Washington Tourism Development Authority
Board of Directors Meeting
Thursday, October 17th, 2026
Washington-Warren Airport
Minutes

ATTENDEES

Andrew Kuhn

Betsy Hester*

Blanche Gibbs Tillis* (Secretary)

Fred Watkins

Paula McCullough*

Stacy Jesso* (Chair)

* WTDA Board Members
Absent: *City Council Liaison Joe Davis*, *Susan Strickland*, *Shont'e Mason*

CALL TO ORDER:

WTDA Chair Stacy Jesso called the meeting to order. Stacy then proposed amending the agenda to add three items:

- Interlocal Agreement Discussion

Betsy motioned to approve the amended agenda, and Paula seconded the motion. The amended agenda was adopted.

MINUTES APPROVAL:

Betsy motioned to approve the September 2026 meeting minutes. Blanche seconded, and the minutes were approved.

REPORTS:

Financial Report:

Tammy Swindell, the City of Washington's Ex-Officio Finance Officer, was unable to attend the meeting. Interim Executive Director, Andrew Kuhn, briefly presented the financial statements and occupancy taxes for August

Occupancy Taxes for August 2026:

Budget: $51, 701 Actual: $43,701 Loss of: $7,699

Paula motioned to approve the financial report. Betsy seconded the motion. The financial report was approved.

Director's Report:

Andrew Kuhn, the WTDA Interim Executive Director, presented the WTDA Director's Report. He reviewed the organization's social media metrics and provided updates on upcoming projects including light up the city and the partnership with Northern VA magazine.

Paula motioned to approve the Director's Report. Betsey seconded the motion. The Director's Report was approved.

OLD BUSINESS:

Wake Up Washington

On December 10 at 8:30 AM, the WTDA will participate in the Washington-Beaufort County Chamber of Commerce's "Wake Up Washington" event.

The goal of the presentation is to highlight opportunities available to tourism-related small businesses and event organizers, including access to grant funding, the Visit Washington website extranet, and marketing opportunities through WTDA partners such as Pirate Radio, Our State Magazine, and social media influencers.

Attendees will also have the opportunity to connect with WTDA staff and board members, learn more about available resources, and explore ways to become involved with the WTDA.

NEW BUSINESS:

Capital Projects Grant

Andrew presented the WTDA Capital Improvements Grant to the Board. The grant is designed to support capital improvement projects that enhance the tourism experience in the City of Washington. Eligible applicants include nonprofit organizations, municipal entities, and for-profit tourism-related businesses.

The Board discussed the grant and agreed that the document should undergo a legal review by an attorney with experience in government law. Betsy mentioned that her husband, Joe, is an attorney with experience in government law and offered that he may be able to review the document on behalf of the WTDA as a volunteer.

Betsy motioned to have the grant reviewed, and voted on in the next WTDA board meeting. Blanche seconded the motion. The motion was approved.

Website Event Policy

Andrew presented a Website Events Policy that will be made available through the extranet portion of the WTDA website for businesses and community partners to reference when submitting events. The policy outlines the types of events that are eligible to be featured on the Visit Washington website, as well as those that are not permitted.

The policy also explains how approved events may be promoted through the WTDA's marketing channels, including social media, newsletters, and other promotional outlets.

Blanche motioned to approve the Website Events Policy. Paula seconded the motion. The policy was approved.

Train Ride

Andrew presented a quote from DC Amusements for a train ride at the Light Up the City event on November 24. The quoted cost was $1,000 for the hours of 6:00 PM to 8:00 PM. Betsy motioned to approve the train ride proposal. Paula seconded the motion. The proposal was approved.

Interlocal Agreement Discussion

Stacy reported that the City of Washington Attorney contacted her to inform the WTDA that the City of Washington has decided to terminate its interlocal agreement with the WTDA.

Stacy further noted that a special meeting will be held on Thursday, November 5, to discuss a proposed transition date and determine the next steps for the WTDA following the termination of the interlocal agreement.

INFORMAL DISCUSSION & PUBLIC COMMENT

ADJOURN

Paula motioned to adjourn the meeting; Blanche seconded, and the meeting was adjourned.

The next board meeting is scheduled for 12:00 pm on November 19th, 2026, at the Washington Warren Airport.

Submitted by,

Andrew Kuhn
Interim Executive Director
Washington Tourism Development Authority