

Boone Tourism Development Authority – Meeting Minutes
June 18, 2025 at 3:00 pm
Explore Boone Office – 171 Grand Blvd. Boone, NC

Present: Sherry Moretz – Chair
Lenny Cottom
Tara Brossa
Jerry Lamonds
Brian Crutchfield
Elisha Brown
Lynne Mason
Edie Tugman

Absent: Brian Williams

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

Guest: Kayla Trivette

Call to Order: The Meeting was called to order by Sheri Moretz, Board Chair at 3:03 pm

Lynne Mason entered the meeting.

Introduction of Lisa Clements, new hire for Administrative/Guest Services. Acknowledgments; then Lisa left the meeting.

Approval of the June 18, 2025 Agenda

*Lenny Cottom moved to approve the agenda, seconded Jerry Lamonds.
The motion passed (7/0).*

Review and approval of May 21, 2025 board meeting minutes:

*Lynne Mason moved to approve the May 21 meeting minutes, seconded by Tara Brossa.
The motion passed (7/0).*

Treasurer's Report:

Given by Kayla Trivette

There was a beginning balance of \$403,181.86 on May 29, 2025. The April 2025 Occupancy Tax revenue was \$177,138.83. Expenses from 5/22/2025 through 6/13/2025 were \$306,237.62. The interest totaled: \$5,927.55. The ending checking balance was \$274,083.07. The ending money market balance was \$1,815,843.71. The ending cash balance was \$2,089,926.78

Public Budget Comment:

Opened 3:09 – *Sheri Moretz moved to open the public budget hearing, seconded by Lynne Mason. The motion passed (7/0).*

Closed 3:10 – *Jerry Lamonds moved to close, seconded by Elisha Brown. The motion passed (7/0). (There were no comments proffered)*

Approval of FY 2025/2026 TDA Budget Ordinance

Wright Tilley presented a balanced FY 2025/2026 budget overview for the ordinance, which estimates \$2,375,000.00 in revenues and expenditures. ***Lenny Cottom moved to approve the FY 2025/2026 TDA Budget Ordinance, seconded by Lynne Mason. The motion passed (7/0).***

Edie Tugman entered the meeting. Tara Brossa left the meeting.

New Business

- Budget Amendments – FY 2024/2025 – The Board Priorities had to be adjusted \$3500.00 from the fund balance. The board awarded more marketing sponsorships to organizations to help market events that were determined to help increase tourism to Boone. ***Motion to increase the board priorities line item by \$3500.00 made by Jerry Lamonds, seconded by Elisha Brown. The motion passed (7/0).***
PR Service increased by \$500.00 from the fund balance. The increase is due to PR initiatives and hosted writer trips to help promote and showcase Hurricane Helene recovery and that businesses were open. ***Motion to increase the PR Service line item by \$500.00 made by Brian C, seconded by Jerry Lamonds. The motion passed (7/0).***
The Town of Boone Tourism Related line item adjusted by \$95,000.00. During the FY 2024/2025, the Boone TDA could likely realize more occupancy tax collections than budgeted for. This amendment increases the expenditure line item for the 1/3 occupancy tax funds that go to the Town of Boone for tourism related project. ***Motion to adjust the Boone Tourism related line item by \$95,000.00 made by Lenny Cottom, seconded by Elisha Brown. The motion passed (7/0).***
- Joint Marketing/Advertising amendment in the amount of \$50,000.00. During the FY 2024/2025, the marketing spending was increased in typically slower months to help promote the recovery campaign and that Boone was open for visitors. ***Motion to adjust the joint marketing/advertising amendment in the amount of \$50,000.00 made by Jerry, seconded by Lynne Mason. The motion passed (7/0).***
- Town of Boone Tourism Funds – The Town of Boone will have a recommendation for the TDA in July. The board also requested a report for what the 1/3 of infrastructure projects TDA budget was used for in FY 2024/2025
- Watauga Arts Council requested \$10,000.00 for art promotion. TDA discussed; there was no action taken. \$3000.00 was requested for Buskers Fest. TDA discussed; \$1500.00 was awarded. ***Motion to approve a \$1500.00 Busker Fest sponsorship made by Sheri Moretz, seconded by Lenny Cottom. The motion passed (7/0).***

PR and Social Media Report – Emily Neeley

Articles or mentions regarding the local area in the following publications: Our State, Smithsonian Magazine, Architectural Digest and Southern Living. PR has included several mentions of the local area and in particular the salamander protection efforts promoted by environmental organizations. These articles and interviews feature Boone and the role that the

area plays in conservation, tourism and rebuilding post Hurricane Helene. There are two more media visits planned for July. Social media metrics and trends were provided.

Tourism Outreach Report – Hope Thingelstad

Visitor guides and in-person visit counts were presented. E-newsletter subscriber and performance data was presented as well as website analytics. Bulk visitor guide distributions were noted, with 103 cases delivered regionally. 37.5 cases were delivered to tourism related businesses and 2.25 cases of adventure guides were distributed. Tourism partners are now at 584 in total with updates and new pages are added on a regular basis.

Executive Director Report – Wright Tilley

A copy of Our State Magazine was provided to show the article and ads promoting Boone and the area. Information was provided regarding local radio interviews and promotions. Every two weeks Wright will be on local radio with a feature time to discuss local tourism. Events and other tourism related matters will be presented.

Upcoming media plans and advertising efforts were presented. All media outlets are being considered and evaluated. Planning for the remainder of 2025 and FY 2025/2026 is taking place.

Occupancy tax reports were provided.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:12 pm