

**Franklin County Tourist Development Council
Board of Directors Meeting
Eastpoint Visitors Center
Wednesday, November 8, 2017, 2 P.M.**

DRAFT MINUTES

In Attendance: Mayor Brenda LaPaz, Major Van Johnson, Sr., Ms. Beverly Hewitt, Mr. Rex Pennycuff, Mr. Chester Reese, Mr. Walter Armistead

Absent: Commissioner Cheryl Sanders - Chair, Ms. Diana Prickett - Vice Chair, Ms. Janalyn Dowden

Recording: Mr. Curt Blair, Ms. Jean Lane, Ms. Deborah Davis

TDC Vendors: Ms. Tana Kendrick - 2K Webgroup, Ms. Cindy Clark - Bay Media,

Visitors: Mr. Del Suggs - Big Bend Scenic Byway, Ms. Billie Kinnett - SGI Lighthouse, Ms. Kathy Robinson - Robinson Real Estate Co., Ms. Dixie Partington - Dixie Theatre, Former Commissioner Mr. Frank Cook

Mr. Reece called the meeting to order at 2:00 P.M.

Mr. Armistead led the Prayer and Pledge of Allegiance.

A quorum was established.

Introductions: Visitors and new members were introduced

Amendments to the Agenda: Mayor LaPaz requested clarification on the report by local governments to state the City of Carrabelle requested \$27,000 for bathroom cleaning assistance (same amount as City of Apalachicola).

Approval of the Minutes:

Motion to approve the September 20th, 2017 Board Meeting Minutes.

Motion: Mayor LaPaz Second: Ms. Hewitt Passed.

Mayor LaPaz reminded the Board that her request for funds for bathroom maintenance at a previous meeting did not include the Carrabelle Beach bathroom since that is owned by and being maintained by the county.

There was a presentation for Mr. Cook and Mr. Armistead for their years of service to the TDC

Administrative Reports:

Financials:

FCTDC Collections: Mr. Blair distributed the Collections report which included collections through August 2017. Revenues for July were \$242,036.51 and August were \$121,838.90 which were down from July 2016 by

\$11,566.79 or -4.6% and August were up from August 2016 by \$39,144.83 or 47.4%. Total collections for fiscal year 2016-17 reflects an increase of collections over the previous fiscal year approximately 3.6%;

Expenditures to Budget: Ms. Davis presented the month Expense to Budget Reports for the periods through September 2017 and October 2017. The TDC is within budget with a carryover for the Fiscal year 2016-17. There are a few outstanding grant recipients that need to file their reports for receiving the allotted grant funds. Six recipients need to file quarter 4 reports, and one recipient needs to file their last three quarters, as of the date of this report.

Promotions:

Media Report: Ms. Clark updated the Board on the launch of a newsletter which was emailed to over 44,000 recipients. The reader-open rate averaged 13% and the click-through averaged 10%. The most interested topics were the Oyster Roast, Places to Stay, Fall Vacation Getaway Deals and Seafood Festival.

The Email Marketing database has increased from 7,400 in June, 2011 to over 45,000 in November 2017. Presented were some recommended additions to buy schedule.

Motion: To approve the recommended buy request of \$18,137 (which is in the Marketing Budget) for purchases in Compass Media Spring Travel Planner, Southeast Tourism Magazine, The Bark.com, Fido Friendly, Local Palette, and approval of Undiscovered Florida and Atlanta Magazine (contingent of renewing the TDC partnership with Visit Florida).

Motion: Mr. Penneycuff Second: Mayor LaPaz Passed

Ms. Clark also presented an opportunity for media intelligence software. The software allows subscribers to access thousands of media outlets across the US and abroad. The news option, recommended, is the basic option. This is all within her budget.

Motion: To approve subscription with either Cision Communication Cloud or Meltwater Media Monitoring pending review and negotiated rate by Visit Florida for up to \$6,000,

Motion: Mr. Pennycuff Second: Ms. Hewitt Passed

Ms. Clark updated Board on status of the visitor guides. She currently is working on a spec sheet, size and pricing. By next week Ms. Taylor Clark will start building a data base and begin to present to accommodation providers, expanding to restaurants and stores. The anticipated start date for this will be November 15th.

Ms. Clark also presented a Revised Schedule for the Getaways

Web Stats: Ms. Kendrick presented the data report for the web site and asked for questions. Earlier in October a survey was sent out to 1000 visitors. The winter campaign targets families, empty nesters, and snow birds in different geographic areas. Also presented was a list of targeted websites. December 1st is the launch date for internet marketing presenting a long weekend getaway for February. Ms. Kendrick stated we have a Social database of 88,000. The new website is being updated to include updated information regarding businesses in the area. Of note, October figures were down 35% from last year.

Motion was presented to revise credit card MOU limit from \$6,000 to \$10,000. This increase is to facilitate seasonal advertising.

Motion: Mr. Pennycuff Second: Mayor LaPaz Passed

Visitor Center Report: Ms. Lane reported on the number of visitors to the four area visitor centers for the month of October. There was a total of 2,540 visitors recorded for the month. Also, presented was a revised Holiday Schedule for the Eastpoint visitor Center.

Motion: To approve the 2017-18 Holiday Schedule for the Eastpoint Visitor Center

Motion: Mayor LaPaz Second: Mr. Armistead Passed

Administrator Comments: Mr. Blair presented the next items on the agenda.

Board Appointment:

Motion to recommend to the BOCC Ms. Kathy Robinson be appointed to fill the lodging provider position being vacated by Walter Armistead

Motion: Ms. Hewitt Second: Mayor LaPaz Passed

Sustaining Grant Program:

Staff to prepare for a discussion of the Sustaining Grant program for the January 2018 Board Meeting.

Visit Florida Partnership:

Motion to approve sending a letter to the Speaker of the House, President of the Senate and Governor regarding transparency requirements of HB 1A.

Motion: Mayor Johnson Second: Mr. Armistead Passed

Vendor Contract Bidding:

Directed Staff to prepare for a discussion of the possibility of putting contracts to bid for the January 2018 meeting. The Board requested staff check with the attorney about limiting bidders to local vendors.

Non-Profit Grants:

Directed Staff to prepare for discussion of the non-profit program for the January 2018 meeting.

EPVC Sign:

Directions: Authorized staff to move ahead to obtain design for the EPVC sign

Triumph:

Motion to instruct staff to investigate the possibility of preparing a Triumph application for tourism infrastructure.

Motion: Mr. Armistead Second: Mayor Johnson Passed

Request from SGI Visitor Center for repair increase.

Motion to approve a request from the SGIVC for an increase of \$800 in funds to renovate the SGIVC

Motion: Ms. Hewitt Second: Mr. Armistead Passed

Big Bend Scenic Byways Update:

Big Bend Scenic Byway update presented by Mr. Suggs, President of Big Bend Scenic Byway:

Mr. Suggs reviewed the history and progress of the project. The Byway will be the longest byway in Florida consisting of 220 miles, three coastal routes and three forest routes through the counties of Wakulla, Leon and Franklin. Phase 1 of the Way Shore Interpretive plan is completed. It consists of electronic media, website, guides and maps. Phase 2 will be the actual construction of the portals, exhibits, and sign approach markers. \$351,000 is earmarked for Franklin County. Leon County has been designated as our Grant Administrator. There are 33 parcels of real estate transactions involved in the implementation of the plan. Originally a Design/Build was released for bids, but due to the licensing for FDOT requirements, the bid process has been changed to a Design/Bid/Build. In addition, Mr. Suggs also shared the Universal Accessible Byway Plan.

Due to changes in the design, Mr. Suggs is requesting approval of the design plan modifications and a letter of support.

Motion to approve recommended changes in kiosk design and a letter of support for a DEO grant.

Motion: Mayor Johnson Second: Ms. Hewitt Passed

SGL Bathroom:

Motion to request that the BOCC put the design proposal for revisions to the SGL Bathrooms out to bid.

Motion: Ms. Hewitt Second: Mayor Johnson Passed

Dixie Theatre:

Ms. Partington appeared before the Board and requested that her Sustaining Grant be renewed for the upcoming year. She stated she is committed to meet all the requirements for receiving the grant.

Motion to recommend to the BOCC the Sustaining Grant Contract for the Dixie Theatre based on Theatre personnel's commitment to meet the terms of the Sustaining Grant Contract.

Motion: Mayor LaPaz Second: Ms. Hewitt Passed with Mr. Pennycuff voting Nay

Lodging Company Licensure:

Mr. Armistead brought forth a motion to request the BOCC's approval to proceed to develop a lodging company licensing program that will allow for regulation of units made available to the public for transient rental.

Motion: To recommend to the BOCC that work be initiated by the TDC to prepare a licensing program for lodging providers.

Motion: Mr. Armistead Second: Ms. Hewitt gPassed

Reports from Member Organizations: None

New Business: None

Public Comment: None

Meeting Announcements: Next Meeting Scheduled January 10, 2018

Seeing no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:45 P.M.

DRAFT