



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, June 26, 2024

- Present (Voting):** Brenda Durden, Chair; Matthew Lehman, Vice Chair; HP Patel, Elizabeth Putnam, Larry Crosby, Scott Patel, Michael Lusick, Lucious Wilson
- Absent (Voting):** Kathleen Mosher
- Present (Ex-Officio):** Asheville Vice Mayor Sandra Kilgore, Buncombe County Commissioner Terri Wells
- Absent (Ex-Officio):** None.
- Staff:** Vic Isley, Jennifer Kass-Green, Julia Simpson, Ashley Greenstein, Josh Jones, Glenn Ramey, Penelope Whitman, Tiffany Thacker, Mike Kryzanek
- BC Finance:** Melissa Moore
- Legal Counsel:** Sabrina Rockoff, McGuire, Wood & Bissette/BCTDA Attorney
- In-Person Attendees:** Tina Kinsey, Lew Bleiweis; Asheville Regional Airport Authority
John Ellis, Prior TDA Board Member
Randy Claybrook, Asheville Bed & Breakfast Association
Olivia Ward, OnWard Digital Media
Megan Rogers, Asheville Independent Restaurant Association
Caleb Johnson, Brooke Randle, Pat Moran; Mountain Xpress
Will Hoffman, Asheville Citizen Times
- Online Attendees:** Sha'Linda Pruitt, Mickey Poandl, Anna Harris, Carli Adams, Khal Khoury, Sarajane Case, Kimberly Puryear, Kathryn Dewey; Explore Asheville
Megan Thorp, Miranda Bowman; Tanger Outlets
Jim Muth, TPDF Committee
Sherree Lucas, Go Local Asheville
Chris Smith, Madison Davis; Asheville Buncombe Regional Sports Commission
Lacy Cross, Movement Bank
Kit Cramer, Asheville Area Chamber of Commerce
Diane Rogers, Pinecrest Bed & Breakfast
Chip Craig, Greybeard Rentals
Susan Gaddis
Rick Bell, Asheville Buncombe Hotel Association
Brad Durden, Asheville Hotel Group
Kevin Beattie, WLOS
Felicia Sonmez, Blue Ridge Public Radio

Executive Summary of Meeting Minutes

- Durden called to order the joint regular meeting of the BCTDA, Public Authority, and BCTDA, Nonprofit Corporation, at 9:04 a.m. Introductions were made around the room.
- Minutes from the May 29, 2024, BCTDA meeting were approved with a 6-0 vote.
- The May 2024 financial reports were approved with a 7-0 vote.
- In a board development update, HP Patel was reappointed as Treasurer of the Nonprofit with a 7-0 vote; recent BCTDA reappointments and openings were announced.
- The FY25 meeting schedule and December meeting cancellation were approved with an 8-0 vote.
- Vic Isley provided the President & CEO's report.
- The public hearing on the FY25 BCTDA budget ordinance opened and closed with no members of the public requesting an opportunity to speak.
- The budget ordinance adopting the BCTDA's FY25 operating, earned revenue, and Tourism Product Development Fund (TPDF) and Legacy Investment from Tourism (LIFT) Fund administrative budgets was approved with an 8-0 vote.
- Tina Kinsey presented an update from the Asheville Regional Airport.
- Vice Mayor Sandra Kilgore and Commissioner Terri Wells provided brief updates.
- With an 8-0 vote, the BCTDA meeting adjourned at 10:17 a.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 9:04 a.m.

There was a quorum, but Lusick and Wilson were not yet present.

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

Putnam made a motion to approve the May 29, 2024, regular meeting minutes. HP Patel seconded the motion. There was no discussion. A vote was taken; with all in favor, the motion carried 6-0. Lusick and Wilson were not present for this vote.

Lusick then joined the meeting.

May 2024 Financial Reports

Melissa Moore, BCTDA Fiscal Agent, presented May 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. Crosby made a motion to approve the May 2024 financial reports as presented. Lehman seconded the motion. A vote was taken; with all in favor, the motion carried 7-0. Wilson was not present for this vote.

BCTDA Board Development Updates

Approval of FY25 Board Officer Nomination

Durden acknowledged that the BCTDA Chair and Vice Chair were appointed to two-year terms in June 2023. She said HP Patel was nominated to serve another year as treasurer of the BCTDA nonprofit.

Putnam motioned to approve the nomination for treasurer of the nonprofit, as presented; Crosby seconded. There was no discussion. The motion carried 7-0. Wilson was not present for this vote.

BCTDA Reappointments and Openings

Durden announced that Lehman, Lusick, and HP Patel were reappointed to the board. She also shared that recruitment was underway for replacements for Scott Patel and Kathleen Mosher.

Wilson joined the meeting.

Approval of BCTDA FY25 Meeting Schedule

Putnam made a motion to approve the FY25 meeting schedule as presented, including cancelling December's meeting. Wilson seconded the motion. There was no discussion. A vote was taken; with all in favor the motion carried 8-0.

President & CEO Report

Isley presented May 2024 lodging occupancy and demand compared to previous years. She noted demand in May was the highest on record for hotels and vacation rentals. She reviewed fiscal-year-to-date combined roomnight demand for hotel and vacation rentals, which was comparable to FY23.

Isley highlighted business development happenings, including the recent groundbreaking at Woodfin Greenway & Blueway, a TPDF investment that should attract whitewater events, and successes booking impactful conferences and groups that align with economic development efforts.

She listed festivals and events Explore Asheville supported in June and July and shared details about two upcoming partner events: Summer Social and Travel and Hospitality Night at McCormick Field.

Proposed FY25 Budget Ordinance

Jennifer Kass-Green, vice president of culture and business affairs, said the FY25 proposed budget ordinance was presented on May 29 and a public hearing date was set for June 26. The proposed budget ordinance was available on AshevilleCVB.com and public notice about the budget hearing was published in the Asheville Citizen Times on June 2. Kass-Green recapped budget ordinance allocations.

Public Hearing on FY25 Proposed Budget Ordinance

Durden opened and closed the public hearing on the proposed FY25 budget ordinance at 9:27 a.m., noting that no one from the public signed up to provide input on the budget.

Approval of BCTDA FY25 Proposed Budget Ordinance

Lehman made a motion to approve the FY25 budget ordinance as presented. Lusick seconded the motion. There was no discussion. A vote was taken; the motion carried 8-0.

Asheville Regional Airport Update

Tina Kinsey, chief administrative officer for Asheville Regional Airport Authority, presented the latest trends at the AVL airport. Kinsey shared continued growth and opportunity through charts and graphs. She acknowledged the importance of partnership with Explore Asheville.

Kinsey also spoke about the status of the AVL Forward project and key milestones of the expansion. With support from Lew Bleiweis, president & CEO of the Asheville Regional Airport Authority, Kinsey answered questions about air service and route development efforts and the airport's master plan.

Asheville City Council Update

Vice Mayor Kilgore spoke about the recent opening of the inclusive playground at Murphy-Oakley Park, conditional zoning approval for a mixed-use development at 172 Moody Avenue with 10% affordable units, and details about the passing of the city budget.

Buncombe County Commission Update

Commissioner Wells shared appreciation for Explore Asheville and board member involvement in hospitality week career development efforts, announced the hiring of an internal audit director, gave specifics about the county budget, and expressed excitement about the Woodfin Greenway & Blueway.

Miscellaneous Business

Lusick apologized for his tardy arrival to the meeting; board members responded with empathy.

Comments from the General Public

There were no comments made by the public at this meeting.

Adjournment

The PowerPoint presentation and relevant documents are on file with Explore Asheville and are posted on AshevilleCVB.com.

The next joint BCTDA meeting will be held on Wednesday, July 31, 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 Lusick seconded the motion. With all in favor, the motion carried 8-0. The meeting was adjourned at 10:17 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Julia Simpson, Manager, Executive & Strategy