

Hickory-Conover Tourism Development Authority
Regular Meeting Minutes
September 11, 2023, 8:30 a.m.

A Regular Meeting of the Hickory-Conover Tourism Development Authority Board of Directors was held in the Conover 1 meeting room of the Hickory Metro Convention Center on Monday, September 11, 2023 at 8:30 a.m., with the following members present:

	Bruce Eckard; Chair	
Kimberly George	Tom Hart	Patricia Hatch
Renee Keever	Lindsay Keisler	Mark Seaman
	Warren Wood	

A quorum was present.

Also present were Rick Beasley; Assistant Hickory City Manager, Terry Taylor; Counsel, Elizabeth Clark; Marketing Coordinator, Mandy Hildebrand; CEO, Sarah Jones; Director of Sales and Marketing, and Amber Howard; Director of Events/TDA Clerk.

- I. Chair Eckard called the meeting to order at 8:32 a.m. All Board Members were present except for Leroy Lail.
- II. Persons Wishing to Be Heard (None Appearing)
- III. Approval of Minutes

A. Regular Meeting of August 14, 2023.

Mr. Seaman moved, seconded by Mr. Wood, that the Minutes of August 14, 2023, be approved. The motion carried unanimously.

IV. Approval of Financial Report

A. Event Revenue - Ms. Howard

Ms. Howard presented the Event Revenue report for August 2023. There were eight events with a total event revenue for the month \$29,410. Event Revenue is on track to meet the budgeted 23-24 numbers.

B. Occupancy Tax - Ms. Hildebrand

July 2023 numbers came in at a record high of \$193,037, which is down from last year. Staff goal is to average around \$200,000 per month in occupancy tax revenues.

C. August 2023 Finance Report - Ms. Hildebrand

For the second month of the Fiscal Year, income and expense should be at 16.7%. Overall, income is at 10.8% of what was budgeted without August occupancy tax, and expense is at 7.6% of what was budgeted.

Mr. Wood asked about football teams meeting at the convention center. Mr. Wood also brought up Gun Show parking complaints. Ms. Hildebrand expanded on how staff is trying to handle this. Mr. Wood discussed the possibility of a covered walkway from hotels to the convention center. Ms. Keever said they are discussing a paved pathway for the future connecting hotels and leading to the convention center.

Chair Eckard moved, seconded by Mr. Wood, that the Finance Report for August 2023 be approved. The motion carried unanimously.

V. Old Business - Chair Eckard

A. Construction Update - Ms. Hildebrand

Construction is on schedule at this time. There has been a lot of progress and the monthly reports on the website are up to date. The roof going on expansion should happen this fall. Mr. Beasley is working on getting additional parking places added along 13th Ave. Dr. SE. The City of Hickory is bidding it out and at the last HCTDA meeting it was approved by the board that the HCTDA will reimburse the City of Hickory for the costs of the parking spots.

Ms. Hildebrand discussed the need for more office space for growing staff in the future and the Visitors Center is a space where offices could be added because brochure racks are being built in the lobby of the main entrance and the plan is to add an Information Desk inside the main lobby as well, staffed by an employee, for the convention center and visitors. Preliminary conversations have been had to find out the costs for construction drawings and reworking the space. This would need to be a change order for Hickory Construction in the project.

Ms. Keever added that we have good staff but will need to find more for the future.

Ms. Hildebrand said the entire project is projected to be complete by end of September 2024.

B. Marketing Strategic Plan - Ms. Hildebrand

Ms. Hildebrand, Ms. Jones, and Ms. Howard are in the process of reviewing the study done by Young Strategies. Tweaks will be and strategic plan will be presented once complete.

VI. New Business - None to Report

VII. Sales & Marketing Report - Ms. Jones

Attending Sports Tradeshow in Indiana and has meetings setup with several Cheer Teams and an NCJAA basketball tournament.

Will attend TEAMS in October with the NC Sports Assn.

Presented slideshow for marketing update which recapped successes for 2022-2023 and discussed plans to market the region moving forward.

VIII. CEO Report - Ms. Hildebrand

Presented draft of Annual Report for FY 2022-2023, which will be on website and sent out via email and social media once complete.

Will be making several presentations to groups around the community of the construction updates.

Audit taking place this month.

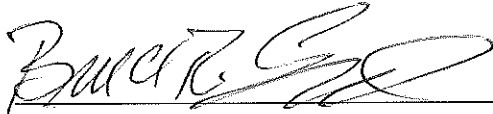
As discussed prior, there will be changes made in staffing and will need to hire future staff to help run the expansion.

IX. Adjournment

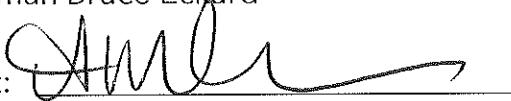
The next HCTDA Board Meeting will be held on October 9, 2023, at 8:30 a.m. at the Hickory Metro Convention Center.

There being no further business, Chair Eckard adjourned the meeting.

Hickory-Conover Tourism Development Authority

By: 

Chairman Bruce Eckard

Attest: 

Clerk to the Board