

Boone Tourism Development Authority Meeting Minutes
May 21, 2025, at 3:00 pm
Explore Boone Office – 171 Grand Blvd. Boone, NC

Present: Sheri Moretz, Jerry Lamonds, Lynne Mason, Elisha Brown, Tara Brossa, Brian Williams, Edie Tugman, and Brian Crutchfield

Absent: Lenny Cottom

TDA Staff: Wright Tilley, Hope Thingelstad, and Emily Neeley

Guests: Kayla Trivette (Town of Boone Finance), Allison Meade (Town of Boone Attorney), Lane Moody (DBDA Director)

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 3:05 pm.

Elisha Brown entered the meeting.

Approval of the May 21, 2025, meeting agenda:

The Howard Street Update was moved up in the agenda to accommodate Lane's schedule.

Brian W., seconded by Jerry Lamonds, moved to approve the May 21, 2025, meeting agenda as amended. The motion passed (8/0).

Approval of the March 19, 2025, meeting minutes:

Edie Tugman, seconded by Tara Brossa, moved to approve the March 19, 2025, meeting minutes. The motion passed (8/0).

Treasurer's Report

There was a beginning balance of \$451,175.05 on March 20, 2025. The total revenue was \$316,784.03 between that time and May 21. Expenses during that period totaled \$364,777.22. The ending checking balance was \$403,181.86. The beginning money market balance was \$1,798,308.72, and interest gained was \$11,607.44. The ending cash balance for this time was \$2,213,098.02.

Kayla prepared a second report, an overview of the budget revenues and expenditures for the fiscal year. Wright will double-check that the sports tourism expenditures have been paid.

Jerry Lamonds, seconded by Elisha Brown, moved to approve the Treasurer's Report. The motion passed (8/0).

Howard Street Update – Lane Moody, DBDA

Lane Moody, Downtown Boone Development Association Director, provided an update about the Howard Street project. Construction began in mid-May at the Depot/Howard St. intersection with the replacement of essential pipes under the road. Work will continue Monday through Thursday, for 12 hours per day. Once work at that intersection concludes, it will move towards Water Street. Signage directing visitors will continue to change and be updated as the work continues and the status of the project changes. Lane will continue to provide updates to those businesses in the immediate area on a weekly basis.

Lane Moody left the meeting.

Old Business – TDA Bylaws

Allison Meade, Town of Boone attorney, provided feedback about the proposed TDA bylaws before they are voted on by the Town Council. Initially, after receiving the submission from the TDA, Ms. Meade determined that it was inappropriate for a town board to have bylaws. However, after researching the TDA's enabling legislation and confirming that the TDA is categorized as a separate public authority known as a municipal corporation, she determined that bylaws are appropriate as long as they comply with the enabling legislation and the town's resolution. Allison also mentioned a legal contract, which was terminated by Boone's town council at their last meeting.

According to the enabling legislation, any membership requirements must be included in the town's resolution. Ms. Meade suggested the town could update its resolution to include the board composition requirements included in the draft bylaws. Additionally, the Chair, Vice Chair, and Secretary on the TDA's board of directors must be appointed by the town council. Allison offered additional suggestions for the rest of the drafted bylaws to the TDA board. Once the bylaws have been updated and approved by the TDA board, they can be resubmitted to the town council for approval.

Emily Neeley and Allison Meade left the meeting.

New Business

- Audit Contract

Jerry Lamonds, seconded by Elisha Brown, moved to approve the \$5,500 audit contract with Combs, Tennant & Carpenter P.C for FY 25/26. The motion passed (8/0).

- Review of Preliminary FY 2025/2026 Budget

Mr. Tilley presented a preliminary budget, including projected occupancy tax revenue of \$2.3 million and interest revenue of \$75,000. He noted the increases and decreases in each budget category, noting an increase in the PR services line item as part of the TDA's marketing strategy to bring more travel writers and influencers to the destination.

- Doc & Rosa Lee Watson Music Fest Sponsorship Request

After damage from Hurricane Helene destroyed the venue for Doc & Rosa Lee Watson MusicFest, the event has been moved to a one-day concert at the Appalachian Theatre this July. Since the event will be held in the town of Boone, they are requesting marketing support from the Boone TDA.

Jerry Lamonds, seconded by Tara Brossa, moved to approve the Doc & Rosa Lee Watson MusicFest sponsorship of \$2,500. The motion passed (8/0).

Tourism Outreach Report

Hope informed the board of directors about a staff change and that the TDA has been interviewing for a new Administrative and Guest Services Assistant. After receiving over 40 applications from LinkedIn and the Chamber of Commerce's career center, six applicants were selected for interviews. Following this, the staff will conduct a second interview with the finalists. Her report was included in the board meeting packets, and she is available to answer any follow-up questions via email.

Executive Directors Report

- Occupancy Tax Update

Mr. Tilley reported on the actual occupancy and ADR through April of 2025, through the STR, Costar report. Occupancy tax collections in the town of Boone were up 11.74% in April compared to the previous year. For the fiscal year to date, the town is up almost 9%.

- Marketing & Promotion Update

Working with Miles Partnership, the TDA has continued to expand on the recovery marketing campaign to remind visitors that the area is open and ready for visits. The public has begun to respond negatively to the "faces" inspiring awe campaign, so these concepts have been shelved as the agency works on creating a new campaign. Miles Partnership should have some initial new campaign concepts to present soon. The TDA office will serve as a Media Hub during the Boonerang Music & Arts Festival.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:30 p.m.