

**Hickory-Conover Tourism Development Authority**  
**Regular Meeting Minutes**  
**August 15, 2022, 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, August 15, 2022, at 8:30 a.m., with the following members present:

	Bruce Eckard; Chair	
Tom Hart	Patricia Hatch	Renee Keever
Leroy Lail		Mark Seaman
Warren Wood		Phil Yount

A quorum was present.

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

- I. Chair Eckard called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m. All Board Members were present except for Lindsay Keisler.
- II. Persons Wishing to Be Heard (None Appearing)
- III. Approval of Minutes

A. Regular Meeting of June 13, 2022

Mr. Yount moved, seconded by Mr. Lail, that the Minutes of June 13, 2022, be approved. The motion carried unanimously.

B. Closed Session Meeting of June 13, 2022.

Chair Eckard moved, seconded by Mr. Yount, that the Closed Session Minutes of June 13, 2022, be approved. The motion carried unanimously.

IV. Financial Reports

A. Event Revenue – Ms. Howard

Ms. Howard reviewed event comparison chart for June 2022 vs. June 2021. There were 11 events in June 2022, with two of those events being first time events.

Ms. Howard reviewed event comparison chart for July 2022 vs. July 2021. There were four events in July 2022. One of the larger events that is normally held in July, JROTC, was moved to August 2022 due to a COVID outbreak, but was later cancelled all together.

B. Occupancy Tax - Ms. Hildebrand

Ms. Hildebrand reviewed Occupancy Tax numbers for Fiscal Year 2021-2022, which was the highest reported in the history of HCTDA at \$2,188,601.68.

C. June 2022 Financial Report - Ms. Hildebrand

For the twelfth month of the Fiscal Year, income and expense should be at 100%. Overall, income is at 134% of budgeted income and expense is at 80% of budgeted expenditures.

WPCOG has a few more details to work out for Fiscal Year 2021-2022, which will be an increase in the overall revenue. Final numbers for the 21-22 will be reported in the audit.

Mr. Yount moved, seconded by Mr. Wood, that the Financial Report for June 2022 be approved. The motion carried unanimously.

D. July 2022 Financial Report - Ms. Hildebrand

For the first month of the Fiscal Year, income and expense should be at 8%. Overall, income is at 3% of budgeted income, without July occupancy tax, and expense is at 5% of budgeted expenditures.

Chair Eckard moved, seconded by Mr. Wood, that the Financial Report for July 2022 be approved. The motion carried unanimously.

V. Fiscal Year 2021-2022 Review on Events/Hotel Groups

A. HMCC - Ms. Howard

Ms. Howard reviewed the year-end report for Fiscal Year 2021-2022, reporting that there was a total of 176 events. The highest category of events was corporate/government events.

Ms. Howard also spoke about the months with the highest number of events and the months with the highest amount of revenue.

For the Fiscal Year, event revenue came in at 20% more than what was budgeted.

B. Piedmont Group Hotels – Ms. Keever

Ms. Keever reviewed a chart showing group blocks at the Piedmont Center Associates hotel properties in Hickory and Conover in FY 21-22. The group blocks included in the chart were only those in which group blocks were created. These include events at HMCC as well as events at other venues/locations in the Hickory Metro.

Ms. Keever reported that the corporate business is their highest category of events, followed by sporting events, then associations.

VI. New Business – Chair Eckard (None to Report)

VII. Old Business – Chair Eckard

A. Expansion – Ms. Hildebrand

Six contractors showed up to a pre-bid meeting on August 11. Bids are due August 25.

VIII. Importance of Tourism & Advocacy Impact Update – Ms. Jones

Ms. Jones presented a PowerPoint that was created as a graduation project for her third year with the SE Marketing College, which breaks down what the Convention & Visitors Bureau is and the impact the CVB has on tourism.

IX. CEO Report – Ms. Hildebrand

Senator Proctor was able to get the HCTDA legislation rules pushed out to 2039, which means that 1/3 of the Occupancy Tax goes to marketing and 2/3 to building operations. Duke Energy has approached staff about putting in Electric Car Charging Stations in our parking lot. Ms. Hildebrand and Mr. Gudat (Facilities Manager) are meeting with representatives this afternoon. Chair Eckard asked if there was a way to monetize the charging stations. Mr. Hart and Mr. Wood said that normally the stations are set to free or whoever installed them received payment.

Staff is working on messaging for when the addition/renovation of the building begins. Soon there will be a sneak peek of the plans.

Chair Eckard asked if there was a way to monetize the expansion by offering sponsorship for the naming of the new addition to HMCC facility? Ms. Hildebrand will explore this.


Hildebrand attended AENC Annual Meeting in New Bern, NC in July, and the US Travel Association Conference in Grand Rapids Michigan August 5-10. North Carolina is the fifth most visited state in the country, and she wants to make sure Hickory stays on the radar as a great place to visit and live.

Ms. Hildebrand spoke about the Destination Guide Tracking Report that Chrystal Dieter has created. The report shows that 44 of 50 states in the country have requested visitor guides for Hickory, NC.

- X. The next HCTDA Board Meeting will be held on September 12 at 8:30 a.m. at the Hickory Metro Convention Center.
- XI. There being no further business, motion was made to adjourn by Chair Eckard, seconded by Mr. Yount. The motion carried unanimously.

Hickory-Conover Tourism Development Authority

By:   
Chairman Bruce Eckard

Attest:   
Clerk to the Board