

# Louisville Tourism Commissioners March 2026 Meeting

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Thursday, March 26, 2026, at 3:00 PM EDT

**Louisville Tourism, 401 W. Main Street, Louisville, KY 40202**

Meeting Room: Winner's Circle Board Room

## **Commissioners Present:**

David Greene, Chair

Kate Latts, Vice Chair

Ryan Bridgeman, Secretary & Treasurer

David Beck

Guy Genoud

George Stinson

Scott Shoenberger

Mike Anderson

Josh Zik

Christi Lanier-Robinson

## **Commission Representatives Present:**

Jennifer Cummings, LHA Rep.

Matt Wallace, Arts & Culture Rep.

Althea Jackson, Mayor's Office Rep.

## **LT STAFF & GUESTS**

Cleo Battle, Doug Bennett, Chris Kipper, Nicole Twigg, Zack Davis, Stacey Yates, Jason Sojka, Mike Shull, and recording secretary, Stephanie Skinner.

## **CHAIR WELCOME AND REPORT**

**David Greene** called the March meeting to order at 3:01 pm.

First on the agenda is the approval of the minutes from January's meeting. **David Greene** called for a motion to accept the January 2026 commission meeting minutes as written. Motion made by **Mike Anderson**. Seconded by **Guy Genoud**. **All in Favor. Motion Carried.**

**Chairman Greene**, then called on **George Stinson** to report on the Community Investment Committee meeting and grant recommendations. As Chair of the CIC Committee, **George** asked Nicole Twigg to share some recent updates and changes to the CIC grant program moving forward into the 26/27 fiscal year.

**Nicole** shared some high-level points around the changes and updates to the Community Investment Committee grant program. Highlights mentioned:

- **Eligibility expanded:** In addition to festivals/events (production and marketing/advertising), grants now officially include attraction/experience programming and exhibits (production and marketing/advertising).
- **Attendance threshold:** Projects must have potential to draw a **minimum of 1,000 attendees**.
- **Timing requirement:** Applications must be submitted **before** the event occurs or before an exhibit/campaign/experience launches.
- **Limits on repeat funding:** A project may receive a **maximum of three consecutive years** of funding.

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- **Step-down for consecutive awards:** If funded three years in a row, award amounts step down: **Year 1 = 100%, Year 2 = 75%** of prior year, **Year 3 = 50%** of Year 1. **-Moratorium after 3-year cycle:** After three consecutive years of support, a **two-year freeze** applies before the project can be submitted again.
- **Standardized post-project reporting (within 90 days) including attendee/visitor ZIP code data:** Recipients must complete an online CIC Grant Tracking Report (event summary, success metrics/impressions/attendance, dates/description, financial report with receipts, evaluation) including attendee/visitor ZIP code data; remaining grant balance is distributed after completion and may be forfeited if not filed.
- **Grant Cycle/Timing-** moving from **two grant cycles to one** per year and setting a new annual timeline (applications due **Oct 15**; reviews in **December**; final approval in **January**).
- **Destination Sense of Place** - Potential expansion of grant program to support Destination Sense of Place projects (e.g., pocket parks, wayfinding, beautification, murals) including build/production and marketing/advertising support for these projects. This expansion was included in the 26/27 LT fiscal year Strategic Alliances budget proposal.

## COMMUNITY INVESTMENT COMMITTEE (CIC) REPORT

**George Stinson**, Chair of the CIC Committee, shared an overview of the grant recommendations for full board approval.

- **Photography for Belle of Louisville Riverboat – April 2026-Dec. 2026** – Funding need – New photography of new events in 2026 on the Belle & Mary M Miller Riverboats – Funding amount - **\$5400**
- **Sky Soul Festival – August 8, 2026 – Funding need** – Expansion of current event. Funding amount - **\$5000** (3<sup>rd</sup> grant request – funded at 50% of original grant amount awarded based on new guidelines.
- **America 250 KY: I Too Am a Kentuckian – Frazier Museum – June 1 - Aug 14, 2026** – Funding need – New event – targeted out-of-market marketing campaign – Funding amount - **\$25,000**

After some discussion. **Chairman Greene** stated we have a motion from the **Community Investment Committee** to approve grants totaling \$35,400, as presented. **All in Favor. Motion Carried.**

## FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT

**Chairman Greene** called on **Ryan Bridgeman** for the Finance Committee Report. **Ryan Bridgeman** requested **Chris Kipper** and **Doug Bennett** to share a high-level breakdown of the proposed 2026-2027 fiscal budget by department.

- I. **2026-2027 Proposed Goals & Fiscal Budget – General Fund** – **Chairman Greene** stated we have a motion from the **Finance Committee** to approve the 26/27 Goals & General Fund Budget and related budget certification resolution as presented. As the motion is from the Finance Committee, it does not require a second. **All in Favor. Motion Carried.**
- II. **2026-2027 Proposed Fiscal Budget – Debt Service Fund** – **Chairman Greene** stated we already have a motion from the Finance Committee to approve the 26/27 Debt Service Fund Budget and related budget certification resolution as presented. As the motion is from the Finance Committee, it does not require a second. **All in Favor. Motion Carried.**

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## PRESIDENT REPORT

Cleo Battle shared a few quick updates with the board members. I have spent time in Frankfort protecting the 1 percent transient tax that is collected every year. There is a group that would like to get their hands on that funding because it supports the state's efforts to market tourism. We don't believe we need deregulation in our cities and counties. He went on to say that back in 2016 we had 50K Airbnb's sold in the market. In 2025 we had 426K sold in the market. Cleo also stated that the month of February was a good month. ACE Hardware had a lot of impact on the market in February. It was the best February for occupancy rate. Still some uncertainty in the market with problems at our airports, high fares, high gas prices that impact on transient, leisure & corporate travelers.

## BOARD REPRESENTATIVES UPDATE

- **LHA Representative, Jennifer Cummings** – reported on the last LHA meeting that hosted Doris Sims, DWP. She gave an update on the music festivals and the impact on the market. She also mentioned Bock Fest in Nulu – “Running of the goats” and closed her report with LHAs partnership with Unity House.
- **Mayor's Office Representative, Althea Jackson** – no updates at this meeting.
- **Arts & Culture Representative, Matt Wallace** – provided updates on collaboration involving the opera and ballet. He mentioned Actors Theater – Storytelling Festival. Outdoor venues are opening. He also reported that the Arts and Culture Alliance met with the Mayor's Office keeping communication a priority staying actively engaged to ensure arts & culture have a seat in discussions related to their sector.

**Chairman Greene** we have one more topic to discuss, which will require us to go into Executive Session. All guests, LT Staff members (not related to the topic), and board representatives exit the meeting room during this time.

## ENTER EXECUTIVE SESSION – Time 4:04pm

**Chairman Greene** requested a motion to go into Executive Session under KRS 61.810(1)(g) relating to discussions concerning a specific proposal, if open discussions would jeopardize the siting, retention, expansion, or upgrading of the business? Motion made by **Ryan Bridgeman**. Seconded by **Kate Latts**. **All in Favor. Motion Carried.**

## EXIT EXECUTIVE SESSION – Time 4:12pm

**Chairman Greene** called for a motion to exit Executive Session. Motion made by **Mike Anderson**. Seconded by **David Beck**. **All in Favor. Motion Carried.**

Before taking a vote, **George Stinson** requested to **recuse** himself from the vote, due to a conflict of interest related to the business opportunity.

## NEW BUSINESS OPPORTUNITY

**Chairman Greene** stated we have a motion from the **Finance Committee** to approve the allocation of \$140,000 per year for 4 years to secure or assist in the future siting or retention of a trade business-related tourism event in Jefferson County, in 2028, 2030, 2032, and 2034, with the authority being delegated to the Louisville Tourism President & CEO to execute an agreement for such potential events. As the motion is from the Finance Committee, it does not require a second. No further discussion. **All in Favor.**

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*Motion Carried.*

**ADJOURNMENT**

**David Greene** called for a motion to adjourn. Motion made by **David Beck**. **All in Favor.** *Motion Carried.*  
Meeting adjourned at 4:14 pm.

Minutes submitted by: Recording Stephanie Skinner

Minutes approved by: \_\_\_\_\_  
Chair David Greene

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Secretary/Treasurer Ryan Bridgeman

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