



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

Explore Asheville – 27 College Place, Asheville

Board Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, May 29, 2024

- Present (Voting):** Brenda Durden, Chair; Matthew Lehman, Vice Chair; HP Patel, Kathleen Mosher, Lucious Wilson, Elizabeth Putnam, Larry Crosby
- Absent (Voting):** Scott Patel, Michael Lusick
- Present (Ex-Officio):** Asheville Vice Mayor Sandra Kilgore
- Absent (Ex-Officio):** Buncombe County Commissioner Terri Wells
- Staff:** Vic Isley, Tiffany Thacker, Jennifer Kass-Green, Julia Simpson, Ashley Greenstein, Josh Jones, Tina Porter, Dodie Stephens, Penelope Whitman, Ali Wainright
- BC Finance:** Mason Scott
- Legal Counsel:** Sabrina Rockoff, McGuire, Wood & Bissette/BCTDA Attorney
- In-Person Attendees:** Shannon Tuch, Ken Kahn; Town of Woodfin
Marc Hunt, Woodfin Greenway & Blueway
Lisa Raleigh, RiverLink
John Ellis, Prior BCTDA Board Member
Randy Claybrook, Asheville Bed & Breakfast Association
Roy Harris, Community Member
Brooke Randle, Caleb Johnson; Mountain Xpress
Will Hofmann, Asheville Citizen Times
- Online Attendees:** Sha'Linda Pruitt, Kathryn Dewey, Sarajane Case, Anna Harris, Shelby Pearsall, Emilie Soffe, Emily Crosby; Explore Asheville
Jim Muth, TPDF Committee
Lacy Cross, Movement Bank
Zach Wallace, Asheville Area Chamber of Commerce
Andrew Celwyn, Herbiary
Timothy Love, Buncombe County
Rick Bell, Asheville Buncombe Hotel Association
Meghan Rogers, Asheville Independent Restaurant Association
Olivia Ward, OnWard Digital Media
Diane Rogers, Pinecrest Bed & Breakfast
Brad Durden, Asheville Hotel Group

Executive Summary of Meeting Minutes

- Durden called to order the joint regular meeting of the BCTDA, Public Authority, and BCTDA, Nonprofit Corporation, at 9:03 a.m. Introductions were made around the room.
- Minutes from the April 24, 2024, BCTDA meeting were approved with a 7-0 vote.
- The April 2024 financial reports were approved with a 7-0 vote.
- A TPDF contract amendment for Woodfin Greenway & Blueway was approved with a 7-0 vote.
- Vic Isley provided the President & CEO's report.
- FY25 budget presentation was given; with a 7-0 vote, a public hearing for the consideration of the FY25 proposed budget ordinance was set for June 26.
- Vice Mayor Kilgore gave a brief report, and updates were shared on behalf of Commissioner Wells.
- Public comments were heard.
- With a 7-0 vote, the BCTDA meeting adjourned at 9:51a.m.

Call to Order of the Joint BCTDA Meeting

Durden called to order the joint regular meeting of the Buncombe County Tourism Development Authority (BCTDA), a Public Authority, and BCTDA, a Nonprofit Corporation, at 9:03 a.m.

Information was provided about the meeting livestream and document access on [AshevilleCVB.com](https://www.ashevillecvb.com).

Introductions were made around the room.

Approval of Meeting Minutes

HP Patel made a motion to approve the April 24, 2024, regular meeting minutes. Lehman seconded the motion. There was no discussion. A vote was taken; with all in favor, the motion carried 7-0.

April 2024 Financial Reports

Mason Scott of Buncombe County presented the April 2024 financials, reviewing operating and earned revenue funds, project funds, and year-to-date lodging sales trends by month and lodging type.

There were no questions. Putnam made a motion to approve the April 2024 financial reports as presented. Mosher seconded the motion. A vote was taken; with all in favor, the motion carried 7-0.

TPDF Project Update – Woodfin Greenway & Blueway

Tiffany Thacker, director of grants at Explore Asheville, detailed the Tourism Product Development Fund (TPDF) contract amendment request received for the Woodfin Greenway & Blueway project. Thacker noted that due to the request only consisting of changes to the disbursement allocation and schedule, and not any material change to the scope or investment amount, staff confirmed with counsel that this request may be considered for approval by the board without referring to the TPDF Committee for review. Thacker answered all questions.

Mosher made a motion to add the Town of Woodfin as a party to the Woodfin Greenway & Blueway contract and adjust the disbursement allocation and schedule as presented. Crosby seconded the motion. A vote was taken; the motion carried 7-0.

President & CEO Report

Isley presented April 2024 lodging occupancy and demand compared to previous years. She noted that although fiscal-year-to-date lodging revenue through April 2024 was down compared to FY23, the fiscal-year-to-date combined roomnight demand for hotel and vacation rentals was on par with FY23.

Isley highlighted the inaugural Heroes of Hospitality award recipients and promotional efforts for the Summer Camp movie that was filmed in the area. She listed festivals and events Explore Asheville supported in May and June and provided information about the American Kennel Club Disc Dog event at to Karl Straus Track on June 2.

FY25 Budget Presentation

HP Patel, BCTDA nonprofit treasurer, reviewed some of the data that informed the Finance Committee's budget discussions for FY25.

Jennifer Kass-Green, vice president of culture and business affairs for Explore Asheville, expanded upon the budget considerations for the upcoming fiscal year. She then presented the FY25 proposed budget, outlining specifics of the operating fund, Tourism Product Development Fund (TPDF), Legacy Investment from Tourism (LIFT) Fund, and Earned Revenue Fund.

Crosby motioned that the board direct that the presented budget ordinance be made available for public review and that a public hearing be set for the consideration of the ordinance for the next board meeting on June 26 at 9:00 a.m. Wilson seconded the motion. A vote was taken; the motion carried 7-0.

The proposed budget presentation and ordinance is on file with Explore Asheville and posted on AshevilleCVB.com.

Asheville City Council Update

Vice Mayor Kilgore provided city-related updates, including council's recent considerations of housing developments, staff compensation, and bonds.

Buncombe County Commission Update

Commissioner Wells was absent. Durden shared county-related updates on her behalf, including information on funding of affordable housing, selection of a waste management service, and budget.

Miscellaneous Business

There was no miscellaneous business presented at this meeting.

Comments from the General Public

Roy Harris addressed the board and acknowledged that the BCTDA's support of local projects is beneficial to residents as well as tourists. Harris said he has visited the majority of the places that have received grant funding from the BCTDA and will attempt to go to the remainder. He also shared appreciation for the Heroes of Hospitality event and the recognition of industry workers.

Adjournment

The PowerPoint presentation and relevant documents are on file with Explore Asheville and are posted on [AshevilleCVB.com](https://www.AshevilleCVB.com).

The next joint BCTDA meeting will be held on Wednesday, June 26, 2024, beginning at 9:00 a.m., in the Explore Asheville Board Room, located at 27 College Place.

Crosby made a motion to adjourn the meeting, and Putnam seconded the motion. The motion carried 7-0. The meeting was adjourned at 9:51 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Julia Simpson". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Julia Simpson, Manager, Executive & Strategy