Explore ASHEVILLE
Buncombe County Tourism Development Authority

Buncombe County Tourism Development Authority
Processes & Protocols for Public Comments
During Regular Virtual Monthly Meetings

To keep everyone safe during the COVID-19 public health state of emergency, BCTDA meetings are currently being held electronically via Zoom Webinar.

Prior to each virtual meeting, the BCTDA will post an agenda, no later than 48 hours before the board meeting, on AshevilleCVB.com. The board invites written public comments via email and a number of live public comments during the virtual board meeting.

Process & Protocols for Written Comments:
- Send your public comments via email to: Reply@ExploreAsheville.com.
- Provide your full name and organization (if applicable).
- Put "Public Comment" in the subject line.
- Brevity is appreciated.
- Comments received by the deadline of 4:00 p.m. on the day before the BCTDA meeting will be provided to the board prior to the start of the meeting. Comments received after the 4:00 p.m. deadline will not be provided to the board.
- Public comments received will not be read publicly during the meeting, however, a discussion related to the comments may take place.
- Comments received will be kept on file with the minutes from the board meeting.

Process & Protocols for Live Comments during Virtual Meetings:
- To sign up to verbally share public comments during a live BCTDA meeting, send an email to LiveComment@ExploreAsheville.com no later than 12 noon the day before the BCTDA meeting and include:
  - Put "Request to Speak at BCTDA Meeting" in the subject line
  - Your full name and organization (if applicable)
  - Your area of residence
  - Estimated number of minutes you plan to speak (up to 3 minutes maximum)
  - Indicate if you want to use audio only or also be visible on screen using your device's camera
  - Include this statement: *"I have read and understand the Rules of Decorum for Live Public Comments during Virtual BCTDA Meetings and agree to abide by them."*
- Register to attend the meeting (using the name you used in the request email) via the Zoom link provided on the agenda. This should be done at the same time that you send the request email.
- Anyone requesting time to speak who does not include the information outlined above and/or does not register via the Zoom link will not be eligible for live comments.
- Based on the amount of time allotted for public comments on the agenda, a limited number of public commenters will be approved in the order of requests received, as long as all of the above requirements are met in the requesting email. Based on time restrictions, there is no guarantee that everyone will be able to speak.
- Speakers will be notified if they have secured a speaking slot. If you request a time to speak and a slot is not available, you will be notified in time to submit your comments in

writing, if you wish, by 4:00 p.m. the afternoon before the meeting, following the *Process & Protocols for Written Comments* above.

- **If you are notified that you have been scheduled to provide live comments:**
  o Use the Zoom link you received after registering to view the meeting. Zoom will also send the link in a reminder email about an hour before the meeting.
  o When it's time for the *Comments from the General Public* agenda item, the names of public commenters signed up to speak will be shown on a slide in the order of appearance.
  o A moderator will permit you to share your audio and (optional) video feeds and announce your name when it is your turn to speak. <u>It is important to watch for the permissions notifications and accept or allow.</u>
  o You will have up to 3 minutes to share your comments and you should not expect a response. Please make sure to speak clearly and have background noise at a minimum. The moderator will let you know when you have 15 seconds left, and then will end your session after 3 minutes.
  o When you finish speaking, a moderator will disable your audio/video capabilities and you will transition back to a "view-only" attendee status.
- If you are not in attendance at the virtual meeting using the name you provided in your request email when public comments are shared, you automatically forfeit your turn to speak.
- In your email requesting to speak, you agreed to abide by the Rules of Decorum (below) and are expected to do so. Any violation will result in the immediate termination of virtual access to the meeting.
- Note that the time for public comment on the agenda is an estimate and the actual time for this item may occur earlier or later than the time posted, based on the timing of other meeting presentations and discussions.
- The BCTDA board and Explore Asheville staff cannot be held responsible for technical difficulties or connectivity issues that may occur during the meeting, which may result in public comments not being heard as arranged.

<u>Rules of Decorum for Live Public Comments during Virtual BCTDA Meetings:</u>
- Public commenters will have up to 3 minutes to speak.
- A person may share public comments only if they have signed up to speak in accordance with the above processes and protocols; substitutions are not permitted.
- Public commenters shall refrain from personal attacks and/or threats directed towards the Buncombe County Tourism Development Authority board members, Explore Asheville staff, and meeting presenters and attendees.
- Public commenters agree to be civil and courteous with their language. Insults, profanity, use of vulgar language or gestures, or other inappropriate behavior are not allowed and will result in the immediate termination of virtual access.
- Speakers should not expect BCTDA board members or Explore Asheville staff to respond to their comments during the meeting.
- The chair or meeting moderator has the authority to enforce the Rules of Decorum. Failure to follow these rules will result in the immediate termination of virtual access to the meeting.