Transylvania County Tourism Development Authority (TCTDA)
Board Meeting Minutes
August 27, 2026

Minutes

Board Members Present: Jessica Whitmire, Lauren Wise, Madeline Magin, Nory LeBrun, Catherine Lemel, Larry Chapman, Emerie Carlton-Jackson
Board Members Absent: Dionne Hodgson, Dana Antonuccio
Staff: Clark Lovelace, Mollie Gordon, Jody McNiel, Mark Johnson, Garnet Fisher, Meagan O'Neal, Julie Hooten (Zoom)
Members of Public: David Bradley

Call to Order

I. Welcome
Board Chair, Jessica Whitmire called the meeting to order at 8:29 a.m. and noted that a quorum was present. She welcomed everyone in attendance and invited introductions from Board members and staff. It was noted that Dionne and Dana were unable to attend the meeting.

II. Public Comment
Jessica asked if members of the public would like to make a comment at this time. No comments were made.

III. Agenda Modifications
Madeline made a motion to accept the agenda as presented. With a second from Lauren, the motion unanimously passed.

IV. Consent Agenda
A. Minutes from June 25, 2026, Board Meeting
B. FY26 Financials (year-end)
C. FY27 Financials (as of July 31, 2026)
D. FY27 Grant Funding List
E. Contracts
Catherine made a motion to approve the consent agenda with a second by Emerie. With all in favor, the motion passed.

V. Presentations
A. Quarterly Financial Report – Meagan O'Neal, Finance Director
Meagan O'Neal, Finance Director of Transylvania County, presented the Quarterly Financial Report. This included a review of year-end revenues, expenditures, net loss/gain, and the fund balance, as

well as a review of financials for July of FY27. She noted the new format, receiving some input and acceptance from the board. Meagan also reported that the FY26 audit contract with Martin Starnes & Associates had been approved and addressed the recent letter that was sent to board members from the auditor. Larry made a motion to accept the financial report as presented. Madeline seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

Meagan presented a budget amendment to transfer funds from Contract Services back to Part-Time Wages following the selection of a new part-time staff member, possibly starting next week. Madeline made a motion to approve the budget amendment. Emerie seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

B. Lake Toxaway Community Update – Historic Toxaway Foundation and Longcliff
Jessica noted the board's selection of Lake Toxaway as a future topic with a speaker at the retreat earlier this year. Given Nory's Lake Toxaway connections, he was asked to coordinate the speakers. Nory then introduced Patricia Roberts with the Historic Toxaway Foundation and Ryan Stahl and Lori Phillips with Longcliff.

Patricia provided an overview of the Historic Toxaway Foundation and its mission to preserve and share the history, culture, and stories of the Lake Toxaway area. She highlighted the Foundation's role as a unifying voice for Upper Transylvania County through initiatives such as the Business Alliance, which includes approximately 140 members, the Historic Toxaway Visitor Guide, Laurel Magazine, professionally produced Sunday Night Stories documentaries, and community programs such as Walk and Talk. She emphasized the Foundation's commitment to preserving local history, telling community stories, and supporting the quality of life for residents and visitors alike.

Ryan Stahl provided an overview of Longcliff, a new 107-acre walkable mountain village community in Lake Toxaway, surrounded on three sides by Gorges State Park. The development includes modern mountain homes, a 44-acre protected nature preserve, walking trails, gathering spaces, wellness amenities, and plans for a market, café, restaurants, retail, and boutique lodging. Ryan highlighted the community's focus on creating a year-round, multigenerational mountain lifestyle centered on nature, wellness, and community connection. He also shared that plans for a hotel are being refined, with the original proposal scaled back to a smaller lodging concept of approximately 80 rooms.

C. Marketing Report – Market Connections
Garnet presented a recap of fourth-quarter marketing activities, highlighting digital, print, broadcast, billboard, signage, newsletter, and blog initiatives. She also announced that TCTDA received an internationally recognized Telly Award, which she presented to Clark and Jessica. Mark reviewed key fourth-quarter marketing highlights, including summer camp promotion efforts, growth in the adventurist audience, increased visitor engagement, Visit NC and NC Tripping influencers, and public relations placements in Southern Living and Smoky Mountain Living. He also shared website performance metrics, including increased traffic and the most-visited pages. The presentation concluded with an overview of first-quarter FY27 marketing activities and priorities.

D. Director's report – Clark Lovelace
Clark provided an update on key staff and committee actions and other noteworthy occurrences related to the local tourism industry, including the partner marketing event, a letter to the city and

county about the courthouse as a potential location for a visitor center, 2027 board openings, the upcoming TDA meeting schedule, the downtown circulation study, Transylvania Times Coverage, a pending new hire, and more.

VI. Old Business

There was no old business to discuss. No action was taken.

VII. New Business

A. Funding Request – The Pisgah Conservancy (Pisgah Project Day)
Clark presented a slide covering the Pisgah Project Day funding request, which originated from a motion approved by the Transylvania Always Committee for $10,000**.** The request was brought before the Board for consideration and approval. Larry seconded the motion to approve the $10,000 in funding**,** and the motion passed unanimously.

B. Tourism Trailblazer Award
Clark discussed the Tourism Trailblazer Award, which is presented in partnership with the Chamber. Board members were asked to provide any nominations by Monday, August 31. Some will be coming in through the Chamber as well. Clark, Jessica, and Madeline will meet to review the nominations and select the recipient.

VIII. Public Comment

No members of the public are present.

IX. Board Member Comments

Larry, shared highlights from a recent trip to Raleigh to meet with other county commissioners. He provided the Board with the County Map Book, which includes statistics and comparisons of Transylvania County with other counties.

X. Closed Session

A. Per N.C.G.S. 143-318.11 (a) (3) To consult with an attorney in order to preserve the attorney-client privilege between the attorney and the public body.
Jessica made a motion to enter a closed session in order to preserve the attorney client privilege. Seconded by Lauren, motion passed. The board entered closed session at 10:17 a.m.

At 10:34 a.m. the regular board meeting resumed.

Adjournment

Jessica shared that next meeting will be on September 24, at 8:30am. With a motion from Catherine and a second from Nory, the meeting was adjourned at 10:37 a.m.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Jody McNiel.

Advance notice of all meetings has been provided and all TCTDA are open to the public.
A schedule of meetings and minutes can be found at **https://explorebrevard.com/tct/meeting-schedule-and-minutes/**