



WELCOME

November 29, 2023

Buncombe County Tourism Development Authority Board Meeting

EXPLORE
ASHEVILLE
POWERED BY | Buncombe County Tourism
Development Authority

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Brenda Durden

- Call to order the Joint Meeting of the BCTDA, Public Authority and BCTDA Nonprofit Corporation.



Board Meeting

Wednesday, November 29, 2023 | 9:00 a.m.

Explore Asheville | 27 College Place | Board Room (1st Floor)

Members of the public may attend in person or [register here](#) to view a livestream of the meeting.

AGENDA

9:00 a.m.	Call to Order the Joint Meeting of the BCTDA, Public Authority and BCTDA, Nonprofit Corporation	Brenda Durden
9:05 a.m.	Approval of October 25, 2023 Meeting Minutes	Brenda Durden
9:10 a.m.	Financial Updates <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. October 2023 Financial Reportsb. June 2023 Financial Reports – Finalc. FY23 Audit Presentationd. BCTDA Investment Policye. Tourism Product Development Fund Budget Amendmentsf. Operating Fund Budget Amendment	Melissa Moore, Buncombe County Finance Director/BCTDA Fiscal Agent Tim Lyons, Mauldin & Jenkins Melissa Moore, Buncombe County Melissa Moore, Buncombe County Dodie Stephens; Melissa Moore, Buncombe County
9:40 a.m.	2024 Festivals & Cultural Events Grant Investment Recommendations	Tiffany Thacker
10:00 a.m.	President & CEO Report <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. Industry Metricsb. Other Updates	Vic Isley
10:10 a.m.	Asheville City Council Update	Vice Mayor Sandra Kilgore
10:15 a.m.	Buncombe County Commission Update	Commissioner Terri Wells
10:20 a.m.	Miscellaneous Business	Brenda Durden
10:25 a.m.	Comments from the General Public	Brenda Durden
10:30 a.m.	Adjournment	Brenda Durden

SAVE THE DATE

The Year Ahead | January 31, 2024, 3:00 – 6:00 p.m. | Embassy Suites, 192 Haywood Street, Asheville, NC 28801

The next joint BCTDA monthly meeting is **Wednesday, January 24, 2024**, at 9:00 a.m., in the Board Room of Explore Asheville, located at 27 College Place. Please contact Julia Simpson at jsimpson@ExploreAsheville.com or 828.333.5831 with questions.

BCTDA Mission Statement

To be a leader in the economic development of Buncombe County by attracting and servicing visitors, generating income, jobs and tax revenues which make the community a better place to live and visit.



FOR OUR REMOTE VIEWERS

Chair Brenda Durden

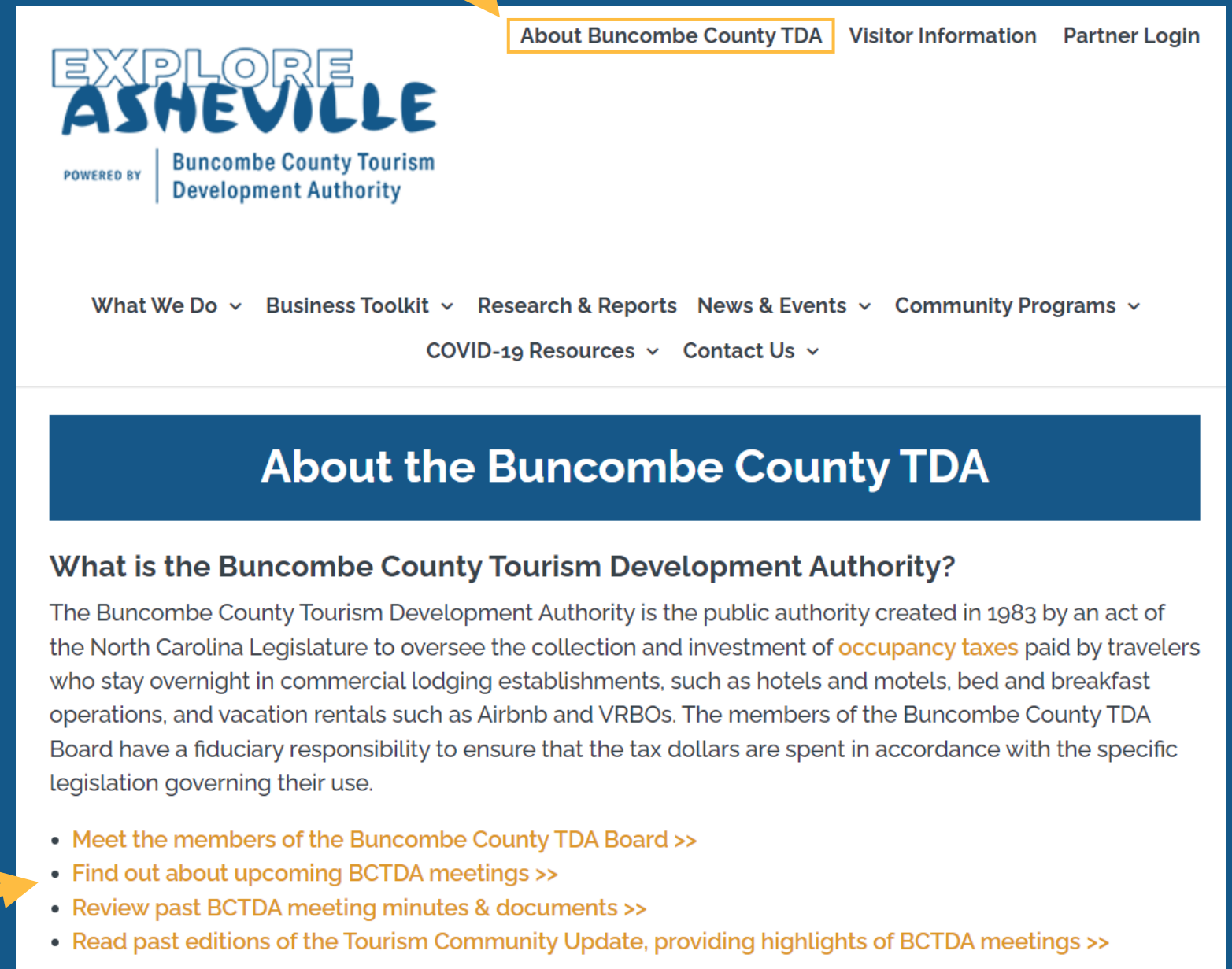
For our viewers watching remotely, documents were emailed to everyone who registered on Zoom by 8:00 this morning.

The agenda and meeting documents are also available online.

Additional materials, including the PowerPoint presentation, will be posted later today.

Go to:

- AshevilleCVB.com
- About the Buncombe County TDA
- Find out about upcoming BCTDA meetings



The screenshot shows the 'EXPLORE ASHEVILLE' website header with the tagline 'POWERED BY Buncombe County Tourism Development Authority'. The navigation menu includes 'About Buncombe County TDA' (highlighted with an orange box and an arrow), 'Visitor Information', and 'Partner Login'. Below the menu, there are dropdown links for 'What We Do', 'Business Toolkit', 'Research & Reports', 'News & Events', 'Community Programs', 'COVID-19 Resources', and 'Contact Us'. The main content area features a dark blue header for 'About the Buncombe County TDA'. Below this, the section 'What is the Buncombe County Tourism Development Authority?' provides a detailed explanation of the authority's role. At the bottom, a list of links is provided, with an orange arrow pointing to the 'Find out about upcoming BCTDA meetings >>' link.

EXPLORE ASHEVILLE
POWERED BY | Buncombe County Tourism Development Authority

About Buncombe County TDA | Visitor Information | Partner Login

What We Do ▾ Business Toolkit ▾ Research & Reports | News & Events ▾ Community Programs ▾
COVID-19 Resources ▾ Contact Us ▾

About the Buncombe County TDA

What is the Buncombe County Tourism Development Authority?

The Buncombe County Tourism Development Authority is the public authority created in 1983 by an act of the North Carolina Legislature to oversee the collection and investment of **occupancy taxes** paid by travelers who stay overnight in commercial lodging establishments, such as hotels and motels, bed and breakfast operations, and vacation rentals such as Airbnb and VRBOs. The members of the Buncombe County TDA Board have a fiduciary responsibility to ensure that the tax dollars are spent in accordance with the specific legislation governing their use.

- [Meet the members of the Buncombe County TDA Board >>](#)
- [Find out about upcoming BCTDA meetings >>](#)
- [Review past BCTDA meeting minutes & documents >>](#)
- [Read past editions of the Tourism Community Update, providing highlights of BCTDA meetings >>](#)

WELCOME BOARD & GUESTS

Chair Brenda Durden

- **Welcome board members and guests who are in attendance**
- **Introductions around the room**



OCTOBER 25 MINUTES

Chair Brenda Durden

Questions/ Comments

Suggested Motion:

Motion to approve the October 25, 2023, meeting minutes.

Motion Second

Additional Discussion

Vote



POWERED BY

Buncombe County Tourism
Development Authority

Buncombe County Tourism Development Authority
A Joint Meeting of the Public Authority and Nonprofit Corporation
Explore Asheville – 27 College Place, Asheville

Board Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, October 25, 2023

Present (Voting):	Brenda Durden, Chair; Matthew Lehman, Vice Chair; Kathleen Mosher, HP Patel, Michael Lusick, Larry Crosby, Lucious Wilson, Elizabeth Putnam, Scott Patel
Absent (Voting):	None
Present (Ex-Officio):	Buncombe County Commissioner Terri Wells
Absent (Ex-Officio):	Asheville Vice Mayor Sandra Kilgore
Staff:	Vic Isley, Tiffany Thacker, Dodie Stephens, Mike Kryzanek, Penelope Whitman, Julia Simpson, Ashley Greenstein, Josh Jones, Marla Tambellini, Tina Porter, McKenzie Provost, Luisa Yen
BC Finance:	Melissa Moore, Buncombe County/BCTDA Fiscal Agent Matt Evans, Buncombe County
Legal Counsel:	Sabrina Rockoff, McGuire, Wood & Bissette/BCTDA Attorney
In-Person Attendees:	Chris Corl, City of Asheville – Harrah's Cherokee Center – Asheville Allison Dains, Buncombe County Parks & Recreation Megan Rogers, Asheville Independent Restaurant Association Robert Sponder, Parks Hospitality John Ellis, Prior TDA Board Member Olivia Ward, OnWard Digital Media Roy Harris, Community Member Jason Sandford, Asheville.com Will Hoffman, Angie Wilhelm; Asheville Citizen Times Chase Davis, Mountain Xpress
Online Attendees:	Mickey Poandl, Ali Wainright, Emily Crosby, Kathryn Dewey, Connie Holliday, Anna Harris, Emilie Soffe, Sha'Linda Pruitt, Maggie Gregg; Explore Asheville Timothy Love, Buncombe County Kit Cramer, Asheville Area Chamber of Commerce Jim Muth, TPDF Committee Andrew Celwyn, Herbiary Chris Smith, Madison Davis; Asheville Buncombe Regional Sports Commission Diane Rogers, Pinecrest Bed & Breakfast Grey Hallock, Kevin Beattie; WLOS





FINANCIAL UPDATES

Melissa Moore
Buncombe County | Finance Director
BCTDA | Fiscal Agent

Tim Lyons
Mauldin & Jenkins | Partner

Dodie Stephens
Explore Asheville | Vice President of Marketing



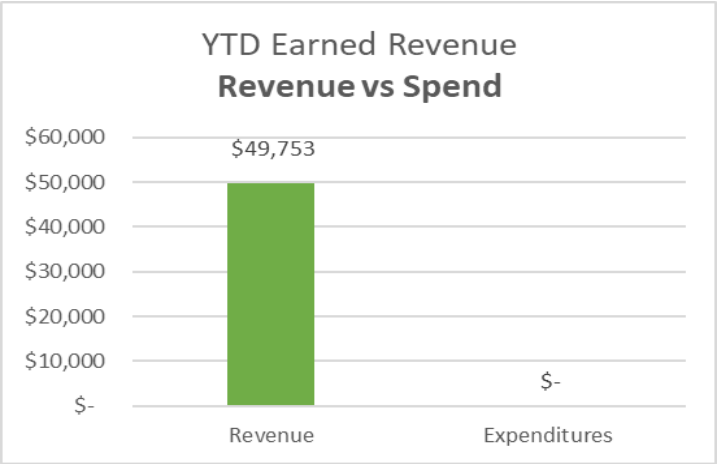
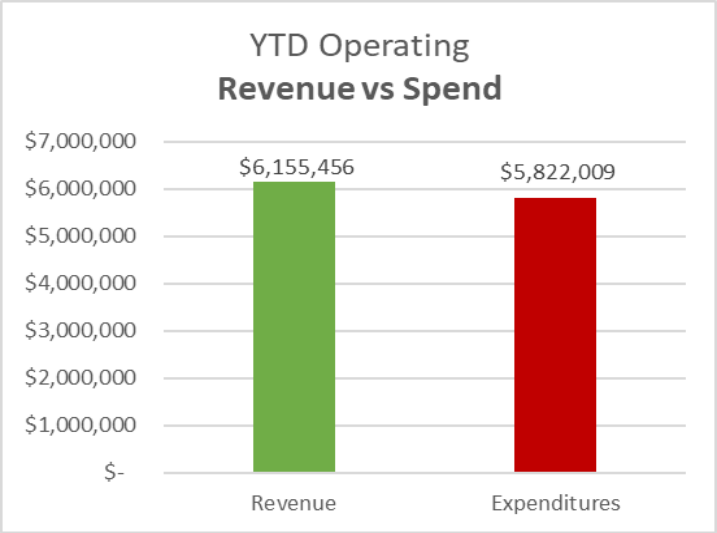
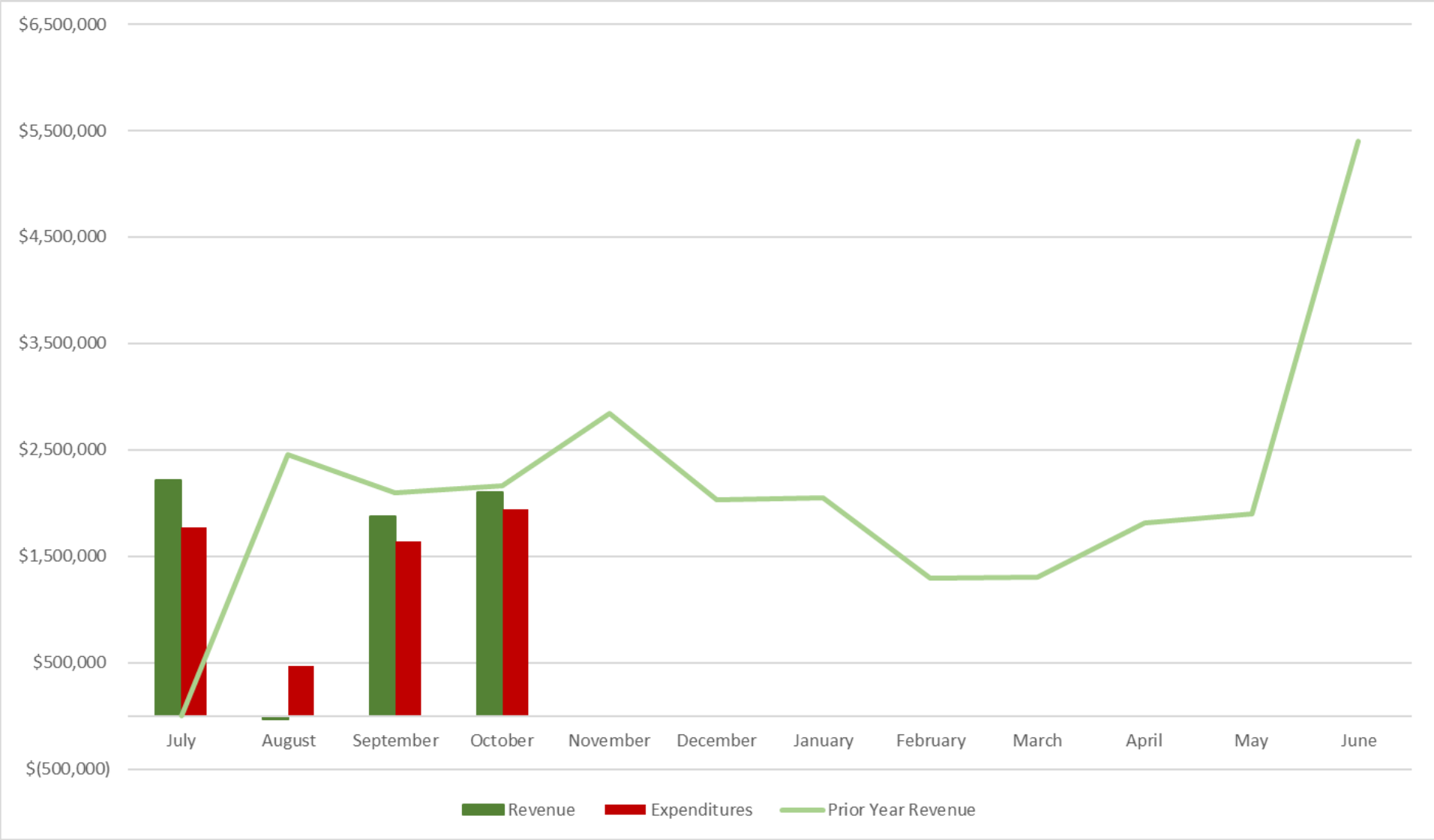


OCTOBER 2023 FINANCIALS

Melissa Moore
Buncombe County | Finance Director
BCTDA | Fiscal Agent

OPERATING AND EARNED REVENUE FUNDS

Revenues (Current and Prior-year) vs Expenditures (current year), October 2023



For more information, see financial and sales statements pages 1, 3, and 6



OPERATING AND EARNED REVENUE FUNDS

Monthly Summary of Activities, October 2023

Operating Fund	Budget	Current Month Actual	Year to Date Actual	(%) Budget Collected/Used
Total revenues	\$ 27,500,000	\$ 2,097,869	\$ 6,155,456	22%
Total expenditures		\$ 1,943,441	\$ 5,822,009	21%

Earned Revenue Fund	Budget	Current Month Actual	Year to Date Actual	(%) Budget Collected/Used
Total revenues	\$ 250,000	\$ 17,458	\$ 49,753	20%
Total expenditures		\$ -	\$ -	0%

For more information, see financial and sales statements pages 1-2



PROJECT FUNDS: TPDF AND LIFT FUNDS

Monthly Summary of Activities, October 2023

Tourism Product Development Fund	Budget	Current Month Actual	Life to Date Actual	(%) Budget Collected/Used
Total revenues	\$ 26,483,770	\$ 764,603	\$ 35,925,842	>100%
Total expenditures		\$ 2,182,149	\$ 4,574,070	17%
Active projects		16		
Funding available for future grants		\$ 9,442,072		

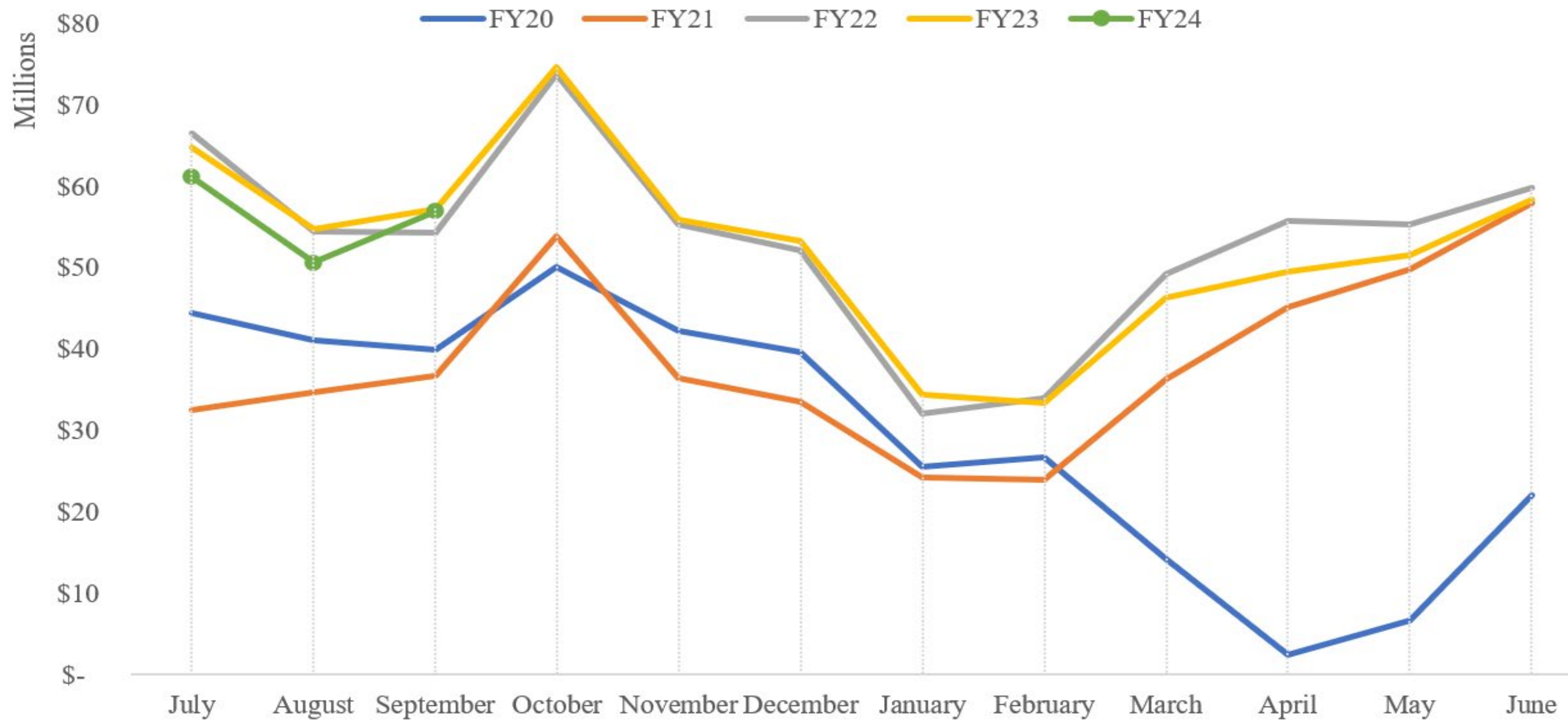
Legacy Investment From Tourism Fund	Budget	Current Month Actual	Life to Date Actual	(%) Budget Collected/Used
Total revenues	\$ 339,560	\$ 516,039	\$ 7,690,121	>100%
Total expenditures		\$ -	\$ 98,621	29%
Active projects		0		
Funding available for future grants		\$ 7,350,561		

For more information, see financial and sales statements pages 3 - 6



LODGING SALES

Shown by Month of Sales, Year-to-Date (5 years), October 2023

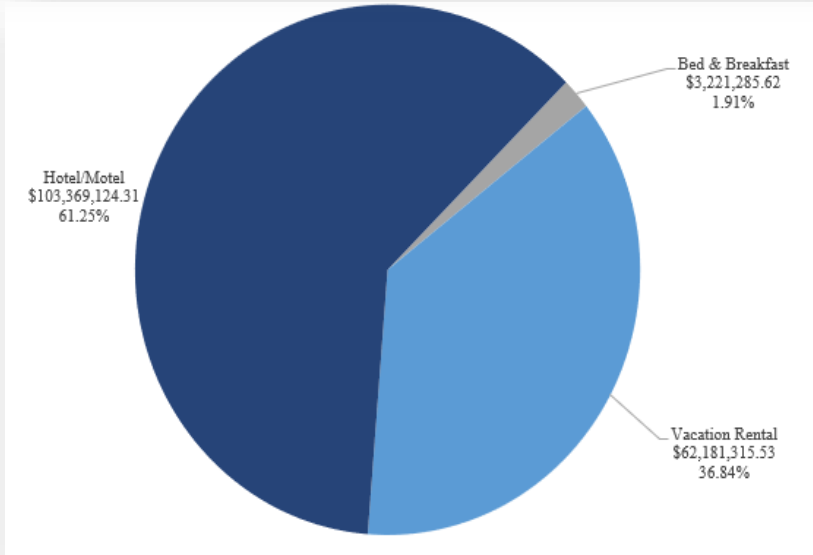
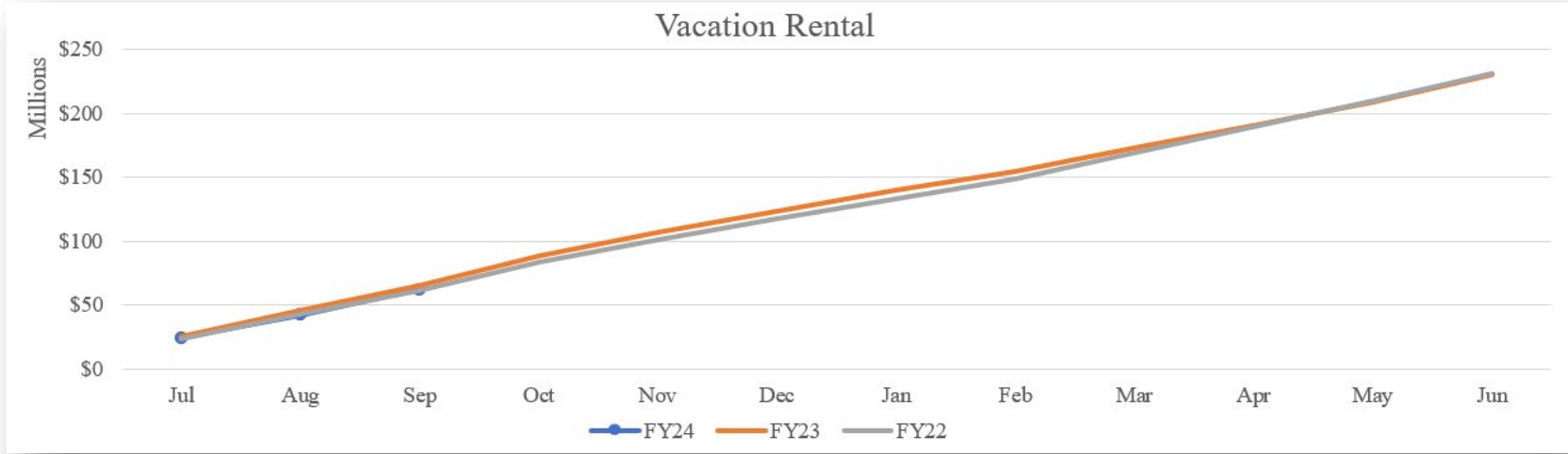
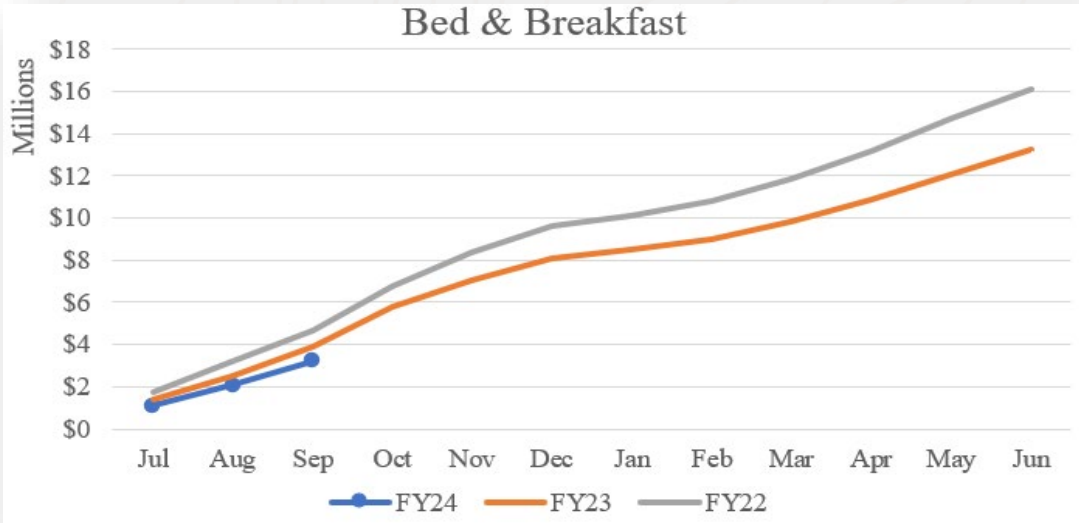
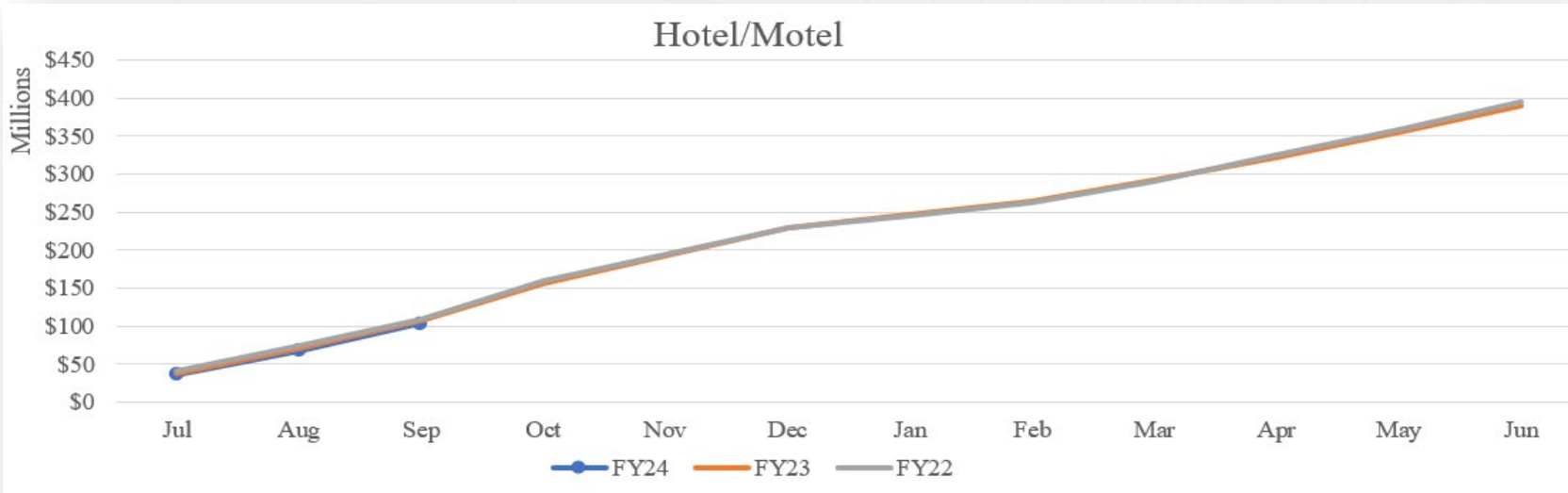


For more information, see financial and sales statements pages 8



LODGING SALES

Activity by type and month, shown for 3 years, October 2023



For more information, see financial and sales statements pages 9 - 10

OCTOBER 2023 FINANCIAL REPORTS

Chair Brenda Durden

Questions/Comments

Suggested Motion:

Motion to approve the October 2023 Financial Reports as presented.

Motion Second

Additional Discussion

Vote



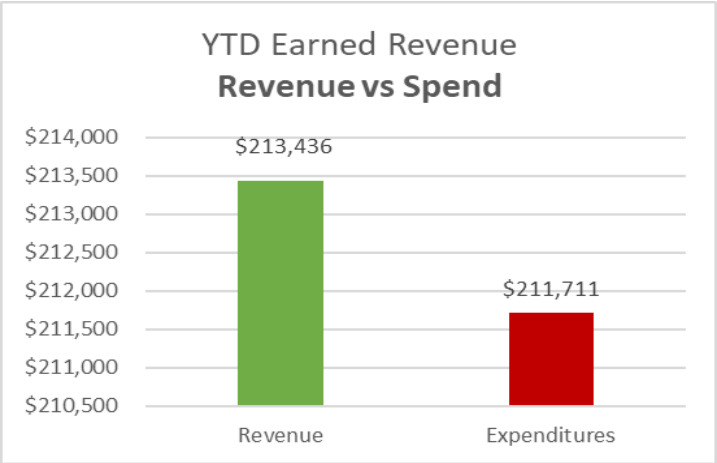
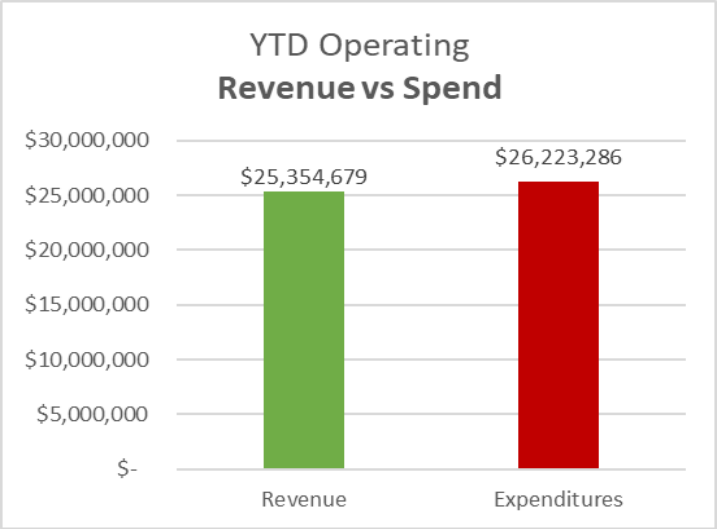
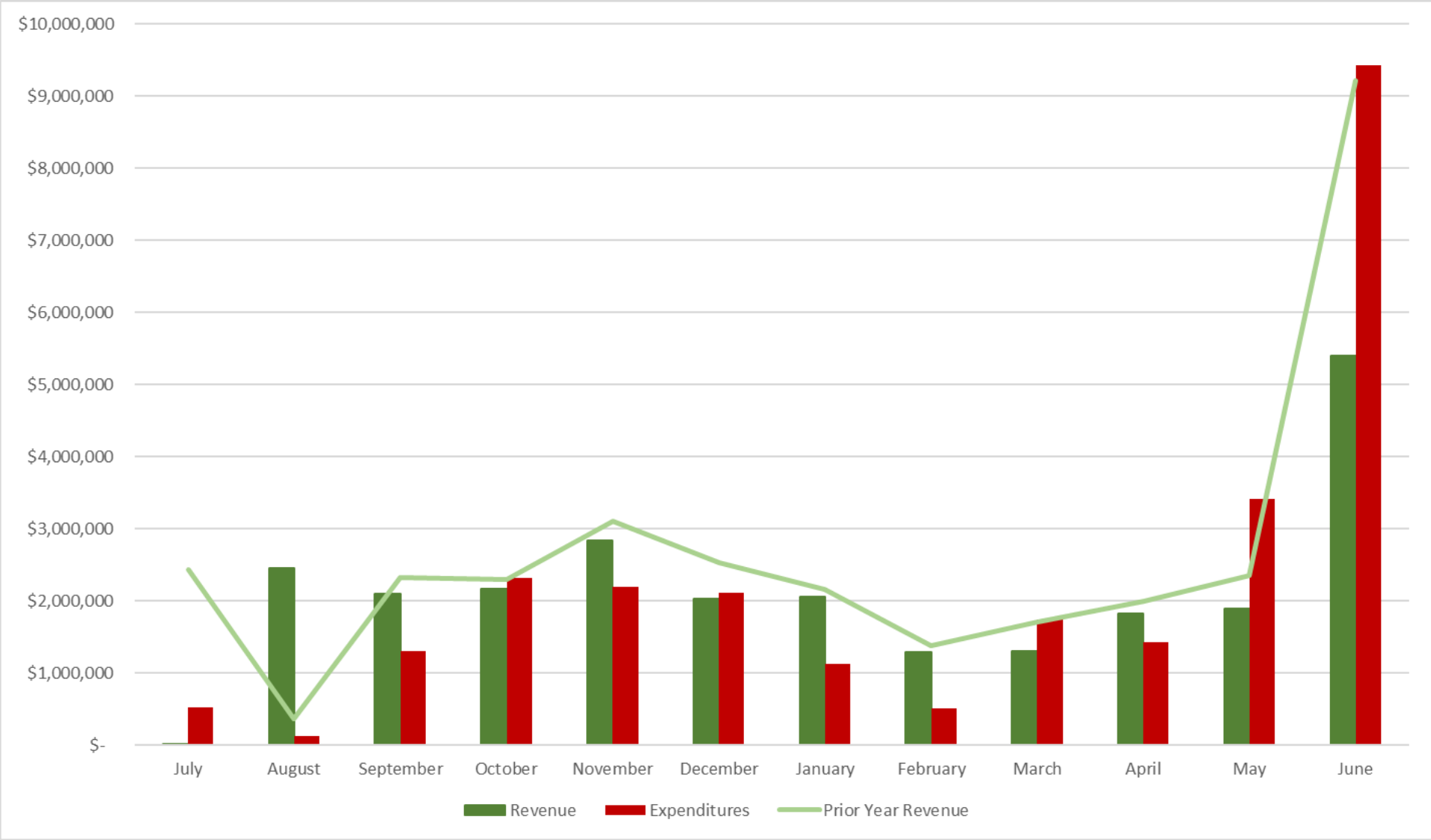


FINAL JUNE 2023 FINANCIALS

Melissa Moore
Buncombe County | Finance Director
BCTDA | Fiscal Agent

OPERATING AND EARNED REVENUE FUNDS

Revenues (Current and Prior-year) vs Expenditures (current year), June 2023



For more information, see financial and sales statements pages 1, 3, and 6



OPERATING AND EARNED REVENUE FUNDS

Monthly Summary of Activities, June 2023

Operating Fund	Budget	Current Month Actual	Year to Date Actual	(%) Budget Collected/Used
Total revenues	\$ 29,217,602	\$ 5,399,132	\$ 25,354,679	87%
Total expenditures		\$ 9,425,660	\$ 26,223,286	90%

Earned Revenue Fund	Budget	Current Month Actual	Year to Date Actual	(%) Budget Collected/Used
Total revenues	\$ 225,000	\$ 52,636	\$ 213,436	95%
Total expenditures		\$ 20,859	\$ 211,711	94%

For more information, see financial and sales statements pages 1-2



PROJECT FUNDS: TPDF AND LIFT FUNDS

Monthly Summary of Activities, June 2023

Tourism Product Development Fund	Budget	Current Month Actual	Life to Date Actual	(%) Budget Collected/Used
Total revenues	\$ 26,327,570	\$ 980,635	\$ 33,712,863	>100%
Total expenditures		\$ 580,866	\$ 2,562,265	10%
Active projects		16		
Funding available for future grants		\$ 7,385,293		

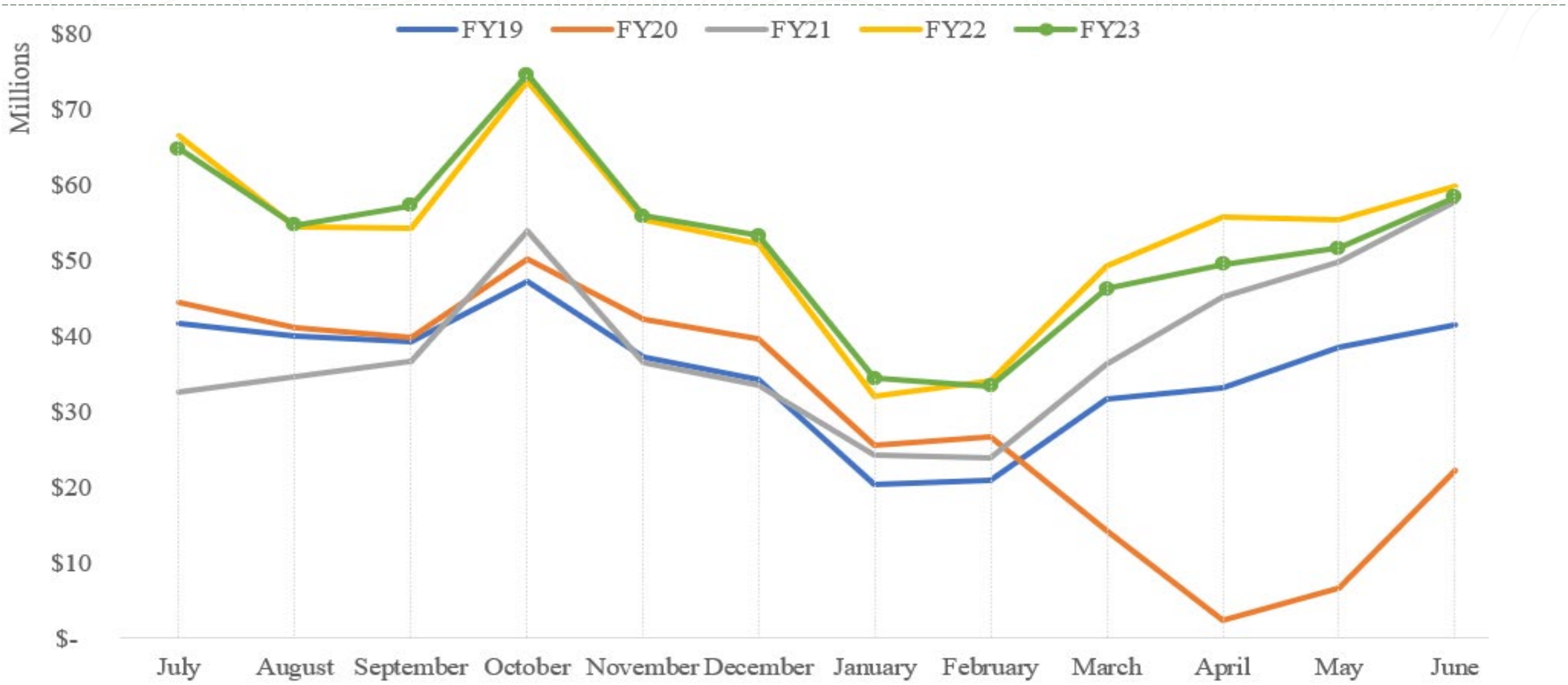
Legacy Investment From Tourism Fund	Budget	Current Month Actual	Life to Date Actual	(%) Budget Collected/Used
Total revenues	\$ -	\$ 1,276,423	\$ 6,175,869	>100%
Total expenditures		\$ -	\$ -	-
Active projects		0		
Funding available for future grants		\$ 6,175,869		

For more information, see financial and sales statements pages 3 - 6



LODGING SALES

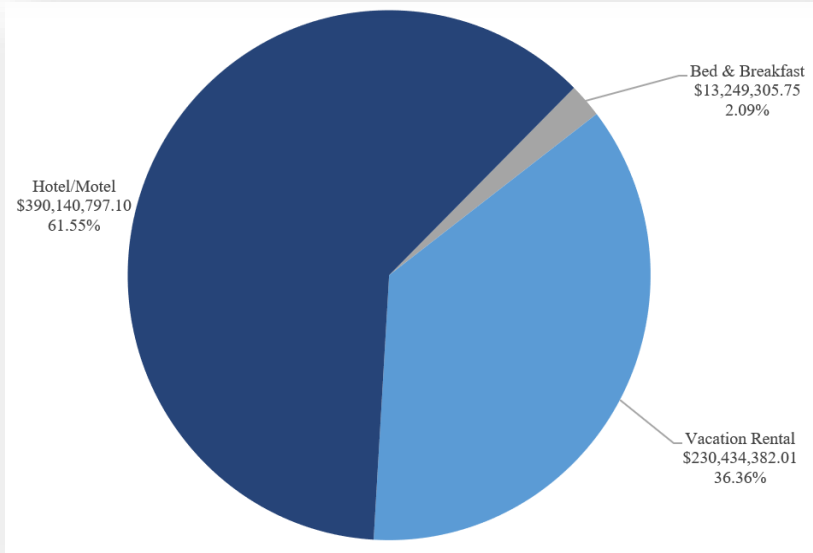
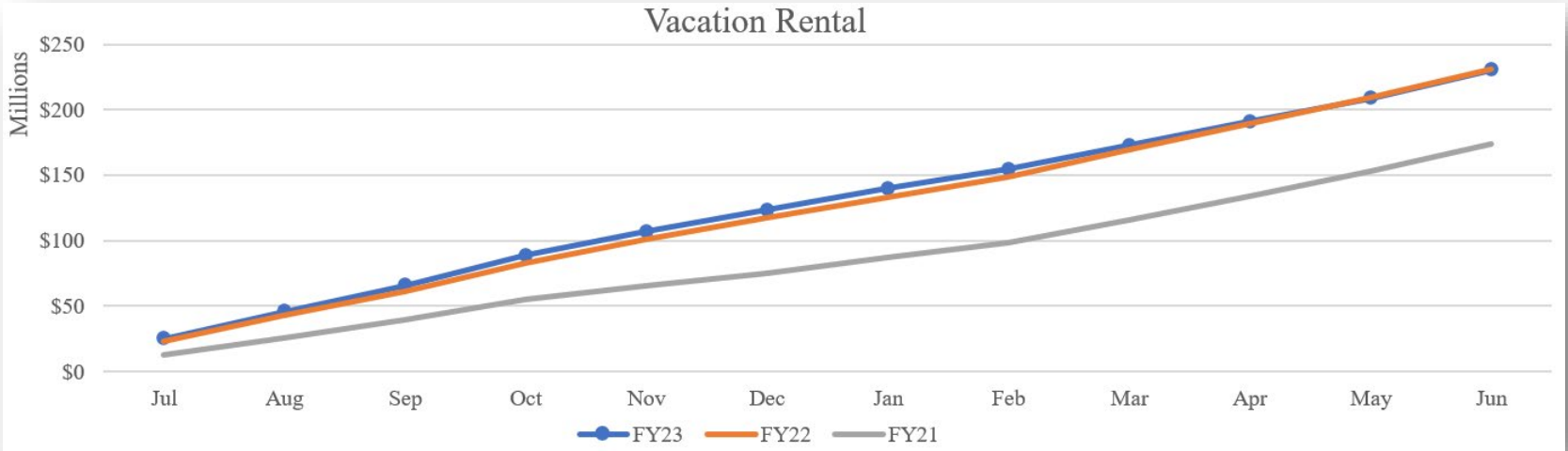
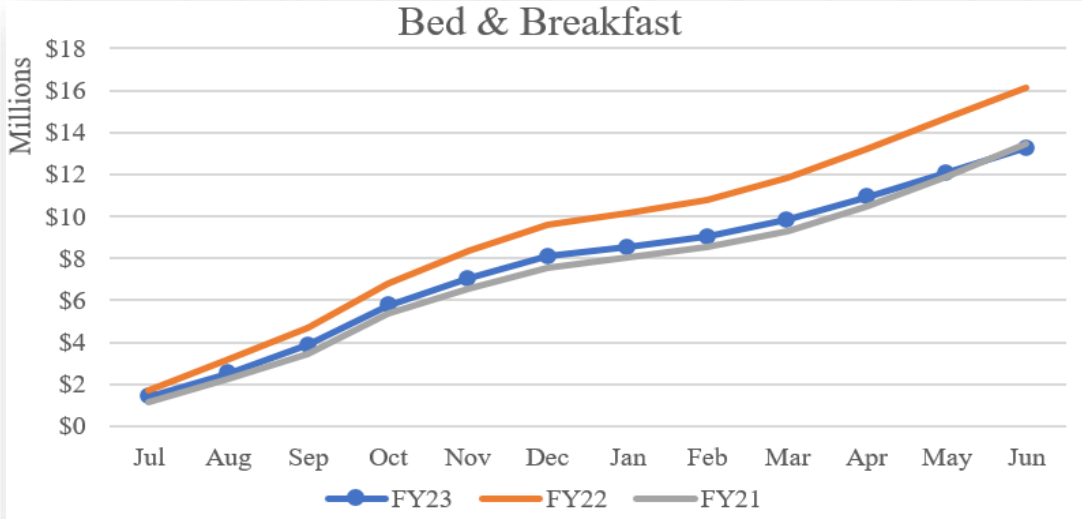
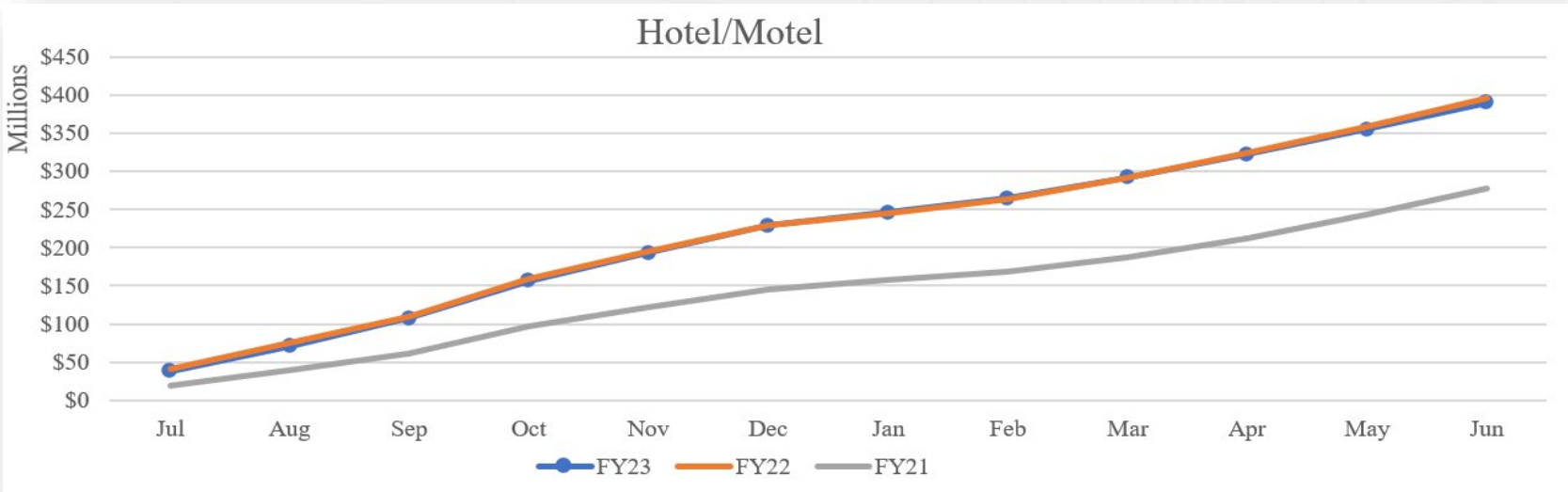
Shown by Month of Sales, Year-to-Date (5 years), June 2023



For more information, see financial and sales statements pages 8

LODGING SALES

Activity by type and month, shown for 3 years, June 2023



For more information, see financial and sales statements pages 9 - 10

FINAL JUNE 2023 FINANCIAL REPORTS

Chair Brenda Durden

Questions/Comments

Suggested Motion:

Motion to approve the final June 2023 Financial Reports as presented.

Motion Second

Additional Discussion

Vote





FY23 AUDIT PRESENTATION

Tim Lyons
Mauldin & Jenkins | Partner



Buncombe County Tourism Development Authority



**Presentation of Audit Results
June 30, 2023**



Agenda

- Engagement Team
- Overview of:
 - Audit Opinion
 - *Government Auditing Standards* Report
- Required Communications
- Accounting Recommendations and Related Matters
- Answer Questions

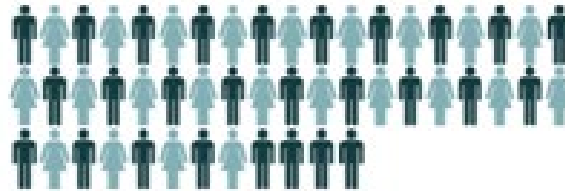


CONSISTENTLY RANKED AS A TOP ACCOUNTING FIRM IN THE U.S.

100+ year
HISTORY
OF QUALITY SERVICE

Serve 650+
GOVERNMENT CLIENTS

GOVERNMENTAL
PARTNERS **16**



140+

TEAM MEMBERS DEDICATED
TO SERVING THE
GOVERNMENTAL INDUSTRY



To be a trusted advisor, earning trust and building respect through our unwavering commitment to sustainable excellence, leadership, and integrity.



225+

SINGLE AUDITS PERFORMED LAST
YEAR COVERING OVER \$4 BILLION
OF FEDERAL GRANTS



135,000+

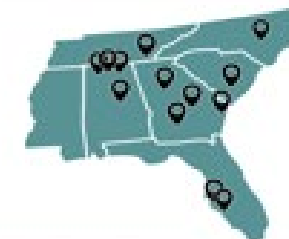
HOURS ANNUALLY
PROVIDED TO
GOVERNMENTAL CLIENTS

150+

CURRENT CLIENTS AWARDED
THE GFOA CERTIFICATE OF
EXCELLENCE

6
STATES

13
OFFICES



Engagement Team Leaders

- Tim Lyons, Engagement Partner | Grant Davis, Quality Review Partner | Kayla O'Sullivan, Senior Associate



Audit Opinion

- **Our Responsibility Under Auditing Standards Generally Accepted in the United States of America (GAAS) and *Government Auditing Standards* (GAGAS)**
 - We considered the internal control structure for the purpose of expressing our opinion on the **Buncombe County Tourism Development Authority's (the "Authority")** basic financial statements, but not for the purpose of providing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Authority's internal controls.
 - Our audit was performed in accordance with GAAS and *Government Auditing Standards*.
 - Our objective is to provide reasonable—not absolute—assurance that the basic financial statements are free of material misstatement.
 - The basic financial statements are the responsibility of the Authority's management.
- **Report on Basic Financial Statements**
 - **Unmodified ("clean") opinion on basic financial statements.**
 - Presented fairly in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.
 - Our responsibility does not extend beyond financial information contained in our report.



Compliance Report and Related Procedures

- **Government Auditing Standards (“Yellow Book”) Report**
 - The financial report package contains a report on our tests of the Authority’s internal controls and compliance with certain provisions of laws, regulations, contracts, and grant agreements. The report is not intended to provide an opinion on internal controls over financial reporting, nor is it intended to provide a legal determination on the Authority’s compliance with applicable laws and regulations.
 - This report and the procedures performed are required by *Government Auditing Standards*.
- **Significant Compliance Items Tested**
 - Compliance with General Statute (G.S.) 159-30 regarding allowable deposits and investments.
 - Compliance with North Carolina Administrative Code (NCAC) 07.01 regarding custodial credit risk and the collateralization of the Authority’s deposits held by financial institutions.
 - Compliance with House Bill (HB 1057) regarding the allocation of occupancy tax revenues to the funds of the Authority.



Required Communications

- **Significant Accounting Policies**

- Management is responsible for the selection and use of appropriate accounting policies.
- The significant accounting policies used by the Authority are described in Note 1 to the basic financial statements.
- During the current year, the Authority implemented Government Accounting Standards Board (GASB) Statement No. 96, *Subscription-based Information Technology Arrangements*.
- The policies used by the Authority are in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles.
- In considering the qualitative aspects of its policies, the Authority is not involved in any controversial or emerging issues for which guidance is not available.

- **Management Judgment/Accounting Estimates**

- Accounting estimates are an integral part of the financial statements prepared by management and are based on management's knowledge and experience about past and current events and assumptions about future events.
- The Authority uses various estimates as part of its financial reporting process.



Required Communications (Continued)

- **Relationship with Management**
 - We received full cooperation from the Authority's management and staff.
 - There were no disagreements with management on accounting issues or financial reporting matters.
- **Management Representation**
 - We requested, and received, written representations from management relating to the accuracy of information included in the financial statements and the completeness and accuracy of various information requested by us.
- **Consultation with Other Accountants**
 - To the best of our knowledge, management has not consulted with, or obtained opinions from, other independent accountants during the year, nor did we face any issues requiring outside consultation.
- **Significant Issues Discussed with Management**
 - There were no significant issues discussed with management related to business conditions, plans, or strategies that may have affected the risk of material misstatement of the financial statements.



Required Communications (Continued)

- **Audit Adjustments**

- A prior period adjustment was needed to correct the recording of the Authority's compensated absences (accrued leave). In prior years, the amount had been recorded in the Authority's General Fund; however, it should only be recorded in the government-wide statement of net position.

- **Financial Statement Disclosures**

- The footnote disclosures to the financial statements are also an integral part of the financial statements and the process used by management to accumulate the information included in the disclosures was the same process used in accumulating the statements. The overall neutrality, consistency, and clarity of the disclosures was considered as part of our audit.

- **Information in Documents Containing Audited Financial Statements**

- Our responsibility for other information in documents containing the Authority's basic financial statements and our report thereon does not extend beyond the information identified in our report. If you intend to publish or otherwise reproduce the financial statements and make reference to our firm, we must be provided with printers' proof for our review and approval before printing. You must also provide us with a copy of the final reproduced material for our approval before it is distributed.

- **Auditor Independence**

- In accordance with AICPA professional standards, M&J is independent with regard to the Authority and its financial reporting process.



Accounting Recommendations and Related Matters

- **New GASB Pronouncements for Future Years**
 - **Statement No. 101, *Compensated Absences*** was issued in June 2022 and is effective for the Authority's fiscal year ending June 30, 2025. Under this new standard, governments will be required to report a liability for leave offered to employees that: (1) is related to services / work already performed; (2) accumulates; and (3) is more likely than not to be settled with cash or other means. Exceptions to these requirements include unlimited leave, types of leave that are contingent upon future events (such as holidays, maternity leave, jury duty, etc.), or leave that is more likely than not to be settled through conversion to a defined benefit pension or other postemployment benefit plan.



Accounting Recommendations and Related Matters

- **Current / Pending Major GASB Projects**
 - **Re-Examination of the Financial Reporting Model.**
 - **Revenue and Expense Recognition.**
 - **Going Concern Uncertainties and Severe Financial Stress.**
 - **Classification of nonfinancial assets.**

Govt. Clients – Free Quarterly Continuing Education

- **Since March of 2009 – For Over 13 Years !!**

- Mauldin & Jenkins provides free quarterly continuing education for all of our governmental clients. Topics are tailored to be of interest to governmental entities. In an effort to accommodate our entire governmental client base, we offer the sessions several times per quarter at a variety of client provided locations resulting in greater networking and knowledge sharing among our governmental clients. We normally see approximately 180 people per quarter. Examples of subjects addressed in the past few quarters include:

- Accounting for Debt Issuances
- Achieving Excellence in Financial Reporting
- Best Budgeting Practices, Policies and Processes
- Budget Preparation
- ACFR Preparation (two (2) day hands-on course)
- Capital Asset Accounting Processes and Controls
- Collateralization of Deposits and Investments
- Component Units
- Cybersecurity Risk Management
- Evaluating Financial and Non-Financial Health of a Govt.
- Financial Report Card – Where Does Your Govt. Stand?
- Financial Reporting Model Improvements
- GASB Nos. 74 & 75, OPEB Standards
- GASB No. 77, Tax Abatement Disclosures
- GASB No. 84, Fiduciary Activities
- GASB Projects & Updates (ongoing & several sessions)
- Human Capital Management
- Grant Accounting Processes and Controls
- Internal Controls Over Accounts Payable, Payroll and Cash Disbursements
- Internal Controls Over Receivables & the Revenue Cycle
- IRS Issues, Primarily Payroll Matters
- Legal Considerations for Debt Issuances & Disclosures
- Policies and Procedures Manuals
- Segregation of Duties
- Single Audits for Auditees
- Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (SPLOST)
- Accounting, Reporting & Compliance
- Uniform Grant Reporting Requirements and the New Single Audit



Questions & Comments



Thank You for the Opportunity to Serve

FY23 AUDIT

Chair Brenda Durden

Questions/Comments

Suggested Motion:

Motion to approve the BCTDA's FY23 audit as presented and to place it on file.

Motion Second

Additional Discussion

Vote





BCTDA INVESTMENT POLICY

Melissa Moore
Buncombe County | Finance Director
BCTDA | Fiscal Agent

BCTDA INVESTMENT POLICY

Chair Brenda Durden

Questions/Comments

Suggested Motion:

Motion to approve the BCTDA investment policy as presented.

Motion Second

Additional Discussion

Vote





TPDF BUDGET AMENDMENTS

Melissa Moore
Buncombe County | Finance Director
BCTDA | Fiscal Agent

TPDF BUDGET AMENDMENTS

Financials will be amended to include these previously approved Tourism Product Development Fund awards

Applicant	Project	Fund	Expenditure
Buncombe County Parks & Recreation	2023 Enka Recreation Destination - Phase II	TPDF	\$4,054,415
City of Asheville	2023 Harrah's Cherokee Center - Asheville Upgrades	TPDF	\$1,586,000
Western NC Agricultural Center	2023 Equine Facility Modernization	TPDF	\$500,000

Applicant	Project	Fund	Expenditure
City of Asheville	2022 Coxe Avenue Green Street – Project Closure	TPDF	(\$1,950,000)
City of Asheville	2023 McCormick Field Capital Improvements	TPDF	\$1,950,000



TPDF BUDGET AMENDMENTS

Chair Brenda Durden

Questions/Comments

Suggested Motion:

Motion to approve all TPDF budget amendments as presented.

Motion Second

Additional Discussion

Vote





OPERATING FUND BUDGET AMENDMENT

Dodie Stephens

Explore Asheville | Vice President of Marketing

2024 POLITICAL LANDSCAPE

Political ad spending is raising the cost of media

- **Spending is anticipated to increase across all channels—2024 political spending is already outpacing the record-setting spend in 2020**
- Predicting a \$10.2B total spending this upcoming election cycle, representing a 13% increase over the previous record in 2020
- The presidential campaign will account for the largest spending at \$2.7B nationally

Source: Vivvix/CMAG



POLITICAL SPENDING IMPACT

2024 Political Cycle Impacts to Media Costs

Spending Increases Impact Most Channels

Biggest Impact: Connected/Streaming TV (CTV/OTT)

- The emerging CTV/OTT channels will have the largest increase in spend from 2020 to 2024

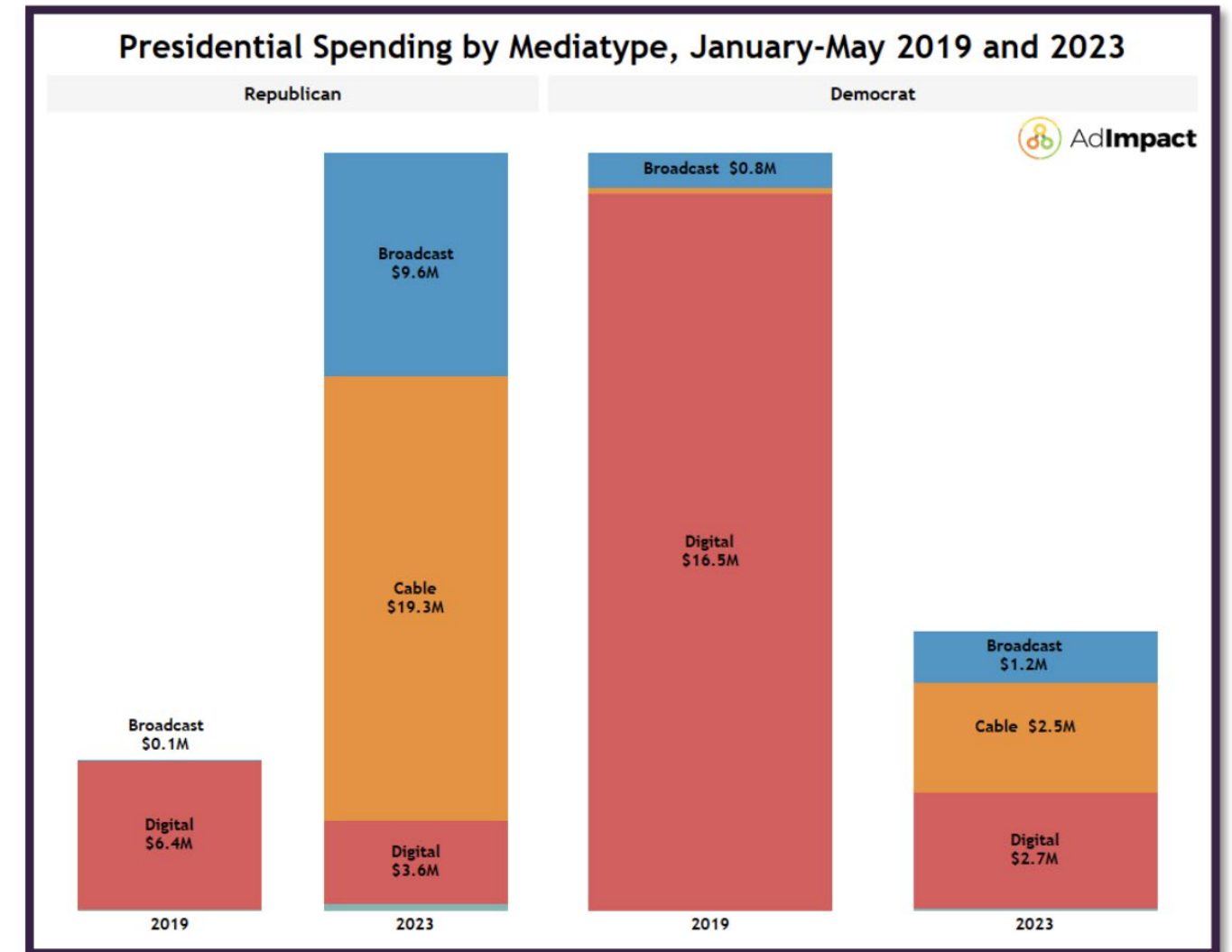
Political Party Spend

- Cable will be the most popular media type with Republicans, investing 58% of their spend. Democrats are investing 39% of their spend in cable

Spending by Political Race

- While the presidential campaign will account for the largest spend, house races will drive increased spend due to more investment in fewer, highly competitive races.

Source: Vivvix/CMAG



RECOMMENDED INVESTMENT INCREASES

To Maintain Advertising Promotion Reach in back half of FY24

FY24 Strategy | Maintain distribution and offset spending impacts to ensure paid media performs to its original strategic intent. Secure 2H inventory when there will be fewer impacts and prioritize time periods that won't be as expensive or competitive.

Channel	Current Budget	Recommended Budget	Cost Increase	Percentage Increase
Linear	\$2,400,840	\$3,361,176	\$960,336	40%
Paid Social	\$505,000	\$555,500	\$50,500	10%
CTV / Digital Display / Rich Media Display	\$975,000	\$1,316,250	\$341,250	35%
Total	\$3,880,840	\$5,232,926	\$1,352,086	

Maintaining promotional reach provides the best opportunity to inspire and support net new visitor spending in local businesses throughout our community.

This is turn will generate visitor-supported sales tax needed to fuel local government budgets for resident services.



OPERATING FUND BUDGET AMENDMENT

Chair Brenda Durden

Request: Increase paid advertising investment by \$1.352 million to maintain the advertising promotion schedule and reach due to rising media costs in a presidential election year.

Questions/Comments

Suggested Motion:

Motion to approve the operating fund budget amendment as presented.

Motion Second

Additional Discussion

Vote





2024 FESTIVALS & CULTURAL EVENTS SUPPORT FUND GRANT INVESTMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

Tiffany Thacker
Explore Asheville | Director of Grants

FESTIVALS & CULTURAL EVENTS SUPPORT FUND

Background

The Festivals & Cultural Events Support Fund was launched in 2016 and is designed to **provide financial support for events that both serve the residents of Buncombe County and the visitors who travel to the Asheville area** for the sense of authenticity and welcoming spirit that the destination exudes.

The primary purposes of the fund are to:

- Support and preserve cultural identity within Buncombe County;
- Stimulate the creation of new, or expansion of existing, festivals and cultural events; and
- Contribute to the financial viability and long-term sustainability of the area's festivals and cultural events

Application Process:

- Competitive application process with all applications evaluated by a Committee
- Grants range from \$1,000 to a maximum of \$5,000. The funding level may not exceed a 50% match of the total event budget



FESTIVALS & CULTURAL EVENTS SUPPORT FUND

Eligibility Requirements

Applicant Eligibility

- Must be a federally recognized non-profit organization based in Buncombe County
- Organizational mission must be to conduct programs that benefit Buncombe County residents and visitors and have the potential to enhance the culture and vitality of Buncombe County
- If the applying organization is not a non-profit organization, the applicant may use a fiscal agent for their application. The fiscal agent must meet all applicant eligibility criteria.

Event Eligibility

- Event must take place within Buncombe County
- Event must occur between January 1, 2024, and December 31, 2024

FESTIVALS & CULTURAL EVENTS SUPPORT FUND

Review Process

A Festivals & Cultural Events Support Fund Committee assesses the application submissions and makes funding recommendations to the BCTDA who has authority over funding decisions.

F&CE Committee Members:

- **Matthew Lehman**, BCTDA Board Member / Vice-Chair of BCTDA & Grand Bohemian Hotel General Manager
- **Jon Fillman**, City of Asheville Community Event Manager
- **Rasheeda McDaniels**, Buncombe County Community Engagement
- **Allison Dains**, Buncombe County Parks and Recreation Director
- **Vic Isley**, Explore Asheville President & CEO

FESTIVALS & CULTURAL EVENTS SUPPORT FUND

Evaluation Criteria

Event & Audience Fit

- Anticipated number of attendees (residents, regional, visitors)
- Alignment with at least one BCTDA Strategic Pillar
- Community interest

Marketing Power

- Details as to how event will be promoted (advertising, promotional partners, website, social media campaign, earned media potential)

Event Viability & Community Support

- Proven track record of successful event production and execution
- Proof of other funding sources (tickets, sponsorships, grants, organizational)
- Use of grant funds
- Demonstrated support from the local community, local businesses, public-sector partners

FESTIVALS & CULTURAL EVENTS SUPPORT FUND

Submission & Recommendation Summary

Submission Summary

- 39 applications received for a total ask of \$176,000 (increase from 24 applications received last year)
- \$100,000 available to award in this grant cycle
- F&CE Committee met on Wednesday, November 8 to evaluate applications & make investment recommendations

Committee Recommendation

- Committee recommends awarding 25 out of the 39 applications received, for a total amount awarded of \$100,000.
- Investment was recommended for the applications that met eligibility requirements and most closely aligned with the evaluation criteria

FESTIVALS & CULTURAL EVENTS SUPPORT FUND

Submission Summary

	Organization	Event	Amount
1	Appalachian Sustainable Agriculture Project (ASAP)	ASAP Farm Tour	\$5,000
2	Asheville Brewers Alliance	AVL Beer Week	\$5,000
3	Asheville Celtic Group	Asheville Celtic Festival	\$5,000
4	Asheville Creative Arts / Lovely Asheville Enterprises, LLC	3rd Lovely Asheville Annual Fall Festival 2024	\$5,000
5	Asheville Downtown Association	Pritchard Park Summer Culture and Art Series	\$2,500
6	Asheville Downtown Association	Asheville Holiday Parade	\$2,500
7	Asheville Downtown Association	Downtown After 5	\$5,000
8	Asheville FM	5th Annual Asheville FM Record Fair	\$1,500
9	Asheville Independent Restaurant Association	Taste of Asheville	\$5,000
10	Asheville Makers Inc.	Maker Faire Asheville	\$1,500
11	Asheville Mardi Gras, Inc.	Asheville Mardi Gras Parade and Queen's Ball	\$5,000
12	Big Ivy Community Development Club dba Big Ivy Community Center	Big Ivy's Independence Day Celebration	\$2,500
13	Black Mountain College Museum + Arts Center	{Re}HAPPENING 12	\$3,500



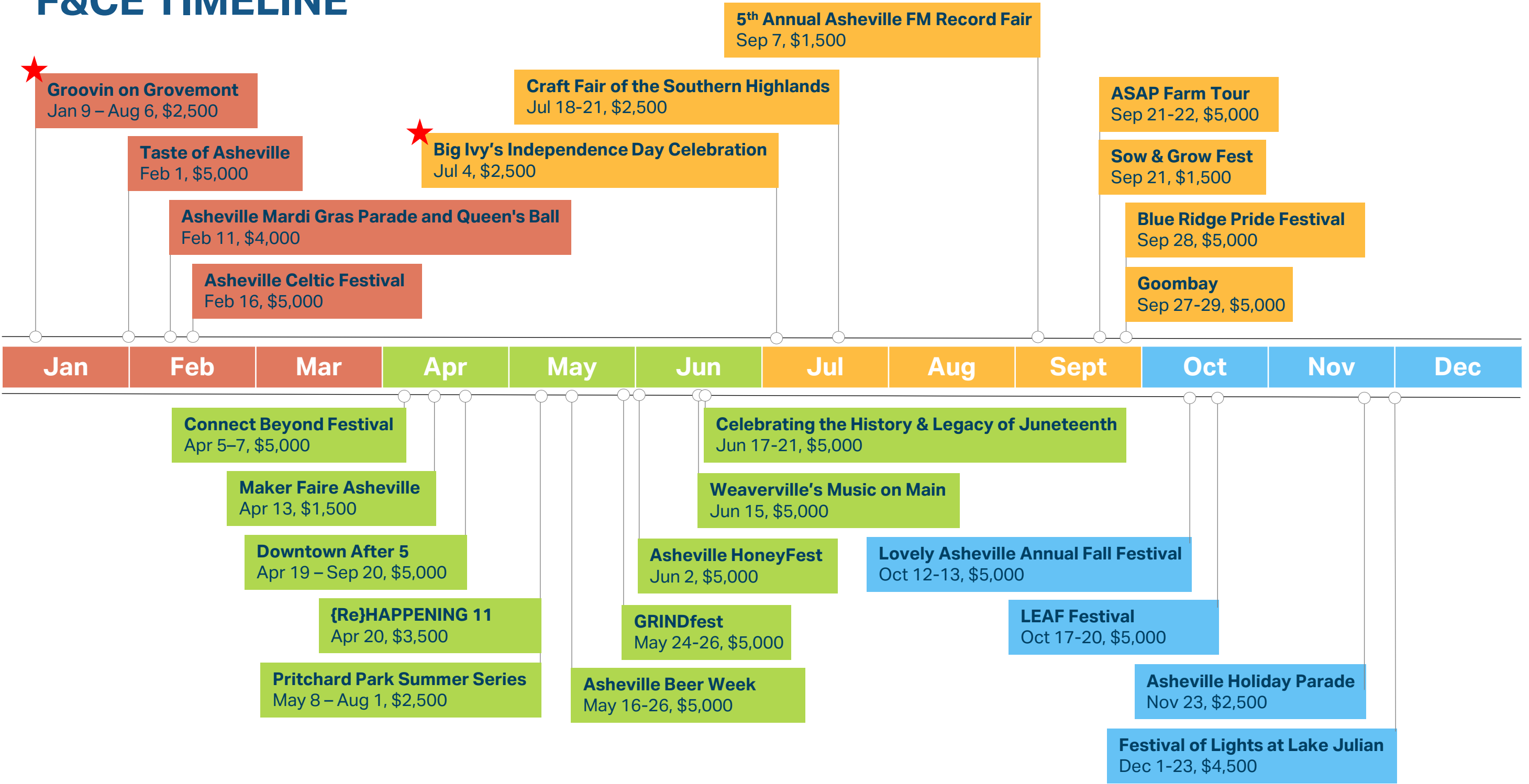
FESTIVALS & CULTURAL EVENTS SUPPORT FUND

Submission Summary

	Organization	Event	Amount
14	Black Wall Street AVL	GRINDfest	\$5,000
15	Blue Ridge Pride	Blue Ridge Pride Festival	\$5,000
16	Buncombe County Recreation Services	Festival of Lights at Lake Julian	\$4,500
17	Center for Honeybee Research	Asheville HoneyFest	\$5,000
18	Connect Beyond Festival	Connect Beyond Festival	\$5,000
19	LEAF Global Arts	LEAF Festival	\$5,000
20	Organic Growers School	Sow & Grow Fest	\$1,500
21	Southern Highland Craft Guild	Craft Fair of the Southern Highlands	\$2,500
22	Swannanoa Community Council	Groovin On Grovemont	\$2,500
23	The Dr. MLK, Jr. Association of Asheville & Buncombe County	"Celebrating the History and Legacy of Juneteenth"	\$5,000
24	Weaverville Business Association	Weaverville's Music on Main	\$5,000
25	YMI Cultural Center	Goombay	\$5,000
TOTAL			\$100,000



F&CE TIMELINE



FESTIVALS & CULTURAL EVENTS SUPPORT FUND

Chair Brenda Durden

Questions/Comments

Suggested Motion:

Motion to approve the grant investment funding for each event as recommend by the Festivals & Cultural Events Support Fund Committee.

Motion Second

Additional Discussion

Vote





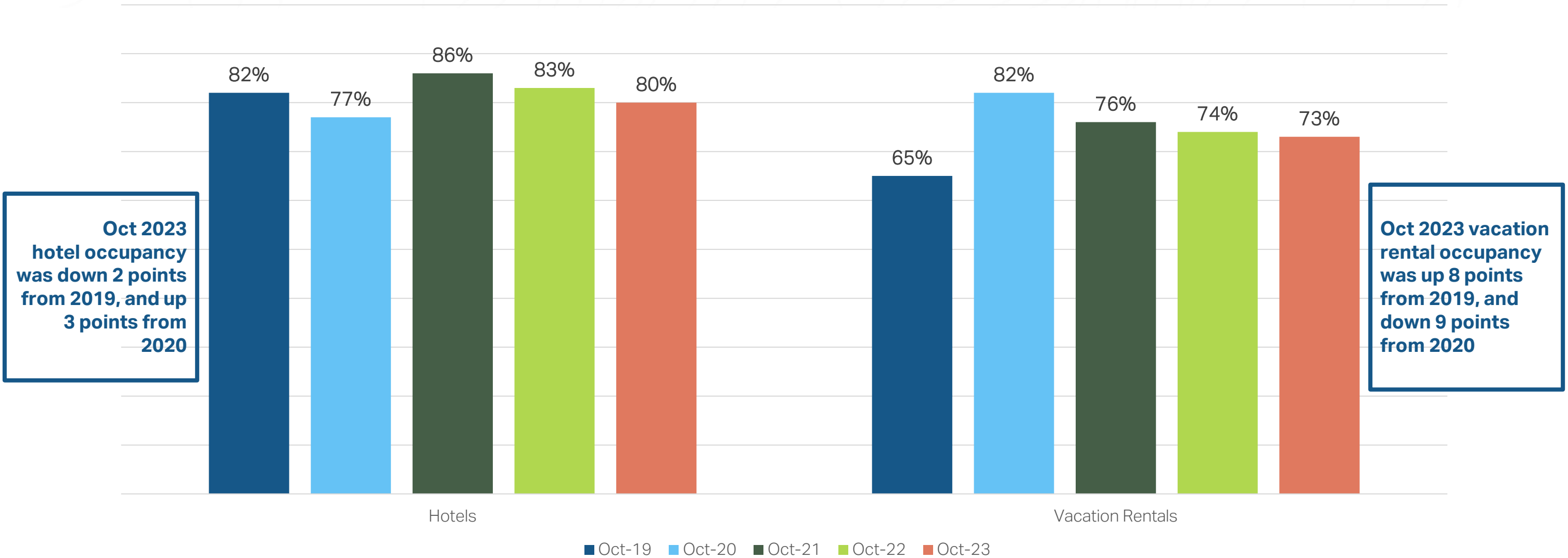
PRESIDENT & CEO REPORT

Vic Isley

Explore Asheville | President & CEO

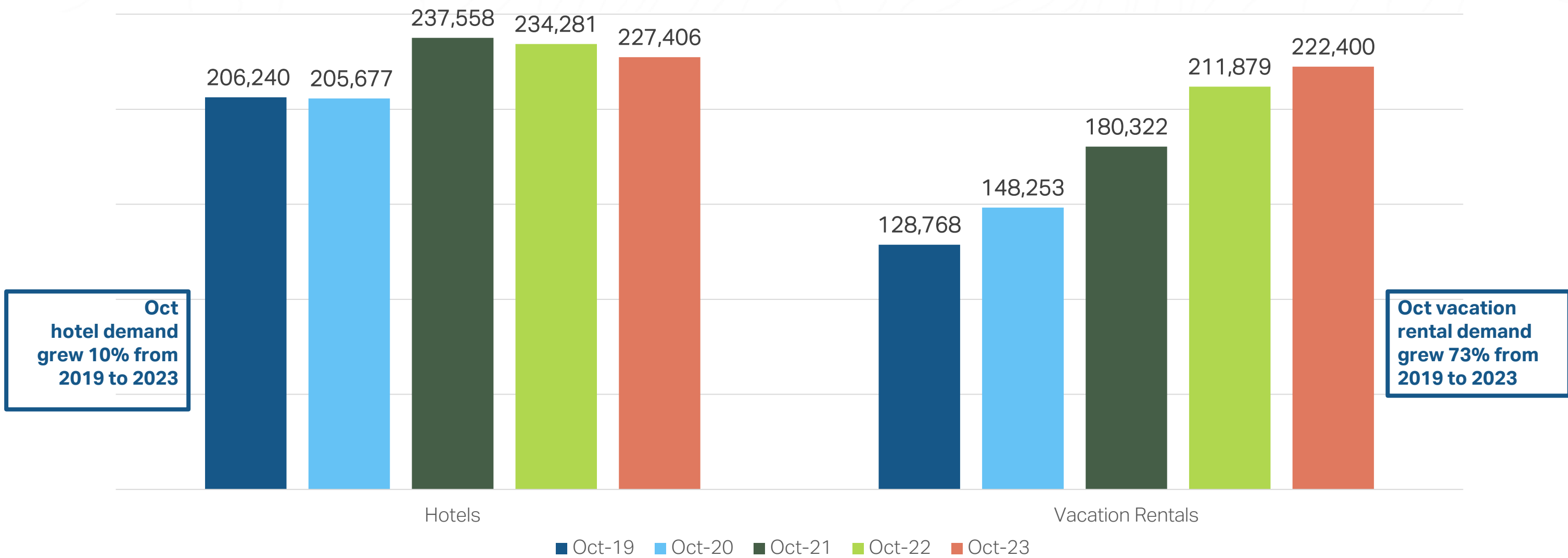
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OCTOBER LODGING OCCUPANCY



Source: Smith Travel Research, AirDNA

OCTOBER LODGING DEMAND



Source: Smith Travel Research, AirDNA

THE GOOD ROAD

National PBS episode part of integrated partnership

- Part of an integrated promotional partnership around Champions of Conservation and Responsible Travel
- Garden & Gun (G&G) and Explore Asheville worked with PBS's The Good Road to produce one full-length episode filmed in Asheville aired during its fourth season
- An innovative, inspiring documentary series about two best friends who travel the world meeting philanthropists and change-makers
- Premiered nationally Nov. 7 and will be in rotation through 2024
- In addition, G&G created three mini-episodes highlighting Asheville to broadcast on G&G and Explore Asheville digital + social media channels shining a spotlight on the stories of:
 - Gaining Ground
 - The Utopian Seed Project
 - Southside Community Farm



PLUS: THREE SHORT FILMS



Gaining Ground

Aaron and Anne Grier of [Gaining Ground Farm](#) and the [Equal Plates Project](#) and chef John Fleer of [Rhubarb](#) restaurant share a farm-to-table discussion.



The Utopian Seed Project

Chris Smith, founder of the [Utopian Seed Project](#), discusses increased agrobiodiversity in the food and farming system with DiBenedetto before taste testing his harvest with dishes prepared by chef Luis Martinez and chef Yunanda Wilson.



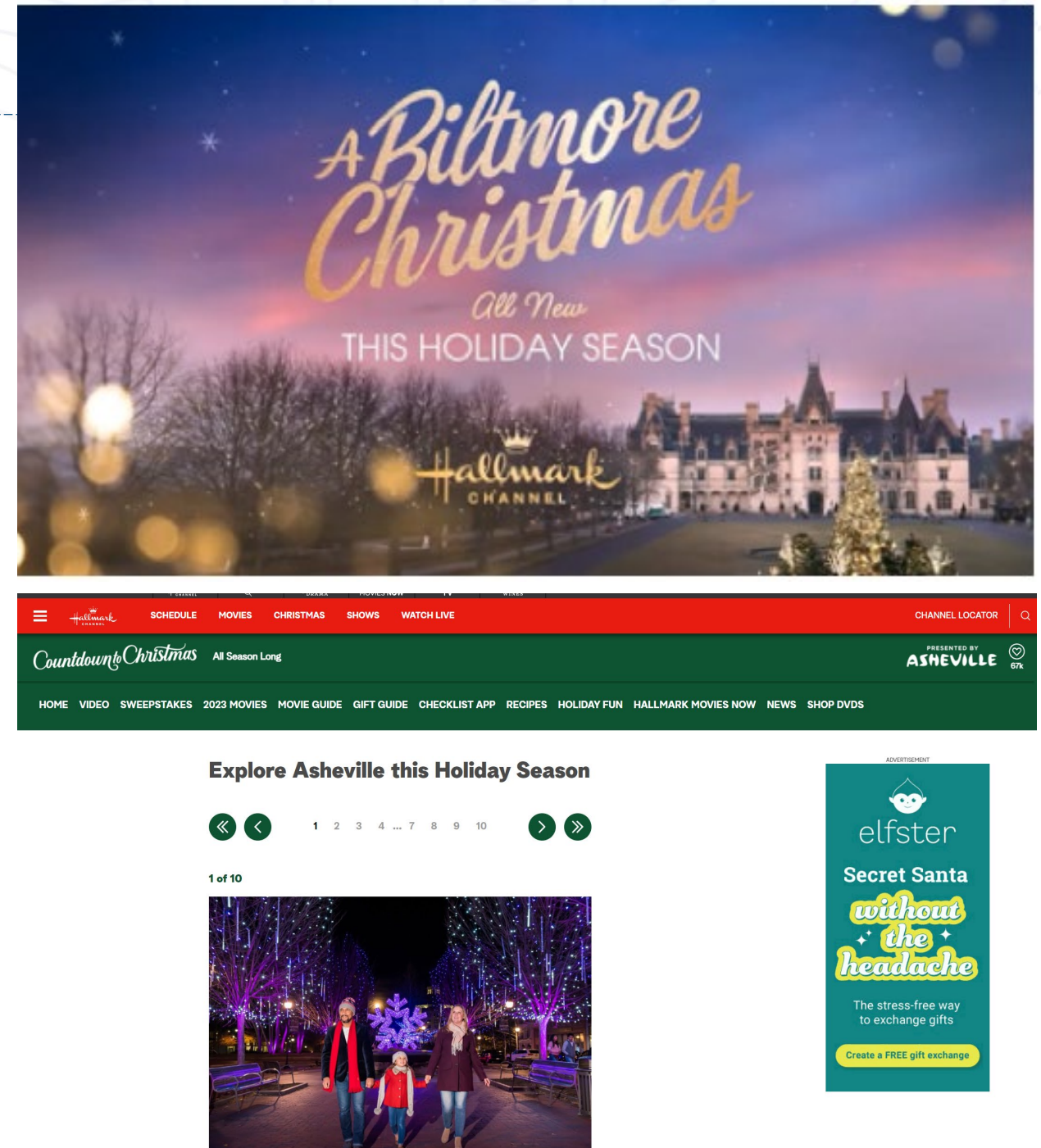
Southside Community Farm

In the historically Black Southside neighborhood of Asheville, North Carolina, [Southside Community Farm](#) is growing black agricultural sovereignty through food distribution, environmental education, racial justice, and connection with the land.

A BILTMORE CHRISTMAS

First of its kind destination promotion with Hallmark Channel

- The last quarter of each year, Hallmark Channel is the most watched entertainment cable network among households, total viewers, women and persons 18+, women 25-54 (with no qualifiers), and women 18-49.
- Women serve as the primary decision-makers and planners of travel, and surprising to many Hallmark Channel dominates with women viewers but also with households and total viewers.
- Show premiered Nov. 26 and currently in rotation.
- The \$500,000 destination promotion runs for six months (July – December), delivering 36.4 million national TV and digital impressions:
 - :30 and :15 second spots plus 10 trivia units with embedded brand video
 - 5-Day Landing Page Takeover
 - Custom Listicle and Surrounding Display Banners
 - Digital Pre-roll



ASHEVILLE CHAMPIONSHIP

Generated \$2.3 million in direct spending

- The Asheville Championship was born out of our community's collective ability to work with KemperSports LIVE to host the Maui Invitational Tournament during the height of the pandemic in 2020.
- Organized by KemperSports LIVE, the same group behind the Maui Jim Invitational, this four-team tournament unfolded Friday, Nov. 10, and Sunday, Nov. 12, showcasing the talents of college men's basketball teams from the University of Maryland, Davidson College, Clemson University, and the University of Alabama at Birmingham.
- Collaboration between Explore Asheville, Harrah's Cherokee Civic Center team, our local sports commission, fellow sponsors and many volunteers.
- Grew from \$500,000 in direct spending in its first year to \$2.3 million in its third season.



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

A seat at the table for community conversations

- Leadership Asheville Forum presentation with Chris Cavanaugh of Magellan Strategies on the facts about destination marketing, management and the usage of occupancy tax in the state of North Carolina
- Business & tourism panel during The French Broad River Partnership 5th Annual Meeting focusing on intersection of the environment and the economy
- Business Improvement District (BID) community leader input during roundtables
- Opening ribbon cutting celebration for Zelda Dearest



BLACK CULTURAL HERITAGE TRAIL

Ribbon cutting event December 15

- The Black Cultural Heritage Trail was awarded \$500,000 in 2018 through the Tourism Product Development Fund
- Stewarded by the River Front Development Group, an engaged advisory group of area residents, and dedicated Explore Asheville staff
- Residents and visitors can explore the rich Black cultural heritage of Asheville throughout three sections of the trail (14 stops and 20 panels): Downtown, Southside, and River Arts District
- The trail celebrates the dignity, humanity, and agency of Black people from all backgrounds who built resilient communities and fostered social change

You are invited to the Asheville Black Cultural Heritage Trail Ribbon Cutting Ceremony

Join the River Front Development Group,
Explore Asheville and the Buncombe County Tourism
Development Authority

for a celebration on December 15, 10am-12pm at the
Black Wall Street building in the River Area, located at
8 River Arts Place.

Trolley service, provided by Morgan's Transportation
will be available from 12-2pm for guests to experience
sections of the trail.

Brunch, drinks, music, and remarks to follow the
ribbon cutting.

See event details, and [RSVP here](#) by December 11.

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LOCAL FESTIVALS & CULTURAL EVENTS

Supported by Explore Asheville and the BCTDA

November Events

- Asheville Design Weekend
- Asheville Symphony's ALT ASO Series
- Winter Lights at The NC Arboretum
- Asheville Holiday Parade
- Harvest & Healing Music Festival

December Events

- Winter Lights at The NC Arboretum

The Festival & Cultural Event Support Fund was designed to provide financial support to local nonprofits for events that serve both the residents of Buncombe County and the visitors who travel to the Asheville area.

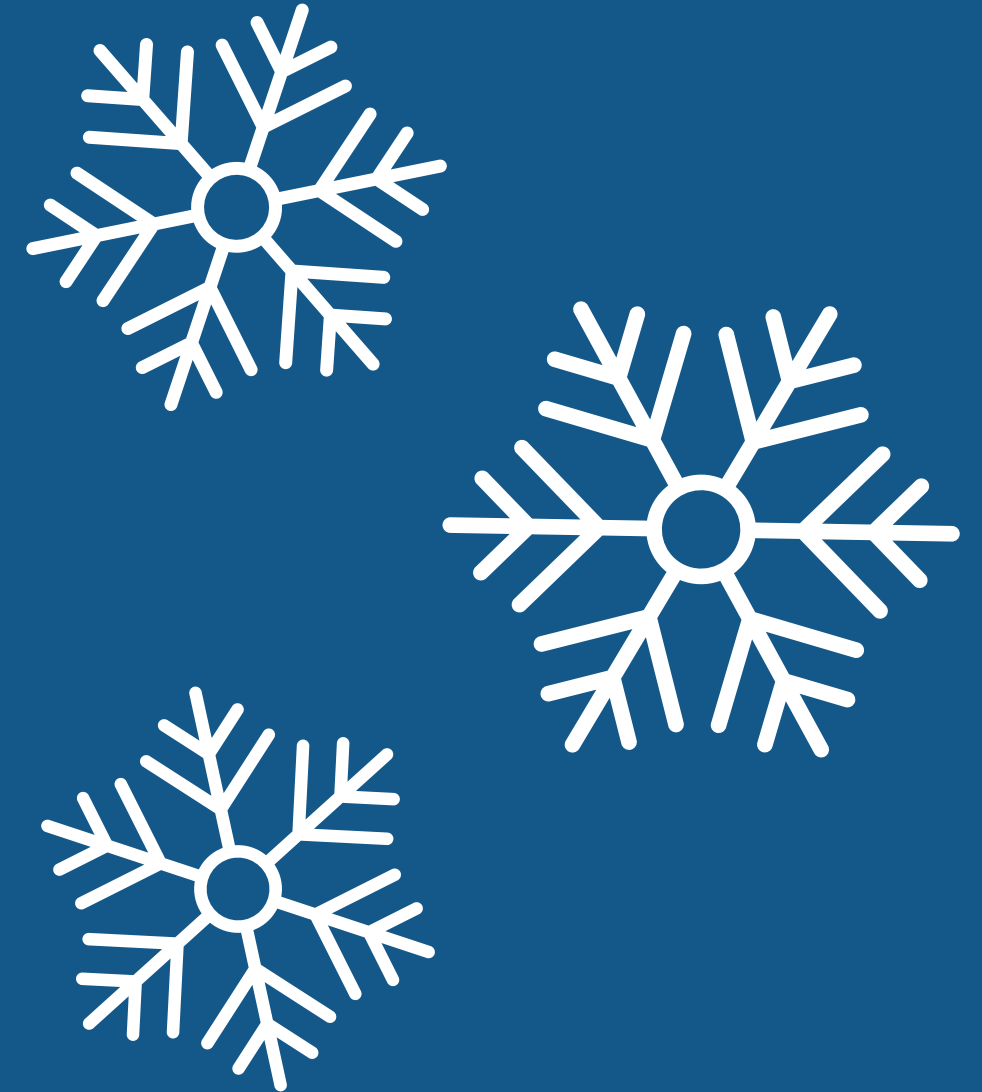
Event sponsorships are also accepted on a rolling basis. More information is available at AshevilleCVB.com.



SEASONAL / HOLIDAY BREAK DETAILS

BCTDA board will not meet in December 2023

- The board voted to cancel next month's meeting when the FY24 meeting schedule was approved in June
- January's board meeting is the second-to-last Wednesday, January 24
- The monthly Destination Performance Index reports will be posted on AshevilleCVB.com as data is available
- Quarterly Highlights for October – December and a year-end 2023 lodging report will be presented during the January board meeting
- Mark your calendars: Explore Asheville will host its second annual Year Ahead event on January 31 at Embassy Suites



NEW NONSTOP SERVICE ANNOUNCED

Allegiant adds new route

- This month, Allegiant announced new nonstop service from Orlando International Airport to AVL
- Begins May 2024, four times weekly
- This makes 19 nonstop destination serviced by Allegiant



BOARD DISCUSSION

QUESTIONS
INPUT
COMMENTS





CITY UPDATES

Vice Mayor Sandra Kilgore





COUNTY UPDATES

Commissioner Terri Wells

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MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS

Brenda Durden
BCTDA | Chair



PUBLIC COMMENTS

Brenda Durden
BCTDA | Chair

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LIVE VIRTUAL PUBLIC COMMENTS

Chair Brenda Durden

Members of the Public were invited to sign-up to virtually share live comments during today's in-person BCTDA meeting.

As of the 12:00 p.m. registration deadline on Tuesday, November 28, no requests to speak had been received.



IN-PERSON PUBLIC COMMENTS

Chair Brenda Durden

Upon arrival to this morning's BCTDA meeting, anyone who indicated a desire to make public comments completed the Public Comment Sign-In Sheet, affirming they agree to abide by the Rules of Decorum.



A FEW REMINDERS

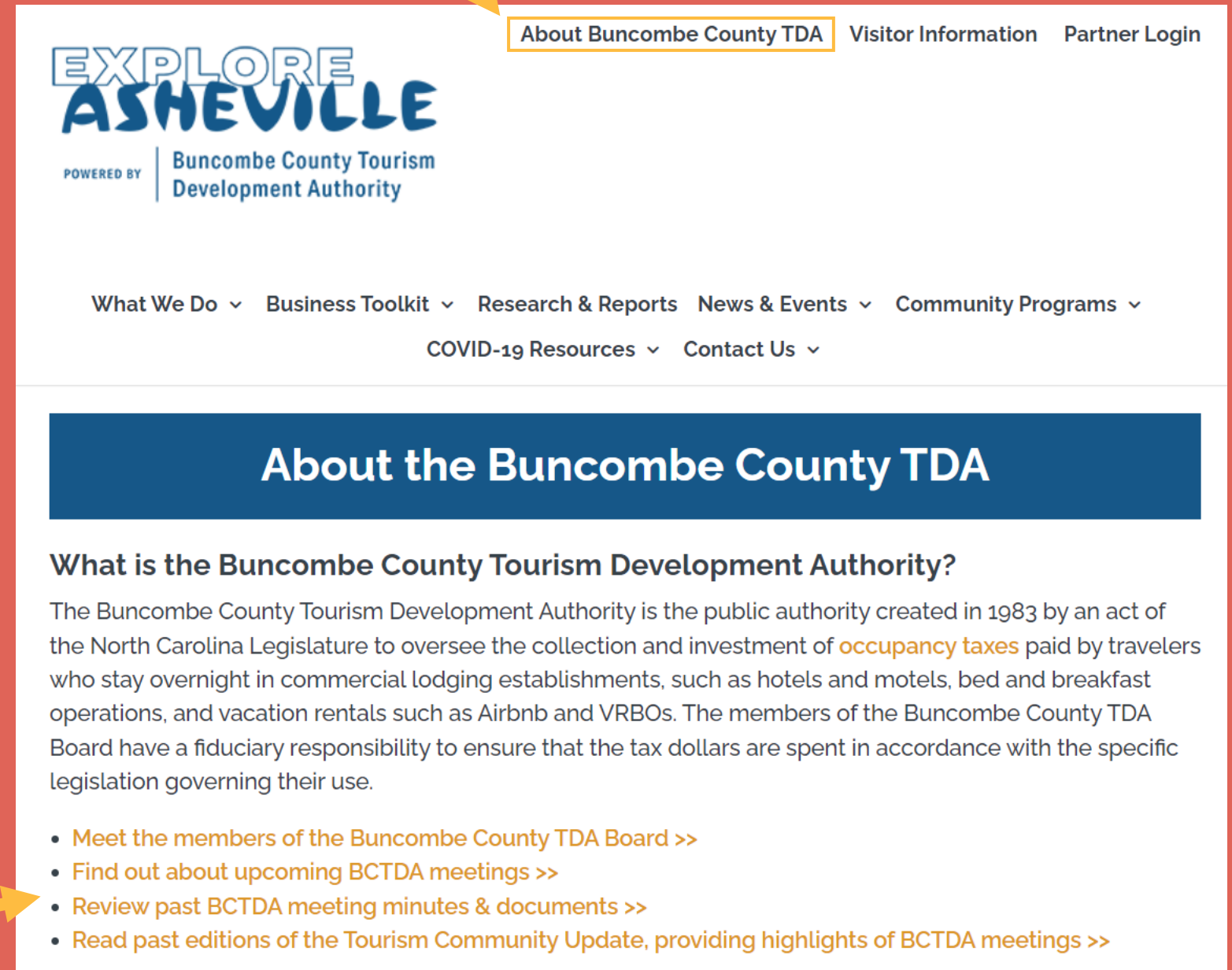
Chair Brenda Durden

Additional materials, including the PowerPoint presentation, will be posted online later today.

**The next BCTDA meeting will be held on
Wednesday, January 24, 2024, at 9:00 a.m.
in the Explore Asheville Board Room**

For more information go to:

- AshevilleCVB.com
- About the Buncombe County TDA section
- Find out about upcoming BCTDA meetings or
Review past BCTDA meeting minutes &
documents



The screenshot shows the Explore Asheville website. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links: "About Buncombe County TDA", "Visitor Information", and "Partner Login". Below this is the "EXPLORE ASHEVILLE" logo, with "POWERED BY Buncombe County Tourism Development Authority" underneath. A secondary navigation bar includes "What We Do", "Business Toolkit", "Research & Reports", "News & Events", "Community Programs", "COVID-19 Resources", and "Contact Us". A prominent blue banner reads "About the Buncombe County TDA". Below the banner, the section "What is the Buncombe County Tourism Development Authority?" is followed by a paragraph explaining its role. A list of links is provided at the bottom of the section:

- [Meet the members of the Buncombe County TDA Board >>](#)
- [Find out about upcoming BCTDA meetings >>](#)
- [Review past BCTDA meeting minutes & documents >>](#)
- [Read past editions of the Tourism Community Update, providing highlights of BCTDA meetings >>](#)



ADJOURNMENT

Chair Brenda Durden

Questions/Comments

Suggested Motion:

Motion to adjourn the BCTDA Meeting.

Motion Second

Discussion

Vote





THANK YOU

See you at the next BCTDA meeting in 2024!

Wednesday, January 24, 2024 | 9:00 a.m.

Explore Asheville Board Room | 27 College Place

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