

**Washington Tourism Development Authority
Board of Directors Meeting
Wednesday, August 21st, 2024,
Washington Civic Center
*Minutes***

ATTENDEES

Andrew Kuhn

Fred O. Watkins III* (Chair)

Anthony Tyre* (City Council Liaison)

Jonathan Russel (City Manager)

Bobby Clark*

Linda Harrington*

Charlotte Stubbs

Manfred Alligood* (Vice Chair)

Dee Patel*

Mrs. Brooks

Donald Sadler (Mayor)

Paula Stephenson

Ellen Brabo

Richard Brooks (City Council)

Franz Holscher (City Attorney)

Tom Richardson (Sign Interpreter)

Wanda Geisen* (Treasurer)

* Board Members

Absent: Tammy Swindell

CALL TO ORDER:

Chairman Fred Watkins III called the meeting to order at 12:04 pm. Manfred motioned to adopt the agenda; Bobby seconded the motion, and the agenda was adopted. Linda motioned to approve the July meeting minutes; Manfred seconded, and the minutes were approved.

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT.

Treasurer's Report:

Tammy Swindell, the Administrative Services Director for the City of Washington, was out due to a sickness. Charlotte Stubbs went over the July numbers briefly for the board. She mentioned that if there were any questions regarding the financial report.

Linda motioned to accept the Treasurer's report; Wanda seconded, and the report was approved.

Civic Center Report:

The Venue & Event Manager, Charlotte Stubbs, reviewed the report. Only four dates are left for wedding packages, and only two days are available for nonprofits in 2025. The venue is looking into a few upgrades to the kitchen. Social media numbers are a little down, but she has seen a gain in followers, especially with Instagram.

Bobby motioned to accept the Civic Center report; Wanda seconded, and the report was approved.

Directors Report:

The Tourism Development Director, Paula Stephenson, presented the director's report. She discussed the current social media numbers and metrics and showcased the WRAL hype video. The mayor noted a citizen's observation about the video's lack of diversity and suggested that we should strive for more diversity in our content. Additionally, Linda pointed out that when a video features a speaker, we should create our own captions rather than relying on the auto-generated ones from the platforms to make the content more accessible for people with disabilities. The new Washington Welcome Guide is out, you can find a copy online or at the Washington Visitors center. Economic development saw \$33 million in money spent on lodgings, resulting in a 5.4% increase compared to last year.

Bobby motioned to accept the Director's report; Linda seconded, and the report was approved.

OLD BUSINESS

WTDA Resource Request/Grant Program

Wanda mentioned that the grant resource program had been sent to an attorney for review. The board discussed its potential uses and the necessary steps to implement it.

Interlocal Agreement

Franz, the city attorney, presented the board with the bills that were passed to shape the TDA, including the interlocal agreement between the city and the TDA. The board discussed the presentation and the TDA's goals and objectives.

NEW BUSINESS

WTDA Calendar

The board expressed they want to have a board calendar to go over performance reviews and budget plans for the TDA.

Strategic Planning

Paula wanted to review the board's schedule for October. She planned to gather the board for a Strategic Planning Trip to discuss TDA's future goals and objectives.

INFORMAL DISCUSSION AND PUBLIC COMMENT

Linda mentioned that she had contacted the city and expressed her desire to see something done about the dilapidated buildings within the Washington city limits.

ADJOURN

Manfred motioned to adjourn the meeting; Wanda seconded, and the meeting was adjourned.

The next board meeting at the Civic Center is scheduled for noon on September 11th, 2024.

Conference Room.

Respectfully submitted,

Andrew Kuhn

Marketing & Outreach Coordinator

Washington Tourism Development Authority