



TPDF Committee Phase I Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, May 14, 2025 | 10:00 a.m.

Present (Voting): Jim Muth, Chair ; Jack Benton, Ken Floyd, Lew Bleiweis, Michael Andry, Michael Hickerson, Randy Claybrook, Scott Kerchner, Stephanie Moore

Absent (Non-Voting): Matthew Lehman, BCTDA Liaison

Staff: Vic Isley, Tiffany Thacker, Jay Curwen, Allison Bashford

Legal Counsel: Sabrina Rockoff, McGuire, Wood & Bissette

Executive Summary of Meeting Minutes

- Muth called to order the meeting of the Tourism Product Development Fund (TPDF) Committee at 10:03 a.m to review the Phase I applications for the TPDF Cycle. Introductions were made around the room and 4 new committee members were welcomed.
- Tiffany Thacker provided the committee with an update on projected **\$15.5 million** in funds available to award this cycle. Vic Isley reminded the committee of strategic funding priorities set during the Leadership Planning Session.
- Committee reviewed 13 applications that were submitted during the Phase I Application Cycle and voted whether to move each application forward to Phase II or not.
- Tiffany Thacker facilitated a discussion around 2 projects requesting expedited approval and a vote was taken. The John B. Lewis Soccer Complex Restoration and Bob Lewis Ballpark projects were both voted on unanimously to expedite recommendations to the BCTDA for funding.
- With a 9-0 vote, the meeting was adjourned at 11:58 a.m.

Application Review Minutes

Asheville Museum of Science – AMOS Museum Master Plan / Infrastructure Expansion

Project Description:

- Renovate 9,989 sq. ft of adjacent space to expand AMOS's downtown Asheville museum to create areas for exhibits, lectures, and Makers Labs (part of AMOS Master Plan).

Project Scope:

- Fire sprinkler system installation (\$55,000) - 8/2025
- ADA-compliant bathroom renovations (\$190,000 - 4/26)
- New consistent flooring
- Demolition of interior non-structural glass walls



- New interior/exterior doors (\$48,000 - 4/26)
- Structural walls for labs, exhibits, and offices
- Construct layout featuring 4,000 sq. ft exhibit + 2,000 sq. ft Maker Lab + office storage space/admin area (\$21,000 - 4/26)
- Outdoor 12x4 ft art display facing Pritchard Park (\$11,000 - 2/26)

Funding Sources:

- \$35K – Dogwood & NC Science Museum Grant (in-hand)
- \$50,000 – Callen Center (committed)
- \$45K – Truist Recovery & Burroughs Welcome (pending)
- \$17,000 – AMOS Capital (committed)

Requested Follow-Up in Phase II:

- Copy of long-term lease that shows Non-Profit has control of property
- Report on progress for 2 grants previously awarded (2024 LIFT and 2022 TPDF)

Andry made a motion to move this application forward to Phase II, and Kerchner seconded the motion. With all in favor, the motion carried 9-0.

Asheville Buncombe Youth Soccer Association – John B Lewis Soccer Complex (JBL Restoration)

Project Description:

- Replacement of artificial turf and repair of field lighting system to return facility to service following Helene
- Prior to Helene, JBL represented 57% (4 of 7) of ABYSA's available turfed fields with lighting
- Contractor could start construction as early as September 2025. Turf replacement can begin within 60-90 days of funding secured, 30-45 days for completion

Project Scope:

- **Turf:** Removal/disposal of existing turf; Removal/replacement of in-field perimeter drainage; Flushing of silt/repair of several underground sections of park storm water system; Minimal grading/compaction of existing stone field bases; Manufacturing/replacement of artificial turf - Cost estimate is \$3,657,000
- **Lighting:** Electrical components under water needs to be replaced – control/monitoring cabinets, lighting contractor cabinets, conduit and underground wiring – Cost estimate is \$663,000

Funding Sources:

- \$1,924,000 – ABYSA Reserve (in-hand)
- \$231,000 – COA/ABYSA (committed)



Andry made a motion to move this application forward to Phase II, and Bleiweis seconded the motion. With all in favor, the motion carried 9-0.

Beacon Foundation – Beacon Park

Project Description:

- Beacon Park is currently public green space in Swannanoa – part of historic Beacon Blanket mill market. Project includes converting a former brownfield into an outdoor destination, with the heart of the park being a world-class bike facility featuring the largest all-wheel facility of its kind in North and South America.
- Other amenities include professional-grade outdoor bouldering walls, a one-mile walking loop, and an open green lawn with a 4,000 capacity for outdoor events. Project is planned to open in Fall 2025.

Project Scope:

- **Bike Park:** (asphalt paved trails – engineering, site grading, drainage, stormwater improvements, utilities, signage/fencing, parking, landscaping/lighting) - \$5.2M
- **Walking Path:** (engineering, site grading, drainage/stormwater, asphalt, signage/landscaping) - \$2.7M
- **Event Lawn:** (engineering, site grading, drainage/stormwater, paved pathways, electricity, landscaping/lighting) - \$3.5M

Funding Sources:

- \$1.9M – Founders (in-hand)
- \$3M – Line of Credit (committed)
- \$949K – Land Value (committed)

Requested Follow-Up in Phase II:

- Ask is high compared to room night projections – consider adjusting and asking for lower amount
- Advise on if awarded less how it will impact the project. Can this project be phased into components if we cannot award the full amount up front?
- Present on community feedback (ie- are lights around the project a concern for the neighborhood an issue?)
- Land Value will not count towards a funding source
- This was a previous application – need confirmation that the hotel has been removed from plans completely.

Bleiweis made a motion to move this application forward to Phase II, and Hickerson seconded the motion. Claybrook abstained from voting. The motion carried 8-0-1.

Black Mountain Visitor Center – Visitor Center Update

**Ken Floyd was recused from this discussion due to conflict of interest*



Project Description:

- Upgrades to the Black Mountain Visitor Center.

Project Scope:

- HVAC System replacement (\$55,000)
- Aesthetic Enhancements: exterior painting, interior lighting updates, revamp display areas (\$12,000)
- Back Storage Space Conversion into meeting room (\$32,000)

Funding Sources:

- \$55,000 – Anonymous Donor (pending)

Requested Follow-Up in Phase II:

- Concern that this project is under-budgeted. Requesting a re-evaluation and confirmation the ask is correct.
- Committee would like the opportunity to discuss expanding / modifying the scope with the applicant in order to help increase visitation.

Andry made a motion to move this application forward to Phase II, and Claybrook seconded the motion. Moore opposed the application moving forward to Phase II. Floyd was recused from voting due to conflict of interest. The motion carried 7-1-1.

Buncombe County Government – Enka Recreation Destination Phase II

Project Description:

- This project was originally awarded \$4,054,415 during the 2023 TPDF Cycle. The funding gap was initially \$2 million from requested. Since that time, it has grown to \$4.8M due to an increase in costs and need for resiliency features post-Helene. Securing funding now will ensure timely delivery of project, which is essential post-Helene

Project Scope:

- **Turfing:** Fields 3, 4, 5, & 9 (Turfing will include fencing & stormwater control measures) – cost increased from \$5.3M to \$6.4M
- **Lighting:** Fields 3, 4, & 5 – Cost increased from \$595,000 to \$719,950
- **BC Parks & Rec Office:** Total cost \$12M
- **Playground:** addresses current drainage issues - total cost is \$950,000
- **Visitor Contact Station & Ranger Office:** Cost increased from \$495,000 to \$598,950
- **Pavilion:** Cost increased from \$324,000 to \$490,050
- **Resiliency & Safety Features (NEW):** solar, stormwater management, erosion control/stream bank stabilization - \$1.4M

Funding Sources:

- \$17.4M – Buncombe County (committed)



Kerchner made a motion to move this application forward to Phase II less the BC Parks & Rec Office, and Bleiweis seconded the motion. Claybrook opposed the application moving forward to Phase II. The motion carried 8-1.

Enka Youth Sports Organization – Bob Lewis Ballpark

Project Description:

- Baseball facility consists of 7 ballfields, concessions, restrooms. Welcomed visitors from 189 cities/towns across 20 states in 2024
- Project will improve visitor experience and site aesthetics, address infrastructure and safety issues, Increase event hosting capacity, and position BLBP as a leading regional/national tournament destination.

Project Scope:

- **Pave and Stripe Gravel Parking Lots** – \$500,000 – Since opening, the site has relied on gravel lots and overflow parking along nearby roads. Now that the new bridge has opened and through-traffic is increasing, roadside parking is no longer possible, and neighboring businesses cannot accommodate visitors. Critical for maintaining 45-team capacity; without it, capacity drops to 25-teams (640 fewer teams per season/39,000 fewer visitors) (Can be done by May/June 2025)
- **Synthetic Turf Behind Dugouts** – \$90,000 - Reduces maintenance; adds seating in high-traffic zones
- **Evergreen Outfield Fencing** – \$100,000 - Enhances player safety; reduces sun glare
- **Formal Gateway - Entry Columns / Gates / Fencing** – \$60,000 - Creates secure, defined access to each field complex
- **Monument Signage** – \$110,000 - Enhances visibility; celebrates local history and culture
- **Shade Sails / Canopies** – \$160,000 - Provides comfort for spectators during long events
- **Maintenance Road / Trail** – \$30,000 - Improves internal connectivity and maintenance access
- **Landscaping/Directional Signage** – \$200,000 - Implements planned streetscape and beautification of key areas; assists navigating fields

Funding Sources:

- \$65,000 – Enka Youth Sports Organization (committed)

Requested Follow-Up in Phase II:

- Itemized list of \$5.3 million in infrastructure investments that we can consider towards the match.

Andry made a motion to move this application forward to Phase II, and Benton seconded the motion. Moore abstained from voting. The motion carried 8-1.

Final Run Rescue – Final Run Rescue Barn



Project Description:

- Located at Montgomery Sky Farm (50-acre property in Leicester NC). Achieved nonprofit status in March 2024.
- Application states in addition to medical and rehab services, they will also offer workshops and events in new space.

Project Scope:

- Project includes the construction of a new medical intake barn, to provide medical care to animals.

Ineligibility Determination:

- Not a major tourism capital project.
- Non-Profit status has not been active for 2 years.

Moore made a motion not to move this application forward to Phase II, and Floyd seconded the motion. Moore abstained from voting. With all in favor, the motion carried 9-0.

Project HNG – Hickory Nut Gap Farm & Project HNG Learning Center

Project Description:

- The applicant aims to transform Hickory Nut Gap Farm into a dynamic learning destination that inspires visitors of all ages to connect with nature, understand the importance of regenerative agriculture, and foster a deeper appreciation for Buncombe County.

Project Scope:

- Installation of new fencing to ensure safety of animals while providing immersive learning environment for visitors
- Installation of a handicap accessible concrete path
- Outdoor classroom where students can gather for educational opportunities
- Installation of native plant species to highlight the importance of biodiversity
- Construction of a pig nursery, farrowing pens, and pig huts, along with a brooder house for pasture-raised chickens, equipped with a walk-through viewing area. These interactive spaces will feature educational signage and messaging, empowering children and families to learn about sustainable farming practices and the importance of ethical animal husbandry.
- Creation of a child-friendly structure by the creek focused on promoting stream health awareness and hands-on exploration. This interactive area will encourage children to engage with nature while fostering a sense of stewardship and curiosity about local ecosystems.
- Development of the Project HNG Learning Center, a transformative hub for education and innovation. The center will be a two-story structure (4,000 sf) that will include:
 - Downstairs - History exhibit curated in consultation with local Native American tribes, showcasing the rich cultural heritage of the land and the agricultural legacy of the McClure family.



- Learning lab will serve as a dynamic space for exploring regenerative agriculture practices, providing hands-on experiences and workshops for visitors of all ages.
- Upstairs conference room will offer a versatile venue for hosting ecotourism groups and corporate events, fostering collaboration and dialogue around sustainability initiatives and education about regenerative agriculture.

Funding Sources:

- \$100,000 – Fundraising (pending)
- \$500,000 – Line of Credit (pending)

Discussion:

- Admin funding is not eligible.
- Hard to say if this will genuinely drive tourism vs just benefit community. Maybe a better fit for LIFT.
- Committee approved last year to move to Phase II – has anything changed? Yes – looks like their match funding dropped last year between Phase I and Phase II and even further this year.

Ineligibility Determination:

- 1:1 Funding match not met.
- Not a major tourism capital project.

Andry made a motion not to move this application forward to Phase II, and Claybrook seconded the motion. With all in favor, the motion carried 9-0.

Tempus Renatus School of Classical Horsemanship – Lower Flat Creek Preserve & Agripark

Project Description:

- Create a park in the Broad River Area. Property contains 80 acres of wooded areas with trails, 30 acres of farmland.
- Park would provide guided-tours led by neighbors that are professional tour guides. Property can also host private events.

Project Scope:

- Adding parking area by Sr. Priscilla Jean Pavilion; Replacing damaged ATVs for tours, clearing trails - \$46,000 including liability insurance
- Adding shedrow barn for guest stabling - \$22,000
- Scenic Gardens - \$10,000

Funding Sources:

- \$39,000 – NC Horse Council (committed)



Ineligibility Determination:

- Not a major tourism capital project – primarily maintenance/operations.
- Lack of visitation / draw.

Bleiweis made a motion not to move this application forward to Phase II, and Moore seconded the motion. With all in favor, the motion carried 9-0.

UNC Asheville Foundation – UNC Asheville on Campus Tennis Complex

Project Description:

- Outdoor tennis facility on UNCA campus that will replace the hardcourts located at Asheville Racquet Club Downtown – open to students and community.
- Project will feature six lighted competition courts with viewing stands, with a dedicated tennis building that will house coaches' offices, team locker rooms, storage, sports medicine room, and public restrooms.
- Project is part of ALL IN Comprehensive Campaign, funded by donors, corporate partners, alumni, and grants.

Project Scope:

- Site Construction – tennis courts, lighting, fencing, seating, parking and pathway, site prep (\$2.2M)
- Site Construction – Field house that includes offices, locker rooms, storage, sports medicine room, public restrooms (\$1.1M) (Total Construction - \$3.3M)
- Soft Costs – planning, design, inspections, permits, survey, A/V, equipment, furnishings (\$1M)

Funding Sources:

- \$455,000 – donors (in-hand)
- \$55,000 – donors (committed)
- \$200K – USTA Grant (pending)
- \$20-\$40K - Southern Tennis Association (pending)
- \$20-\$40K – NC Tennis Association (pending)

Bleiweis made a motion not to move this application forward to Phase II, and Floyd seconded the motion. With all in favor, the motion carried 9-0.

University of North Carolina at Asheville – Lipinsky Concert Hall Renovation

This application was withdrawn from consideration by the applicant.

Warren Wilson College – Warren Wilson College Aquatic Center



Project Description:

- Renovation of Warren Wilson College's Aquatics Center into a state-of-the-art Aquatics Center

Project Scope:

- Removing the existing pool roof structure, portions of sidewalk
- Expanding building footprint to 10,000 sf to seat 200 spectators + plus 50-100 seats for athletes. 6-lane pool (to be deepened and refinished), 2 competitive level diving boards
- Building new walls, windows, and roof structure, including new entrance
- Repairing tile work and refinishing areas of the pool deck and pool surface
- Executing associated mechanical, electrical and plumbing work
- Commissioning the HVAC unit & pool equipment (including re-installing ductwork)
- Installing new lighting in the pool area as well as new egress lighting to code
- Installing new sprinkler system & associated site work in pool area
- Building concrete walks and retaining walls, painting, and associated site work

Funding Sources:

- \$300,000 – Buncombe County (pending)
- \$1M – Institutional Funding (committed)
- \$500,000 – Fundraising (pending)

Bleiweis made a motion to move this application forward to Phase II, and Kerchner seconded the motion. With all in favor, the motion carried 9-0.

White Horse Black Mountain – White Horse Community Patio

Project Description:

- The White Horse Community Patio Project aims to expand and enhance outdoor space for live music, arts, and community events in downtown Black Mountain, NC.
- Recent Interior Renovations (Spring/Summer 2024): ADA compliance upgrades, New electrical and HVAC systems, Enhanced sound and lighting systems

Project Scope:

- **Upper Patio:**
 - Roof height deck with panoramic mountain views that doubles the current footprint of the patio space and expands seating
- **Lower Patio:**
 - Covered buskers/performance stage with sound and lighting
 - Space for arts/crafts markets and public gatherings
- **Additional Renovations/Project Points:**



- Demolition and reconstruction of the ticket lobby
- Improved ADA access and egress for expanded capacity
- Partnering with local restaurants for food service

Funding Sources:

- \$50,000 – Grant (pending)
- \$770,360 – Private Donor (committed)

Bleiweis made a motion to move this application forward to Phase II, and Floyd seconded the motion. With all in favor, the motion carried 9-0.

Additional Discussion on Expediting Approval for Bob Lewis Ballpark

Bleiweis made a motion to expedite the recommendation to the board to fund this project – but only for the Parking Lot Repaving (\$500,000) and require them to go through the standard Phase II process for everything else, and Floyd seconded the motion. With all in favor, the motion carried 9-0.

Additional Discussion on Expediting Approval for John B. Lewis Soccer Fields

Michael Andry made a motion to expedite the recommendation to the board to fully fund this project, and Bleiweis seconded. With all in favor, the motion carried 9-0.

Wrap Up and Adjournment

The Committee will next meet on Tuesday, August 12, 2025 for Project Presentations. Site Visits will take place on Wednesday, August 20, 2025. Final Committee Meeting will take place on Wednesday, September 10, 2025.

Claybrook made a motion to adjourn the meeting, and Hickerson seconded the motion. With all in favor, the motion carried 9-0. The meeting was adjourned at 11:58 a.m.