



# City of Columbia, Missouri

## Meeting Minutes

### Convention and Visitors Advisory Board

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Monday, October 27, 2025  
12:00 PM

Regular

300 S. Providence  
Road - Thomas G.  
Walton Building

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#### I. CALL TO ORDER

Richard Walls, Board Chairman, called the meeting to order at 12:02 p.m.

#### II. ROLL CALL & INTRODUCTIONS

**Present:** 9 - Heather Hargrove, Melody Marcks, Rusty Strodman, Aric Jarvis, Scott Cristal, Donald Laird, Richard Walls, Kristopher Kunz and Lori Lammers

**Excused:** 3 - Barth Burgin, Raman Puri and Jamie Varvaro

Also present City Staff Amy Schneider, Julie Ausmus and Danielle Vardeleon.

#### III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The agenda was approved as written.

**Scott Cristal motioned to approve, Aric Jarvis second, motion passed.**

#### IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes were approved as written.

**Scott Cristal motioned to approve, Don Laird second, motion passed.**

9/29/25 CVB Board Minutes

**Attachments:** Meeting Minutes 9.29.25.pdf

#### V. OLD BUSINESS

None to discuss.

#### VI. NEW BUSINESS

Tourism Development Signature Series Application - We Always Swing Jazz Series

**Attachments:** [Signature Series application-We Always Swing Series.pdf](#)

Presenter: Jon Poses presented the We Always Swing Jazz Series Signature Series Tourism Development application.

This season was more challenging to assemble due to limited venue availability (only Sundays, no dedicated venue), but resulted in a strong lineup. The lineup includes Branford Marsalis, Dr. Pat Metheny and Bobby Watson with the Columbia Jazz Orchestra. Performances will occur on April 3, April 16 and April 30 respectively.

This year's National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) Grant was withdrawn so this caused major financial issues. The funds were earmarked for film editing and completion of a full-length performance film of legendary saxophonist Bobby Watson and the home-grown 18-piece Columbia Jazz Orchestra. The world premiere is scheduled in Columbia in April 2026 and intended to be marketed nationally (e.g., PBS) due to Watson's notoriety.

Regarding the series' impact on tourism, some out-of-town attendance will be expected, especially for Branford and Metheny as they are well known. Pat Metheny's tour includes 55 total dates, but education components occur only in Columbia. Performing artists staying in Columbia generate 4-5 room nights with larger events reaching 10-12.

There are a total of 14 concerts scheduled this year with a budget of \$428,000, an increase of ~\$17,000 from last year. Total budget is \$428,000 (up from \$31,000 initially); and last year \$194,00 was raised from ~600-700 donors. Financial footing is stronger than 10 years ago.

Discussion followed regarding the economic impact of the series and the proposal to offer a one-time additional amount due to the NEA grant loss and film production costs. The series received \$10,000 in 2025.

The board scored the application and Lori Lammers motioned to grant the series \$15,000; Scott Cristal seconded. There was additional discussion regarding the a one-time additional funding to assist with the completion of the Bobby Watson performance film. The motion was amended to add a one-time additional funding of \$2,500 for a total of \$15,000. A vote was taken and the motion passed.

**Lori Lammers motioned to approve \$15,000 to fund the We Always Swing Jazz Series, Scott Cristal second, motion passed.**

4th Quarter Communication & Outreach Report

**Attachments:** CommOutreach Report - FY2025 - Q4.pdf

Communications & Data Report - Presentation Summary

There were ~14 million leisure impressions (July-September). With steady social media growth, we are seeing hundreds of new followers monthly with Instagram now at 10,900 followers. The top-performing content centered on outreach and communications projects such as the "Coolest Week" - a July Travel Writer Visit. The CVB hosted three travel writers (two from Missouri and one from Arizona) with the tour focused on outdoor recreation, culinary experiences, and culture. The writers visited the MKT Trail, Mizzou campus, museums, Ragtag, The District, Farmers Market, and Rocheport. This tour resulted in multiple published articles.

The new Visitor Guide was printed in August and distributed via CTM along I-70.

Sarah Parks, Industry Relations, departed last Friday. The position is advertised and will remain open through 11/10.

We are having ongoing 2026 FIFA World Cup discussions as well as establishing 2026 departmental goals.

## Datafy - Columbia Destination Summary

**Attachments:** Columbia Destination Summary (1).pdf

Datafy is a platform which uses geolocation + cell phone + credit card data gathered from 2018 forward and includes detailed county polygons. It will also allow filters, such as event tickets sales to trace visitor origins.

Some key findings using this platform were as follows:

Total trips up 8.5%.

Visitor days increased overall.

September saw the largest spike (football games).

6+ day visits up 5%+ - further analysis underway.

Balanced mix of in-state and out-of-state visitors.

Strong traffic from St. Louis, Kansas City, Springfield.

## 4th Quarter Sales Report

**Attachments:** Sales Report - FY2025 - Q4 (1).pdf

The CVB welcomed a new Sports Sales Specialist this quarter, Tevin Riddle, rounding out our sales team to full capacity.

The fourth quarter we have seen an increase in room nights compared to this time last year. Some of the key events we hosted or supported included the Law Enforcement Traffic Conference, Dental Hygiene Conference, Black Wall Street Tour, MSAE Summit at Stoney Creek, PDGA World Amateur Disc Golf and more.

Looking ahead, we've already secured several exciting events such as the Society of Government Meeting Professionals (SGMP) Missouri Capital City Chapter - Holiday Extravaganza, Wind Jammers International, Missouri Missionary Baptist State Convention, County Collectors 2026 Annual Conference, Missouri American Legion, returning annually through 2028. The sales team is also working on several promising leads for 2026-2027.

During the Missouri Society of Association Executives (MSAE) Summit, we hosted a planner brunch at Beet Box and a tour of the Arcade District - great opportunities to showcase our city's unique offerings.

Upcoming events included the NCAA Division I Men's & Women's Cross Country National Championships on November 22. Approximately 600 tickets have been sold so far. Qualifying team will be finalized on 11/14. We will also be hosting the Missouri Sports Travel Exchange in March 2026.

### **Vote on FY2026 Board Chair & Vice Chair**

A motion was made to nominate Rusty Strodman as Board Chair for FY2026 and Don Laid as Vice-Chair.

**Scott Cristal made a motion. Aric Jarvis seconded and the motion passed.**

## VII. REPORTS

## October CVB Staff Report & Updates

### Update Report from The District

Nickie Davis was unable to attend. Aric Jarvis provided information. There are ongoing safety discussions with the CID board and community and committees are being formed to look at proposals on making downtown safer. Halloweenie was very successful. Holiday Shop Hop is upcoming as well as the Christmas lighting. The Living Windows Fest is December 5th and there will be horse drawn carriage rides this year every Saturday in November and every Saturday and Sunday in December from 4-7:00 p.m.

### Update Report from the Boone County Commission

Justin Aldred, Boone Count Commissioner, reported \$11 million has been invested into 911 radio services to provide 800 mhz providing updates and stronger signals for hard shell buildings and more. This will also allow for greater GPS tracking for officers and responders.

The senior personal property tax relief helped ~8,000 properties and \$8.2 million in tax relief. It took over 700 hours of programming changes to change tax codes.

The Boone County Sheriff office continues to provide extra support in downtown Columbia.

## VIII. GENERAL COMMENTS BY PUBLIC, MEMBERS AND STAFF

### IX. NEXT MEETING DATE

November 24, 2025

### X. ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made to adjourn at 1:09 p.m.

**Aric Jarvis made a motion. Scott Cristal seconded and motion passed.**

Members of the public may attend any open meeting. For requests for accommodations related to disability, please call 573.874.CITY (2489) or email CITY@CoMo.gov. In order to assist staff in making the appropriate arrangements for your accommodation, please make your request as far in advance of the posted meeting date as possible.

**USB DRIVES PROHIBITED:** A speaker who desires to display a presentation must upload the presentation, in advance, to the city network using an upload portal. To upload your files and learn more, visit CoMo.gov/upload.