Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, March 25, 2026, | 2:00 pm

Randolph County Tourism Development Authority
Phillip Kemp Meeting Room | 500 Albemarle Rd Asheboro, NC

I. Call to Order – David Caughron, Chairman

The Randolph County Tourism Development Authority Board of Directors meeting was called to order by David Caughron, Board Chair, at 2:00 pm on Wednesday, March 25, 2026, at the Randolph County Tourism Development Authority, Phillip Kemp Meeting Room, 500 Albemarle Rd, Asheboro, North Carolina.

II. Roll Call of Board Members – Brooke D. Thomas, Clerk to the Board

Board Member Present IN PERSON: David Caughron, Chairman; Ross Holt; Luke Hollingsworth; Leslie Brown; Shawn Patel; Barbara Gallimore; Amy Struble; Diane Villa

Board Members Absent: Rebecca Petty Moffitt

Staff Members Present IN PERSON: Amber Scarlett, Executive Director; Annette Cagle, Director of Visitor Services & Information; Brooke Thomas, Clerk to the Board; Wes Alexander, Digital Content Coordinator; Melody Varner, Tourism Marketing Coordinator; Will Massie, Finance Officer

Guests Present IN PERSON: Richard Schoenberger, Manor House Creative; Kenny Kidd, Randolph County Commissioner Liaison

Guest Video Presentation on ZOOM: Susan Dosier, DK Communications

III. Request to Approve March 25, 2026, Agenda – David Caughron, Chair

David Caughron presented the March 25, 2026, board agenda for review/approval.

Amy Struble made a motion to approve the agenda for March 25, 2026, as presented, and Diane Villa seconded the motion. The motion passed on an 8 – 0 vote.

SEE ATTACHMENT #1

IV. Request to Approve Consent Agenda – David Caughron, Chair

David Caughron presented the consent agenda to board members noting that an email ratification was included on the consent agenda for which board members approved contracting with Cherry Bekaert, LLP for the Fiscal Year 2025/26 financial audit, and further authorized Board Chair David Caughron to execute the engagement letter on behalf of Randolph County Tourism Development Authority.

A motion to approve the consent agenda as presented was made by Ross Holt and seconded by Shawn Patel. The motion passed on an 8-0 vote.

SEE ATTACHMENT #2

V. Request to Approve Board of Directors Meeting Minutes from February 18, 2026 – David Caughron, Chair

David Caughron presented the Board meeting minutes from February 18, 2026, for review/approval.

A motion was made by Diane Villa to approve February 18, 2026, board meeting minutes as presented. Leslie Brown seconded the motion, and it carried on an 8-0 vote.

SEE ATTACHMENT #3

VI. FAM Tour 2026 Update – Melody Varner, Tourism Marketing Coordinator

Melody Varner updated the board on the FAM Tour and shared a brief video, noting successful stops at the NC Zoo, the NC Pottery Center, Cagle's Diner, Carolina Bronze, and the Randolph County Agricultural Center. Varner noted that board member Diane Villa, Interim NC Zoo Director, provided attendees with an overview of zoo plans and progress. Board members Shawn Patel and Diane Villa shared that their staff learned a great deal and enjoyed the tour. Leslie Brown noted that Brown Entertainment staff were in attendance and appreciated learning more about the Seagrove area. Executive Director Amber Scarlett thanked staff for their efforts in making the tour a success.

VII. Request to Approve updated TDA Personnel Policies – Brooke Thomas, Director of Office Administration/Clerk to the Board

Brooke Thomas summarized updates to personnel policies that will be incorporated into the current TDA Employee Policy & Procedures Manual to ensure alignment with Randolph County's Employee Policy and Procedures. Randolph County Board of Commissioners approved these revisions with an effective date of March 1, 2026.

A motion was made by Ross Holt to approve the new, revised and active policy updates to the TDA Employee Policy and Procedures manual along with a revision to conduct annual staff evaluations to coincide with the month of hire. Shawn Patel seconded the motion, and it carried 8-0.

SEE ATTACHMENT #4

VIII. Finance Reporting – Will Massie, Finance Director

- *Finance Report for Month-Ending February 28, 2026*

Massie provided an overview of the February financial statements, noting that revenues continue to trend downward with a $200,000 deficit projected at fiscal year-end. He stated that TDA has responsibly maintained a healthy appropriated fund balance; however, it will become necessary to utilize a portion of appropriations to supplement the current and upcoming fiscal year budgets.

SEE ATTACHMENT #5

IX. Hotel Data Reporting – Amber Scarlett, Executive Director

- *Hotel Data Report for Month-Ending January 31, 2026*
- *Hotel Data Report for Month-Ending February 28, 2026*

Scarlett presented the hotel data reports ending January 31, 2026, and February 28, 2026. Hotel data reports continue to reflect the downward trend in revenues.

SEE ATTACHMENT #6-7

X. I-73/74 Visitor Centers Data Reporting – Annette Cagle, Director of Visitor Services & Information

- *Attendance Data Comparison & Guest Registrant Reports for Month-Ending February 28, 2026*

Cagle presented the Visitor Centers attendance data and guest registration reports for the month ending February 28, 2026, noting a total of 2,709 guests. Visitor Centers staff members assisted the TDA with distribution of the 2026 Randolph County travel guides in February.

SEE ATTACHMENTS #8-9

XI. Digital Content Reporting – Wes Alexander, Digital Content Coordinator

- *Social Media Report for Month-Ending February 28, 2026*

Alexander presented digital content reports for the month ending February 28, 2026.

SEE ATTACHMENTS #10-11

XII. Public Relations Reporting – Susan Dosier, DK Communications Group

- *Public Relations Report for Month-Ending February 28, 2026*

Dosier presented the Public Relations report covering the period ending February 28, 2026.

SEE ATTACHMENT #12

XIII. Visual Advertisement Reporting – Richard Schoenberger, Manor House Graphics

- *Advertising Report for Month-Ending February 28, 2026*

Schoenberger presented the visual advertisement report ending February 28, 2026.

SEE ATTACHMENT #13

XIV. Executive Director Update – Amber Scarlett

Scarlett shared updates on recent activities and announced that the Dr. Temple Grandin event at Sunset Theatre was sold out. She noted that staff will continue promoting additional upcoming Sunset Signature Series events. Dr. Temple Grandin's visit, hosted by the collective team from March 12 - 15, included presentations and stops at the NC Zoo, Randolph County Agricultural Center, Victory Junction Gang Camp and Sunset Theatre. The visit was highly impactful for both the TDA team and the community.

The MAGS Committee will meet on March 30 to review funding applications from the Town of Franklinville for brochure updates, Deep River Folk School in Franklinville for assistance with printing rack cards, and Vintage Oaks Farms for support in printing brochures for the Vintage Oaks Antiques Festival.

The TDA Leadership team recently attended the Visit NC Tourism Conference, which covered topics including the North Carolina school calendar law, the Berger/Page election, occupancy tax issues in Currituck County, the use of AI and GPT bots to ensure accurate website messaging, and ongoing concerns regarding the lack of a final state budget.

Scarlett informed the Board that TDA staff participated in or are planning to attend the following events:

- Amber Scarlett attended the Piedmont Legacy Trails Summit on March 5 in Winston-Salem
- Staff attended the Power of Five Chamber event on March 18 at Becker Hill venue.
- Melody Varner graduated from the Randolph County Leadership Academy on March 19

Scarlett noted upcoming dates of importance:

- TDA office will be closed in observance of Good Friday on April 3; Visitor Centers will remain open.
- TDA Leadership team will support the Randolph County Agricultural Center for the Common Grounds Festival on April 11
- Staff will attend the Liberty Chamber Annual Dinner on April 11 at the Harvest House in Ramseur.
- TDA Leadership team will host a table during the Kickoff event for the Concert Series in Downtown Asheboro at Bicentennial Park.
- TDA staff and partners from the NC Zoo and Downtown Asheboro will travel to the Women's Correctional Facility in Raleigh to update the 800-VisitNC team on current and upcoming events in Randolph County.
- High Point Furniture Market will take place April 25 – 29
- Colonel Joseph Marm, Medal of Honor recipient, will speak at the Sunset Theatre on May 23 as part of the Sunset Signature Series
- Heart of NC Visitors Bureau and the NC Zoo will co-sponsor a fireworks display and host a table during the opening night of the season, also Tourism Night, at the Asheboro ZooKeepers baseball game on May 29, 2026

XV. Board Member Updates – David Caughron

Ross Holt reported that the Dr. Temple Grandin event was highly impactful for the community and attributed the success surrounding that event to careful planning and foresight by Amber Scarlett, TDA Executive Director. He noted that the Asheboro Public Library is currently undergoing roof repairs and is intermittently closed depending on the weather. Holt also shared that an America 250 event, *The American Constitution* documentary, is scheduled for May 3, 2026, at the Sunset Theatre, and that Colonel Joseph Marm, Medal of Honor recipient, will speak at Sunset Theatre on May 23, 2026.

Leslie Brown reported that the Trial by Fire Journey Tribute was successful despite restroom issues at Liberty Showcase Theatre, noting appreciation for downtown Liberty patrons for opening their restrooms for use during the event. Puppy Pals was also a successful event with hopes of returning, and Wade Hayes is scheduled to perform in April 2026.

Luke Hollingsworth stated that the golf industry remains steady with no current decline. He shared well wishes for long-term staff member, Nick Cromer, and noted that the vacant position will be absorbed internally. Property acquisition efforts are ongoing, with future plans to offer stay-and-play packages in partnership with local hoteliers.

Amy Struble stated that hotel staff are preparing for the upcoming High Point Furniture Market and that staffing remains stable. She noted a shift toward advance bookings with discounted, non-refundable rates.

Shawn Patel stated that spring break activity was strong, with increased family visits to the NC Zoo. He noted that hotels are preparing for the summer season, though budget forecasts remain cautious due to declining occupancy rates. Construction continues at the historic bank hotel in downtown Asheboro.

Barbara Gallimore stated that the Dr. Temple Grandin event positively impacted downtown Asheboro restaurants. She noted that the NC Zoo's sand cats are popular among Flying Pig patrons and that the Summer Concert Series begins May 22, 2026, with a Brooks and Dunn Tribute band.

Diana Villa shared that NC Zoo staff benefited greatly from attending the FAM Tour and that the Dr. Temple Grandin presentation at the zoo was well received. She noted upcoming events, including the April 22 Earth Day "Gorillas on the Line…Answer the Call" recycling initiative to collect old cell phone, tablets and laptops for recycling in an effort to reduce habitat-destroying mineral mining and the May 17 America 250 book signing for *Freedom's Howl* supporting Red Wolf preservation. Villa reported that the west parking lot remains closed, Asia cannot

open until 69 essential positions are funded pending the state budget. Villa excitedly reported that the two baby sand kittens are generating strong in-person and social media interest.

Commissioner Kenny Kidd thanked staff for their work on the FAM Tour and the recent Dr. Temple Grandin event.

David Caughron shared on behalf of Rebecca Petty Moffitt, that Petty Fest would take place on March 28, 2026. Caughron reported that Amber Scarlett's annual performance evaluation was successfully completed. Caughron commented that he recently attended a Rotary Club dinner at the NC Zoo, in the Asia dining area and it was a wonderful dining experience.

Board Chair, David Caughron, announced that Will Massie, Randolph County/TDA Finance Officer, had submitted his letter of retirement effective July 31, 2026. Caughron and board members thanked Massie and noted that he would be greatly missed.

There was no further discussion across the board.

XVI. Adjourn – David Caughron, Board Chair

Caughron thanked everyone for attending the board meeting. A motion to adjourn was made by Barbara Gallimore, seconded by Luke Hollingsworth, and approved unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 3:28 pm.

NORTH CAROLINA
RANDOLPH COUNTY

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David Caughron, Board Chair

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Brooke D. Thomas, Clerk to the Board