

Franklin County Tourist Development Council
Board Meeting
County Commission Meeting Room and via Zoom
Wednesday, October 14th, 2020 2:00 P.M.
Minutes

Attendance: Commissioner Ricky Jones - Chair, Beverly Hewitt – Apalachicola Bay Chamber, Rex Pennycuff – TDC Board Member, Mayor Kevin Begos- City of Apalachicola, Kathy Robinson – TDC Board Member

Via ZOOM: Mayor Brenda LaPaz – City of Carrabelle, Buck Bolden – TDC Board Member

Absent: Lewis Christie – Carrabelle Chamber of Commerce Lewis Christie, Janalyn Dowden - TDC Board Member

Recording: John Solomon, Deborah Davis

Vendors: Royce Rolstad – FCTV, Tana Kendrick – 2K Web Group, Cindy Clark – Bay Media

Visitors via ZOOM: Cortina Bankston, Diane Brewer, Buena Brown

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|---|---------------------------|
| 1. Welcome/Call to Order | Commissioner Jones |
| 2. Prayer and Pledge of Allegiance | Pennycuff |
| 3. Quorum Announcement | Solomon |
| 4. Approval of the Minutes of September 2, 2020 | Davis |
| Motion: Pennycuff | Passed |
| Second: Hewitt | |

5. Public Comments: None

6. Administrative Reports

- FCTDC Collections Report **Solomon**
Report shows a comparable high for the month of July, since 2016, 41% increase. We still have the months of August and September to go and we are approximately \$300,000 behind to meet last year's totals. With the Covid-19 issues, we are going to close either same as last year or a slight increase over last year.

- Expenditures to Budget **Davis**
As of September 30th, we have used up approximately 71% of budget. We will not close the fiscal year until December because of invoices and grant requests that will need to be processed.
Under Administration - there is a balance due as of September 2020, which is not paid until the October.
Under Aid to Local Government - there is a balance amount left over. This is due to the funds held for the Armory Website, SGI Bathrooms Project, and Funds designated as Other. Also, we had an extra \$12,000 set aside for Bridge Cleanup that was not used. We of course saved some in the early payoff of the Lombardi loan.
Under Aid to Private Agencies - the Q4 payments for the Museum Grants has not posted yet, because these are not paid until after September 30th. The museum grant recipients need to file a report prior to receiving funds.

Under Promotions - there is approximately 42% of the Promotions budget left. This would be due to the decrease in advertising during onset of the Covid-19 crisis.

Grants for Non-Profits - only 26% of designated funds were spent.

There may be a few more grant reimbursement request, but not very many if any. A lot of the events were cancelled.

The Rest of the Promotions Budget - There may be some categories that need to be adjusted, that were perhaps posted to the incorrect category. I am researching in preparation of making adjustment for closing out the fiscal year. The fiscal year usually is closed by the end of December.

The overall budget so far has expenditures of approximately 71-72%.

Promotions Reports

- **Media Report** **Clark**
October newsletter launched 09/22/20 and had a reader open rate of 16% with an average click-through rate of 4.3%. There was a cleanup of emails in August, and of note the newsletter was opened more on desktops than mobile devices during the pandemic. See handouts for additional information.

The Fishing Getaway launched the end of July and ran through October 1th with a record number of 1,896 signups. Requesting the next getaway to be a Birding Getaway; the trend is outdoor activities. We are looking at the winner to participate in the FWC event, or the Christmas Bird Count, running from 12/1 – 1/15, an Audubon Event, with an Eco-Tour.

Motion: LaPaz

Second: Pennycuff

Passed

Question regarding Banner Ads by Commissioner Jones, This category in budget has not been used. The reason for this is banner ads are usually included with internet and print ads as an extra no cost bonus. In the future, we will prorate the cost of ads and allocate a portion toward the banner ads.

- **Web Master Report** **Kendrick**
Goals were up 120% from last year's numbers. September was strong and social media is up. Link clicks are up compared to last year (11,000 compared to 4,000). Popular pages were events, Ghost Walks. See handout.
- **Video Report** **Rolstad**
Over the last week we created two commercials for non-profits to promote the Pink Out event and the Ghost Walk. We have started doing photo shoots to add to the photo library; the photo series will focus on featuring young people and families visiting out local sites. Note, Alligator Point will be added to the photo library.
- **Visitor Center Report** **Solomon**
Visitor Numbers – See Report

- Administrative Items
See Continuing Business

Solomon

7. Continuing Business-

- Diane Brewer representing The Apalachicola Historic Squares requesting funding for advertising on Oyster Radio in the amount of \$3000. See proposal handout.

Motion of Denial: Hewitt

Second: Robinson

Passed

Recommendation further discussion in the next grant period.

Motion to have administration to work with the organization to create a video as part of the museum video series.

Motion: Pennycuff

Second: Hewitt

Passed

- John is requesting funding for a filming crew. Authentic America – Produced by Grand Ole Opry – will be in County to do a 30-minute filming, on 11/17-19/2020. They have requested assistance in paying for rooming only for the filming staff. Request is for 7 rooms for 3 days with a budget not to exceed \$3000. Motion to approve funding up to \$3000 with stipulation we will negotiate to have access to the filming video.

Motion: Pennycuff

Second: LaPaz

Passed

- Information on Occupancy – Franklin County Occupancy rate for August, September, October has been still trending up. The percentages for those three months are 17.6%, 23.5% and 18.8% above 2019 numbers.
- Visit Apps – The build out of the design for the App is almost complete as of writing of this agenda we are waiting on the process to import information from our current site into the App. The Mobile App is on schedule to be released by end of October.

8. Reports by Local Government Representatives:

A. Franklin County

Commissioner Jones

1. Update on County Commission actions about trash cleanup on the bridges. Bridge Cleanup is going to be contracted with the Franklin County Sherriff's Office on a trial basis for 6 months.

B. City of Apalachicola: No agenda item

Mayor Begos

C. City of Carrabelle: No agenda item

Mayor LaPaz

9. Reports from Member Organizations - None

10. Board Comments

Apalachicola Bay Chamber of Commerce – Black Drum Fishing Contest for 11/7/2020

Meeting Announcements:

Motion to amend next TDC Board Meeting to be changed to Wednesday, November 4, 2020

Motion: Pennycuff

Second: Hewitt

Passed

Wednesday, November 4th, 2:00 pm TDC Board Meeting – TBD – Possibly Carrabelle

Adjourned 3:22 pm.