and then will end your session after 3 minutes.
 - When you finish speaking, a moderator will disable your audio capability and you will transition back to a "view-only" attendee status.
- If you are not in attendance via the virtual platform using the name you provided in your request email at the appointed time on the agenda for public comments, you automatically forfeit your turn to speak.
- In your email requesting to speak, you agreed to abide by the Rules of Decorum and are expected to do so. Any violation will result in the immediate termination of virtual access to the meeting.
- Note that the time for public comment on the agenda is an estimate and the actual time for this item may occur earlier or later than the time posted, based on the timing of other meeting presentations and discussions.
- The BCTDA board and Explore Asheville staff cannot be held responsible for technical difficulties or connectivity issues that may occur during the meeting, which may result in public comments not being heard as arranged.

Note for all who make public comments, whether in-person or via call-in: As a public authority, meetings of the Buncombe County Tourism Development Authority are subject to the North Carolina Public Records Law. All comments will be included in the minutes of the meeting as public records and may be disclosed to third parties. Meetings may also be recorded, and commenters acknowledge that their likeness and/or voice may be recorded and become public record.