

Hickory-Conover Tourism Development Authority
Regular Meeting Minutes
February 12, 2024, 8:30 a.m.

A Regular Meeting of the Hickory-Conover Tourism Development Authority Board of Directors was held in the Catawba River Boardroom of the Hickory Metro Convention Center on Monday, February 12, 2024, at 8:30 a.m., with the following members present:

Bruce Eckard; Chair
Kimberly George Renee Keever
Lindsay Keisler Mark Seaman

A quorum was present.

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

I. Call to Order

Chair Eckard called the meeting to order at 8:33 a.m. All Board Members were present except for Tom Hart & Warren Wood.

Chair Eckard called for a moment of silence to honor the life of Leroy Lail and his service of over 28 years to the HCTDA Board.

II. Persons Wishing to Be Heard (None Appearing)

III. Approval of Minutes

A. Regular Meeting of January 8, 2024.

Chair Eckard moved, seconded by Ms. George, that the Minutes of January 8, 2024, be approved. The motion carried unanimously.

IV. Approval of Financial Report

A. Event Revenue - Ms. Howard

Ms. Howard presented the event revenue chart for January 2024. There were 11 new events in January with two of those events being new. Seven months into the Fiscal Year, event revenue is at 75% of budgeted amount.

B. Occupancy Tax - Ms. Hildebrand

Ms. Hildebrand presented the occupancy tax report which shows six months of collections. Ms. Keever mentioned that January 2024 numbers will be down a bit because January 2023 numbers were so high, and the hotels were at 90% occupancy during that time.

C. Finance Report - Ms. Hildebrand

For the seventh month of the Fiscal Year, income and expense should be at 58%. Overall, income is at 54% of what was budgeted without January occupancy tax, and expense is at 43% of what was budgeted.

Mr. Seaman moved, seconded by Ms. George, that the Financial Report for February 2024 be approved. The motion carried unanimously.

V. Budget Ordinance Amendments

Ms. Hildebrand explained Budget Amendments for items necessary with renovation and addition. These items include upgraded audio visual and sound systems, sports venue & exhibit hall items, furnishings and signage, and miscellaneous items. There is enough money in fund balance to cover all items and a detailed list of the items is attached.

A. Ordinance #2 Amending the 2023-2024 Operating Budget - Ms. Hildebrand

Mr. Seaman moved, seconded by Ms. Keisler, that Ordinance #2 Amending the 2023-2024 Operating Budget as attached be approved. The motion carried unanimously.

B. Ordinance #1 Amending the 2023-2024 Capital Projects Budget - Ms. Hildebrand

Ms. George moved, seconded by Chair Eckard, that Ordinance #1 Amending the 2023-2024 Capital Projects Budget as attached be approved. The motion carried unanimously.

C. Ordinance #2 Amending the 2023-2024 Capital Reserve Fund – Ms. Hildebrand

Chair Eckard moved, seconded by Mr. Seaman, that Ordinance #2 Amending the 2023-2024 Capital Reserve Fund as attached be approved. The motion carried unanimously.

D. Old Business

A. Construction Update – Ms. Hildebrand

Soon, Ms. Hildebrand will meet with Brad Lail, Ms. Keever, & Mr. Beasley about the plans for the Furniture Hall of Fame.

Finish date for project is still the summer of 2024.

At the last meeting, Mr. Wood asked how many parking spaces would be available after project completion. Ms. Hildebrand said that there would be a total of 959 spaces.

Ms. Hildebrand and Ms. Howard met with Valley Hills Mall regarding using their lots when needed. When needed, guests can also park at the Piedmont Center. Ms. Keever mentioned that Piedmont Center Associates (PCA) still has plans to try to tie all the hotels together via a sidewalk or path of some sort. Ms. Hildebrand mentioned again, like earlier months, that she and the board need to talk with PCA about using the lot behind Verizon for parking.

VI. New Business – None to Report

VII. Sales & Marketing Report – Ms. Jones

CVCC is hosting the NC Junior College Athletic Association Basketball Tournament in March 2024.

Also bidding to host 2026-2028 Division 3 Women’s Basketball Tournament, which brings 24 teams.

Have the potential to bid on Division 2 Women’s Basketball Tournament as well.

Received and RFP to bid on a large soccer tournament but we do not have the facilities.

Fishers of Men is coming back in Fall 2024 for the NC State Tournament.

King Kats National Fishing Tournament is also returning to Hickory.

Had a site visit last Friday with representatives from the National Flag Football League, coming in August of 2024, which would bring between 60-75 teams.

Bidding on Alpha Phi Alpha for November 2024 - the First African American fraternity in the US.

Sent out sports marketing ad in Sports Destination Magazine - digital e-blast and newsletter blast. Sent out on February 8 and have already received two requests for information - volleyball and cheer/dance.

Last week was the Branding Committee meeting kickoff - process begins with stakeholder interviews and research on Destination by Design. Using information from Young Strategies as well.

Will attend Visit NC Media Mission in March in Atlanta, GA. This event connects us with Travel and Leisure, Fodders, etc. There will only be 8-10 destinations so Hickory will get a lot of one-on-one time with each agency.

VIII. CEO Report - Ms. Hildebrand

At this time, the Visitor Services & Receptionist position has not been filled.

Will be participating in the CVCC Career Fair in April. Will be asking hotels and restaurant partners if they would like to give us a list of job openings or set up with us to promote jobs in hospitality.

Beginning to work on Fiscal Year 2024-2025 Budget.

Checkers fast food restaurant in Hickory has been charging customers a 2% hospitality tax since October of 2023. Catawba County does not have a hospitality tax, so the question was raised as to what the tax is actually being used for. Folks on social media have commented as well. Ms. Hildebrand is investigating. Ms. George commented that it is probably a system issue within their corporate office and the local employees probably do not even know where the tax goes, and it is a matter of reaching the correct person at the corporate office. Ms. Hildebrand will continue to investigate and let the board know her findings.

IX. Adjournment

The next HCTDA Board Meeting will be held on March 4, 2024, 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

**Hickory-Conover Tourism Development Authority
Ordinance #2 Amending the 2023-2024 Operating Budget Ordinance**

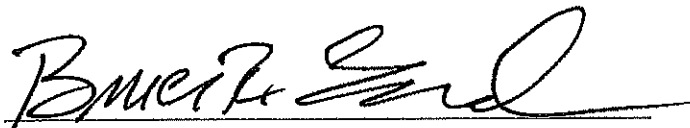
The Governing Board of the Hickory-Conover Tourism Development Authority, North Carolina does ordain and enact as follows:

That the 2023-2024 Budget Ordinance of the Hickory-Conover Tourism Development Authority, adopted pursuant to the provisions of Chapter 159 of the General Statutes of North Carolina, the Local Government Budget and Fiscal Control Act, be amended as follows:


	<u>Adopted Budget to Date</u>	<u>Amendment</u>	<u>Amended Budget</u>
Personnel	\$ 1,009,000		\$ 1,009,000
Operating	\$ 1,246,301		\$ 1,246,301
Debt	\$ 788,699		\$ 788,699
Capital			
Transfer to Capital Project		\$ 1,161,000	\$ 1,161,000
Transfer to Capital Reserve	\$ 262,000		\$ 262,000
	<u>\$ 3,306,000</u>	<u>\$ 1,161,000</u>	<u>\$ 4,467,000</u>

\$1,161,000 Fund Balance Appropriated

Adopted this 12th day of February, 2024.



Chairman



Clerk

Hickory-Conover Tourism Development Authority
Ordinance #2 Amending the 2023-2024 Capital Reserve Fund Ordinance

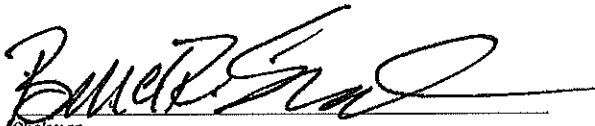
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	<u>Adopted Budget to Date</u>	<u>Amendment</u>	<u>Amended Budget</u>
Transfer to Capital Projects	\$ 850,773	\$ 10,000	\$ 860,773
	<u>\$ 850,773</u>	<u>\$ 10,000</u>	<u>\$ 860,773</u>

\$10,000 Transfer from General Fund

Adopted this 12th day of February, 2024.


Chairman


Clerk

**Hickory-Conover Tourism Development Authority
Ordinance #1 Amending the 2023-2024 Capital Projects Budget Ordinance**

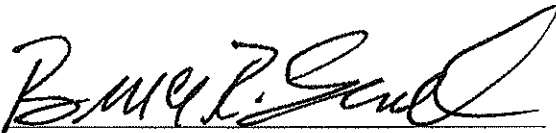
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	<u>Adopted Budget to Date</u>	<u>Amendment</u>	<u>Amended Budget</u>
Design Services and Professional Team and Overseeing Construction- Renovation Design 5/10/21	\$ 1,019,250	\$ 1,171,000	\$ 2,190,250
	<u>\$ 1,019,250</u>	<u>\$ 1,171,000</u>	<u>\$ 2,190,250</u>

\$1,161,000 Transfer from General Fund
\$10,000 Transfer from Capital Reserve Fund

Adopted this 12th day of February, 2024



Chairman



Clerk