

**Franklin County Tourist Development Council Board Meeting
Franklin County Courthouse Annex
November 8, 2011 - 3:00 p.m.**

MINUTES

In attendance: Chair Sanders, Allen, Collins, Cook, Friedman, Hosford, Parker, Prickett, and Reese

Recording: Blair, Edwards

Guests: Sandra Allen, Tamara Allen, Kristin Anderson, Jamie Atchison, Cindy Clark, Marisa Getter, Bonnie Gomes, Anita Grove, Jerry Hall, Sheila Hauser, Beverly Hewitt, Danny Itzkovits, Tana Kendrick, Mike Koul, Bill Mahan, Smokey Parrish (FCBOC Commissioner), Dixie Partington, Clarice Powell, Elaine Rosenthal, Helen Spohrer, Bill Spohrer, Lois Swoboda, Joe Taylor, Lynn Wilson, Candace Varnes, Charles Wilson, Suzanne Zimmerman,

Call to Order – Chair Sanders called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m.

Introductions - none

Amendments to Agenda – request to add SGI \$500 funding request for Lighting of the Palms to New Business, and to delete the Visitor Center Funding Request from Continuing Business. Approved by consensus.

Minutes of September 13, 2011 FCTDC Council Meeting - Motion to approve as written:

Motion: Reese, 2nd Parker, passed

Committee Reports of Sept 27, and Oct 24, 2011 – distributed, Report for September 27 – page 2, second paragraph - addition to motion to proceed for FC Brochure, rack cards, area tri folds : Motion: Collins, 2nd Parker, passed

Administrative Report

Collections – Blair distributed and commented on the increase of nearly 8% for the fiscal year and over 6% for the calendar year. Collins commented the June 2011 tax collected had broken all prior records.

BP Report – Blair conveyed that BP had approved the Media Buy 3; that the FCBOCC had approved the MB3 on November 1, 2011

Public Records Request – Blair reported that staff had emailed an electronic financial record of BP paid expenditures through 9/30/11 to Michael Shuler’s office for further action in response to the Associated Press inquiry.

Committee Reports

Marketing:

BP Promotions Report – Helen Spohrer explained the ongoing progress to date as follows:

Sale of “Salty” t-shirts tabled.

Mobile Marketing, as suggested by Parker - Spohrer has done initial research that it will be a large undertaking to organize the content and to find a system that could furnish a toll free number. She thinks it is a good idea, and will have the information available and put the estimated expense in Media Buy 4 for review.

“Fishing the Flats” TV Fishing Show Sponsorship – Spohrer indicated that to use this venue, April was not going to be available, but that an earlier month may be. It would cost TDC \$7,000 plus about \$5,000 for food/lodging expense, but the total video would be promoting Franklin County. She will come back to the board with further details.

Website – tweaking and should have in place by end of the year.

Bumper Stickers – very popular, distributing, have ordered another 5,000 for distribution

MB2 – Funding for Springtime in Tallahassee – Department of Agriculture received some BP funding and will match \$5,000 to advertise.

Geocache Contest - Spohrer reported on Geocache Contest that began October 31; is quite popular and successful, four winners have already claimed the specially numbered "oyster coin" prize.

Spohrer distributed a report "Remaining Balances after MB 1, 2, and 3" report and suggested the following allocations for the available balances:

Fishing Show \$12,000; H'COLA Festival \$10,000; Trade Show Exhibits \$8,000; Memberships in travel writers groups \$5,000; and Geiger Spring Press Tour \$37,500; mobile marketing audio map \$TBD

Motion to approve the H'COLA \$10,000

Motion: Friedman, 2nd Cook, passed

BP Media Buy 3 – Spohrer stated that BP had approved Media Buy 3, as well as the BOCC on November 1, 2011, and requested the TDC approval to proceed with actions necessary:

Motion to approve Media Buy 3:

Discussion: Friedman questioned video library composition. Spohrer explained.

Motion: Reese, 2nd, Collins, passed

BP Vendor Agreements – Spohrer distributed a copy of the three Visitor Center Special Media Press Tour Agreements – Area Specific, and a draft of Reporting Requirements. She requested input by the board.

Motion to adopt the draft of required reporting as presented:

Motion Parker, 2nd Hosford, passed

\$30,000 Traditional Marketing/specific area/allocation to inet/google Review – these funds will be allocated to "beef up" google, facebook and to drive interest to the lodging providers by offering three free vacations contests; to enter, internet guest must enter email and other information, then will "click" on destination area's lodging providers and must make a choice as to which lodging provider they wish to use, thereby giving every lodging provider equal access opportunity and exposure to their properties.

October Press Tour October 12-16 review – Spohrer and Collins commented on the phenomenal success of the Geiger October Press Tour - a wonderful group of journalists, enthralled with the county, and Collins and Spohrer feel some great publicity will result from this.

Continuing Business

Visitor Center Funding Request (item deleted for future discussion)

Submittal by Bike Florida March 2012 Tour for \$500 special request - Motion to approve the \$500 from the FY 2nd quarter funding allocation.

Motion: Friedman, 2nd, Cook, passed

Request by Chamber for reimbursement for Sports Illustrated Photo Shoot – Discussion by Parker of where to allocate the funds for payment – Blair reported that funds had been reserved in the 2011-12 Promotions budget. Hosford questioned which amount was to be paid - the exhibited request of \$38,000 or \$30,000? Blair indicated the County Commissioners had approved up to \$30,000. Friedman stated he would feel comfortable accepting the \$30,000.

Hosford : Motion to pay the \$30,000

Cook 2nd

Discussion: Friedman disclosed he is President of the Apalachicola Chamber.

Collins – requested to make a statement to inform Board Member Hosford that TDC never really approved the \$30,000. That the TDC tabled the Chamber's request asking for more information. The Chamber did not come back to the TDC, but chose to go directly to the County Commission, and the County Commission directed the TDC to pay up to \$30,000 to the Chamber if the Sports Illustrated Photo Shoot occurred. Collins concern is that in normal FCTDC reimbursement

requests, receipts are required. She stated it is important to know that we are treating this differently, but the county chose to fund this.

Chair Sanders concurred this is a special allocation matter; we have guidelines for other payment requests, but Chair Sanders' concern is transparency and states we should require more documentation as we did on the Seafood Festival request. Chair Sanders indicated the TDC did not receive any direction from the FCBOCC as how to handle these special matters.

Reese questioned if there were receipts anywhere, as the food cost indicated they were "eatin' good."
Friedman reported they had receipts.

Prickett questioned as to why the receipts are not attached to the request.

Allen requested that the FCTDC continue the current practice to require documentation for payment requests, and requested Hosford and Cook to amend their motion to require documentation receipts from the Apalachicola Chamber for the \$30,000.

Hosford and Cook agreed to amend their motion and 2nd to reflect that the Chamber should provide receipts for up to the \$30,000 request. Hosford and Cook then amended their motion to reflect the following:

Amended Motion: to approve the Apalachicola Bay Chamber funding request as directed by the County Commission, but to require documented receipts for the charges indicated (up to \$30,000).

Motion: Hosford, 2nd Cook, passed, no abstentions

Reports by Local Government Representatives

Franklin County – Blair verified to Chair Sanders that \$234,000 TDC funding is in the 2011-12 budget for the Coombs Armory for improvements and Lombardi has clean up funds for about \$30,000 in place

City of Apalachicola: Cook distributed an updated City of Apalachicola progress report of TDC funding projects.

City of Carrabelle: Allen stated the Bear Festival was a success; that City of Carrabelle had purchased the "Moore House" and adjoining acres for restoration; Allen announced that a new park in Carrabelle will be named the "Tamara Allen Park"

New Business

\$500 Grant Requests:

Franklin County Senior Citizens Council, 1st Fall Festival & Veterans Day Parade Nov 12

St James Lanark Volunteer Fire Dept, 3rd Annual Gumbo Cook Off, Nov 12

Franklin's Promise Coalition – SENIORS - Blues in the Park, Oct 22

Franklin's Promise Coalition TOY PROJECT Motorcycle Toy Run – November 19

SFI Business Association "Lighting of the Palms" Christmas Project – December 2

Motion to approve all five requests. Staff directed to find additional \$500 to fund the fifth request, since only \$2,000 is allocated for these \$500 grants per quarter.

Motion: Allen, 2nd, Reese, passed

Public Items for the Good of the Order

FCTDC Committee Meetings, November 22, 2011 - 1:30 pm, City of Apalachicola Meeting Room

Consensus of the Board to move Committee Meeting to November 29, due to Thanksgiving conflict.

Same time, same place.

FCTDC Council Meeting, December 13, 2011 - 3:00 pm, Carrabelle City Offices, Carrabelle

Jerry Hall, member of the Apalachicola Chamber, appeared before the board regarding transparency and questioned the validity of expense for Geiger.

Lynn Wilson, owner of Coombs House Inn, appeared before the Board with questions about the TDC Press Tour invitation list, indicating that lodging providers should always be included, as well as other tourist businesses. She also questioned why she does not receive TDC sponsored Event Posters for her business. Chair Sanders stated she was in agreement to invite the lodging providers. Parker indicated it was a budget and space-available matter. Hosford suggested that each area's lodging providers be invited to each area press tour, thereby being able to accommodate each of the area businesses. Chair Sanders added that all tourist-related businesses should be invited to the press tours, including fishing charters, and restaurants since they influence the tourism in Franklin County.

Charles Wilson, owner of Capt Charles Charters, appeared before the Board to inform them of a fair competition conflict with the Apalachicola Chamber regarding the Chamber's rental to Robinson Charters and Real Estate for an office in the Chamber Building. Chair Sanders stated that the FCBOCC had given permission to hire a TDC attorney, Matt Fuqua, to review this issue.

Reese contributed that it should be a level playing field for everyone, including Lynn Wilson's issues, and that TDC funds should be an open field for all tourism businesses in the community and that we should band together to promote these businesses.

Sandra Allen, owner of Book Me A Charter, stated she did not think it was good business to house a company-for-profit in the same building as the Chamber.

Collins interjected that she is a representative of lodging tourism on the board, but is also a local real estate agent, that she was concerned about the Chamber renting out its offices. At the time of the Chamber's request in January 2011 she questioned where the office would be located and was told it would be in the back and not in the Visitors Center. In that meeting discussion, the TDC did not take action to approve any rental of Chamber space to anyone.

Chair Sanders thanked Commissioner Parrish for attending.

Adjourn – Chair Sanders adjourned the meeting at 4:45 p.m.