



**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE
TOWN OF LAKE LURE ABC BOARD**

Monday, April 20, 2026
3:30 P.M.

This Meeting was held at the Town Hall at The Landings

Present: Mr. Richard Sayles, Chair
Mr. Bob Cassano, Vice Chair
Ms. Esther Lusk, Board Member
Mr. Trace Boswell, Board Member
Mr. Peter O'Leary, Board Member
Patricia Crain, Store Manager
Rhonda Cook, Accountant

Absent: Commission Scott Doster

I. Call to Order

Board chair Richard Sayles called the meeting to order at 3:30 p.m.

II. Agenda Adopted

Bob Cassano made a motion to approve the agenda as presented. Esther Lusk seconded the motion and all were in favor.

III. Conflict of Interest Statements

There were no conflict of interest.

IV. Public Comment

Frederick Jaeger introduced himself and his distillery aiming for a strong local market presence.

The distillery will produce rye and single malt whiskies using local and regional grains sourced from Riverbend Malt, Asheville, emphasizing regional authenticity.

Looking for feedback from board members on bottle design preferences and strategic positioning were discussed to balance uniqueness and shelf space efficiency. The board favored the darker, rounder bottles for their visual appeal and better shelf fit. Feedback identified certain bottles as better suited for higher-end products due to their heft and design. Maintaining consistent bottle sizes was emphasized to avoid retailer shelf reorganization issues. The approach will likely start with multiple bottle types but consolidate toward one standard for efficiency. Product sampling and tastings planning was confirmed to support brand engagement and sales growth

VI. Approval of the March 16, 2026, Regular ABC Board Meeting Minutes

Esther Lusk made a motion to approve the minutes from March 16, 2026. Bob Cassano seconded the motion. All members voted in approval.

VI. New Business

A. Discuss ABC Store Operations

Mixed beverage sales are rising due to frequent restaurant orders, increasing demand for certain liquor brands like Tito's. Sales data indicates a decline compared to the prior year, raising concerns about budgeting and payroll. The team acknowledged the need to carefully balance staffing costs with sales volume. Restaurants like 828 Highlands and Smokehouse are placing multiple orders weekly, driving demand. Despite this, total sales are approximately 40% lower than the previous year, impacting revenue forecasts. Inventory management is challenging as some popular brands sell faster than anticipated.

The ABC system has no official policy on handling penny shortages, forcing local boards to decide on rounding approaches. Two-tier pricing concerns arise because cash payments might be rounded while card payments remain exact, risking customer confusion. The board favors managing discrepancies through over and short accounting to minimize complications. Other businesses like McDonald's have adopted rounding policies with customer notifications to ease transitions. Will follow suit if the issue arises.

Sales promotions (SPAs) legislation restricts purchase timing for discounted items, disadvantaging smaller boards. Larger boards often buy in bulk during sales, limiting availability for smaller stores. The team plans to continue pushing for policy changes to improve fairness and inventory access.

Vito's schedule was reduced to two days weekly; new hires Stuart and Laura onboarded with staggered availability.

Plans to open the store at 10 AM starting in May to recapture morning sales and meet customer demand. A skeleton morning crew is planned to manage costs while restoring service hours. The team noted increased morning customer visits when the store was closed early.

Carolina Data system glitches resulted in mismatches between sales records and bank deposits totaling around \$52. These errors included multiple credit card transaction inconsistencies and a few cash and check mistakes.

Patricia and Rhonda enhanced daily monitoring and cross-checking with camera footage to identify and correct errors. Improved vigilance is expected to reduce future discrepancies and financial risks.

B. Review Financial Report

Rhonda advised due to the error that the team has been working on checking daily sales reports against bank statements to catch errors promptly. The process now includes reviewing camera footage to verify transactions when discrepancies arise. Regular review protocols were reinforced to maintain financial accuracy and prevent losses.

Rent will decrease back to \$2,000 per month starting in May or June after a temporary reduction. This adjustment results from prior negotiated deals to offset pandemic-related rent relief. Understanding rent fluctuations helps explain recent payroll increases and budget planning.

The budget is due July 1, with work beginning in May; the team aims for better accuracy on mileage and staffing costs. Collaboration between Patricia and Rhonda will improve budgeting processes, leveraging webinars and deeper financial understanding. Past budget submissions were rejected for format issues, prompting efforts to comply with official guidelines.

A \$6,000 annual maintenance invoice for computer and POS systems was questioned for its value and necessity. The board plans to request a detailed contract breakdown and invite the service provider to explain fees and services. Discussions revealed uncertainty about whether maintenance contracts include equipment replacement or just repairs. There is a proposal to renegotiate or explore alternative vendors to reduce ongoing costs.

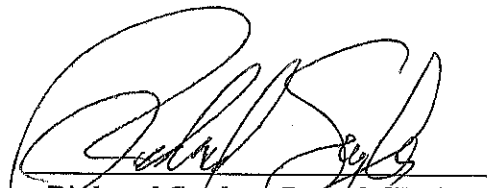
VI. Adjournment

With no further business, Esther Lusk made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Bob Cassano

seconded the motion and all voted in favor.

Attest:


Kimberly Martin, Town Clerk


Richard Sayles, Board Chair

