Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, May 20, 2026, | 2:00 pm

Randolph County Tourism Development Authority
Randolph County Agricultural Center | Board Room
1880 US HWY 64 E, Asheboro, NC 27203

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 2:02 pm on Wednesday, May 20, 2026, at the Randolph County Agricultural Center, in the Allen Ray McNeill Education and Resource Center, located at 1880 US Highway 64, Asheboro, NC 27203.

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; Shawn Patel; Amy Struble *(late arrival)*; Diane Villa; Leslie Brown; Barbara Gallimore *(late arrival)*

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; Larry Penkava, Randolph Hub

Guest Video Presentation on ZOOM: Susan Dosier, DK Communications

III. Request to Approve May 20, 2026, Agenda – David Caughron, Chair

David Caughron presented the May 20, 2026, Board agenda for review/approval.

Ross Holt made a motion to approve the agenda for May 20, 2026, as presented, and Luke Hollingsworth seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

SEE ATTACHMENT #1

IV. Request to Approve Board of Directors Meeting Minutes from April 15, 2026 – David Caughron, Chair

David Caughron presented the Board meeting minutes from April 15, 2026, for review/approval.

A motion was made by Leslie Brown to approve April 15, 2026, Board meeting minutes as presented. Diane Villa seconded the motion, and the motion carried.

Board member Barbara Gallimore arrived at the meeting.

SEE ATTACHMENT #2

V. Public Hearing on the FY 2026/27 Authority Proposed Budget – Brooke Thomas, Clerk to the Board

Caughron, Board Chair, opened the Public Hearing on the FY 2026 – 2027 Authority Budget and asked the Clerk to review the General Statute as follows:

Pursuant to NCGS 159-12, the Board shall hold a public hearing on the proposed budget, at which time any person who wishes to be heard may appear.

With no members of the public present to speak, Caughron closed the Public Hearing.

VI. Adoption of FY 2026/27 TDA Budget Proposal – Will Massie, Finance Officer

Will Massie, Finance Officer, presented the budget proposal for the Board's review and reported that occupancy levels remain below expectations. He noted that a portion of the appropriated fund balance was utilized to maintain a realistic and balanced budget for FY 2026–2027.

Luke Hollingsworth made a motion to approve the Fiscal Year 2026-27 Authority Budget as presented. Barbara Gallimore seconded the motion, and the motion was approved unanimously.

SEE ATTACHMENT #3

Board Member Amy Struble arrived at the meeting.

VII. Randolph County Leadership Academy Video Presentation – Melody Varner, Tourism Marketing Coordinator

Varner presented an overview of the Randolph County Leadership Academy and shared a video project from the cohort. Board members spoke positively about the program.

VIII. Finance Reporting – Will Massie, Finance Director

- *Finance Report for Month-Ending April 30, 2026*

Massie presented an overview of the April financial statements, noting that revenues remain approximately 12% below the prior fiscal year. Caughron added that the upcoming report may reflect increased activity from High Point Furniture Market visitors, which could help escalate revenues.

SEE ATTACHMENT #4

IX. Hotel Data Reporting – Amber Scarlett, Executive Director

- *Hotel Data Report for Month-Ending March 31, 2026*
- *Hotel Data Report for 1st Quarter-Ending March 31, 2026*
- *Hotel Data Report for Month-Ending April 30, 2026*

Scarlett presented hotel data reports for March and April, highlighting a continued decline in occupancy. She also reviewed the 1st quarter 2026 figures, which reflect an 11.4% decrease compared to 2025, aligning with the finance report. Board members engaged in discussion with hotel representatives Amy Struble and Shawn Patel, who noted that several regular High Point Furniture Market attendees did not return this year, resulting in a weaker market. Patel added that this decline is consistent with a nationwide downturn in travel. Massie further reported that county sales tax revenues are also trending downward. Holt noted that recent library satisfaction surveys indicate residents are increasingly seeking free, local activities.

SEE ATTACHMENTS #5-7

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

- *Attendance Data Comparison & Guest Registrant Reports for Month-Ending April 30, 2026*

Cagle presented the Visitor Centers attendance data and guest registration reports for the month ending April 30, 2026, highlighting a total of 14,312 guests, a 55% increase from 2025. Visitors Centers staff celebrated National Travel and Tourism Day on May 8 and greeted a total of 697 guests.

SEE ATTACHMENTS #8-9

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

- *Social Media Report for Month-Ending April 30, 2026*

Alexander presented the digital content reports for the period ending April 30, 2026. He noted that April saw a significant surge in Facebook engagement, largely driven by the Compass Media campaign. He further reported that the timing of content releases influenced engagement levels, with morning posts generating higher open and click-through rates.

SEE ATTACHMENTS #10-11

XII. **Visual Advertisement Reporting – Richard Schoenberger, Manor House Graphics**

- *Advertising Report for Month-Ending April 30, 2026*

Schoenberger presented the visual advertising report for the period ending April 30, 2026, highlighting the placement of an advertisement in the annual military deployment guide, a newly launched resource.

SEE ATTACHMENT #12

XIII. **Public Relations Reporting – Susan Dosier, DK Communications Group**

- *Public Relations Report for Month-Ending April 30, 2026*

Dosier presented the Public Relations report covering the period ending April 30, 2026, highlighting exceptional content from recent media hosting.

SEE ATTACHMENT #13

XIV. Executive Director Update – Amber Scarlett

Scarlett shared that the Liberty Antiques Festival is now under new ownership. The Moss family, of Windy Hill Farms in Ramseur has purchased the festival. TDA will help promote the festival by collaborating with the new owners on website enhancements and visitor experience enhancements. TDA will continue to promote the Liberty Antiques Festival.

TDA recently hosted two travel writers, The Wandering Foxes out of Charleston, SC and the American Nomad Traveler out of Raleigh, NC. Scarlett emphasized that travel writers offer valuable outside perspectives on Randolph County. Their focuses were on Downtown Asheboro, NC Zoo, Millstone Creek Orchards (Highland Cow experiences), and America 250 sites. Scarlett encouraged board members to check out their social media posts.

Additionally, Scarlett noted that the Asheboro TDA office would be closed on Monday, May 25 in observance of Memorial Day. However, Visitors Centers will remain open.

Scarlett informed the Board that TDA staff participation included the following:

- May 5 – Successful meeting with the Town of Franklinville leadership and members of NC Commerce to discuss next steps in the Trail Town designation through Outdoor NC programming.
- May 13 – Blue Jeans & Boots Dinner/Auction at Adaumont Farm
- May 19 - Randleman Chamber of Commerce Annual Dinner at AVS

Scarlett noted upcoming dates of importance:

- May 23 – Sunset Signature Series event, Colonel Joseph Marm will speak at Sunset Theatre
- May 29 –Tourism night at Asheboro ZooKeepers game with cohosts, NC Zoo with a fireworks finale
- June 16 – Economic Development Corporation annual meeting
- June 18 – Business after Hours Power of Five Chamber Event at Cone Health on Spero Road, Asheboro

XV. Board Member Updates – David Caughron

Ross Holt reported that the countywide summer reading campaign will be titled "Unearth a Story," with related activities scheduled throughout the season. He also noted that Connie Knox of Wilmington recently interviewed him during a genealogy research visit to the area. The interview, published on her Genealogy TV YouTube channel, has received about 9,600 views and 900 likes. Holt further

shared that the American Constitution event held on May 3 with NC filmmaker David Garrigus was successful. Additionally, the Sunset Signature Series will feature Colonel Joseph Marm on May 23 at the Sunset Theatre. Holt announced that brass sculptures of the Charters of Freedom are being installed near the Randolph County Courthouse, with a formal kick-off event coming soon.

Luke Hollingsworth reported that a local band through Crash Radio performed a sold-out show at Holly Ridge on May 4. He also highlighted the success of Holly Ridge's Cinco de Mayo dinner on May 5. Hollingsworth reminded the group that Holly Ridge offers free live entertainment on the first Thursday and third Saturday of each month. The facility will be closed for maintenance and renovations from June 8–15.

Amy Struble reported strong bookings from April through August, accompanied by an increased average daily rate. She noted ongoing renovations at the Hampton Inn, as well as new bedding installations at Holiday Inn Express. Struble emphasized the continued importance of printed visitor collateral, as guests frequently prefer tangible brochures when seeking information on local attractions.

Shawn Patel reported that winter occupancy was slower; however, bookings from April through August appear strong, driven largely by visitation to the NC Zoo and the Zoo City Sportsplex.

Leslie Brown reported a slight decline in ticket sales at the Liberty Showcase as the slower summer season approaches. However, she noted that the Black Hawk performance in April was nearly sold out, drawing several attendees from out of state.

Barbara Gallimore reported that concert season is underway in Downtown Asheboro. The Band of Oz performance was well attended, and the first Rock'n the Park event will feature a Brooks & Dunn tribute band on May 22. As part of the America 250 initiatives, Downtown Asheboro, Inc. is developing historic markers for downtown buildings.

Diane Villa announced that the NC Zoo has appointed Dr. Mark Penning as its new Director, with his tenure beginning August 3. She reported that the Zoo will host an informational table at an event at the NC Governor's Mansion and that she will present to the Leadership Randolph group on June 4. A recent book signing for *Freedom's Howl: The Song of the Red Wolves* featured author Eileen Hayes and illustrator Anne Runyon. Commissioned by the Department of Natural and Cultural Resources (DNCR) for the America 250 celebration, the event included treat distribution by DNCR staff. Villa also shared that the Zoo Society's Wild at Heart fundraiser generated over $140,000, and the sand cat kitten naming contest is nearing completion.

David Caughron reported that the Randleman Chamber of Commerce held its annual dinner and update on May 19. He also noted that the Chamber will host a bass fishing tournament this coming weekend. A recent Cruise-In event in Randleman, organized by two local businesses, drew strong participation and was considered highly successful.

Commissioner Kenny Kidd reported that the Board of Commissioners is currently engaged in budget sessions. He also indicated that he may attend the Asheboro ZooKeepers Tourism Night event on May 29.

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 Luke Hollingsworth, seconded by Amy Struble and Shawn Patel, and unanimously approved. The meeting adjourned at 3:15 pm.

NORTH CAROLINA
RANDOLPH COUNTY



David Caughron, Chair

Brooke D. Thomas

Brooke D. Thomas, Clerk to the Board