

**Hickory-Conover Tourism Development Authority**  
**Regular Meeting Minutes**  
**March 4, 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 meeting room of the Hickory Metro Convention Center on Monday, March 4, 2024, at 8:30 a.m., with the following members present:

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

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. Chair Eckard called the meeting to order at 8:34 a.m. All Board Members were present. Chair Eckard reminded the Board that we are two members short, an appointee from the City of Hickory and an appointee from the City of Conover, both appointments must be an owner or operator of hotel/motel and/or a property that pays occupancy tax in Hickory or Conover.
- II. Persons Wishing to Be Heard (None Appearing)
- III. Approval of Minutes
  - A. Regular Meeting of February 12, 2024 – Chair Eckard

Mr. Seaman moved, seconded by Chair Eckard, that the Minutes of February 12, 2024, be approved. The motion carried unanimously.
- IV. Budget Amendments for Fiscal Year 2023-2024

Ms. Hildebrand said that the Budget Amendment is for \$609,750, which cover costs for renovating the Visitors Center into offices, adding a kitchen to share with the Economic Development Corporation, and update the EDC space. In addition, this will cover additional needs for the convention center when renovation and addition are complete.

If approved, this would increase the Capital Project Fund as of March 4 to \$2.8 million. If not all the funds are needed, the remaining balance will go under the Capital Reserve Fund.

If amendment approved, the Fund Balance for the General Fund has a remaining balance of \$4,270,758 as of March 4, 2024.

A. Ordinance #3 Amending the 2023-2024 Operating Budget - Ms. Hildebrand

Mr. Wood moved, seconded by Ms. George, that Ordinance #3 as attached amending the 2023-2024 Operating Budget be approved. The motion carried unanimously.

B. Ordinance #2 Amending the 2023-2024 Capital Projects Budget Ordinance

Mr. Wood moved, seconded by Mr. Seaman, that Ordinance #2 as attached amending the 2023-2024 Capital Projects Budget be approved. The motion carried unanimously.

V. Old Business

A. Construction Update - Mr. Beasley & Ms. Hildebrand

Mr. Beasley discussed the visit to Atlanta to see the Lakewood Sports Facility in Cartersville, Ga. He was joined by Ms. Hildebrand, Ms. Jones, and Ms. Howard. A lot of good information was received from the Facility Director regarding food/beverage, parking, pricing, etc.

Mr. Beasley added that the glass is up for windows of the pre-function/Hall of Fame area and dividers, volleyball nets and basketball goals are up in the ceiling of the sports complex.

Ms. Hildebrand said that there are 959 total parking spots on the HMCC campus (and surrounding lots). Mr. Hart added he is on the Greenway Public Transportation Authority Board, and he has raised the question about Greenway providing transportation services for events at the convention center and the staff is looking into details and Mr. Hart will let us know what comes of it.

Next week work will begin for new roof installation on the east side of the building.

VI. New Business

A. Audit Contract for Fiscal Year 2023-2024 - Chair Eckard

Chair Eckard moved, seconded by Mr. Hart, that Audit Contract with Thompson, Price, Scott, Adams & CO., P.A. be approved. The motion carried unanimously.

## VII. Sales, Marketing, & Event Reports

### A. Sales & Marketing – Ms. Jones

After the February Sports e-blast was released with information on our new sports facility, a tournament director for volleyball reached out to get info. He said that with eight volleyball courts, we should be able to hold a tournament for around 64 teams. Staff is still trying to figure out how best to charge for sporting events.

Will be hosting a site visit with Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity on March 8 for their NC District Conference.

Will be hosting a site visit for Division 2 Women’s Basketball Tournament, which would be a three-year commitment with 24 teams). Hickory already won the bid to host the Division 3 Basketball Tournament.

Ms. Jones will attend Media Mission in Atlanta, Ga this week. She has 10 appointments planned with media outlets.

Soon, we will also host a site visit with NC Head Start Program. They are looking for a place to hold the annual conference in 2025.

### B. Events – Ms. Howard

Ms. Howard said there is no February Financial Report yet due to the meeting being pushed up a week, however, she estimated that event revenue for February 2024 will be around \$81,000. There were 13 events in February 2024. Year-to-date event revenue should be around \$435,000 when February financials come out.

As a comparison to last fiscal year, in FY 2022-2023, there were 185 events at the convention center. This fiscal year to date (July 2023-February 2024), there have already been 133 events with only half the building open.

## VIII. CEO Report – Ms. Hildebrand

Ms. Hildebrand reported that Occupancy Tax for January 2024 was down a bit from January 2023. Ms. Keever added that February 2024 will also be done a bit, but still performing

above where they were pre-pandemic and ADRs are higher. Ms. Hildebrand thinks overall occupancy tax will exceed budgeted amount.

Ms. Keever also said that the Hampton Inn will soon undergo refurbishments. They will refurbish one floor at a time and hope to be complete by December 2024.

Ms. Hildebrand said that she, Ms. Jones, and Ms. Howard are working on numbers for next year's budget and future staffing needs. A receptionist has still not been hired, but Ms. Jones should be meeting with a candidate soon to discuss the position.

Mr. Eckard asked about building security once the addition/renovation is complete. Discussion ensued regarding security needs for building.

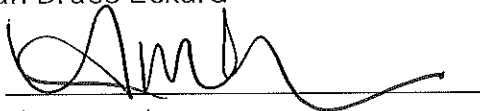
IX. Adjournment

The next HCTDA Board Meeting will be held on April 8, 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 #3 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:

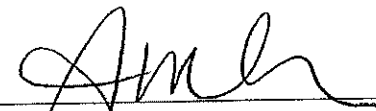
That the 2023-2024 Budget Ordinance of the Hickory-Conover Tourism Development Authority, adopted pursuant to the provisions of Chapter 159 of the General Statutes of North Carolina, the Local Government Budget and Fiscal Control Act, be amended as follows:

	<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	\$ 609,750	\$ 1,770,750
Transfer to Capital Reserve	\$ 262,000		\$ 262,000
	<u>\$ 4,467,000</u>	<u>\$ 609,750</u>	<u>\$ 5,076,750</u>

\$609,750 Fund Balance Appropriated

Adopted this 4th day of March, 2024.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Chairman

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Clerk

**Hickory-Conover Tourism Development Authority  
Ordinance #2 Amending the 2023-2024 Capital Projects 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>
Design Services and Professional Team and Overseeing Construction- Renovallon Design 5/10/21	\$ 2,190,250	\$ 609,750	\$ 2,800,000
	<u>\$ 2,190,250</u>	<u>\$ 609,750</u>	<u>\$ 2,800,000</u>

\$609,750 Transfer from General Fund

Adopted this 4th day of March, 2024

  
Chairman

  
Clerk