



Charlotte County Tourist Development Council

Meeting Minutes

January 8, 2016

B-106 Conference Room

Members Present

Commissioner Chris Constance

Judy Malbuisson

Julie Mathis

Vice Mayor Kim Devine

Kelly Williamson

Robin Madden

Rick Brunette

Kathy Burnam

Members Absent

Mayor Rachel Keesling

Staff Present

Lorah Steiner, Director - Tourist Development

Chip Futch, Marketing Director

Jerry Jones, Charlotte County Film Director

Sean Doherty, Sports Marketing Manager

Elizabeth Parker, Admin Svc Coordinator

Jennifer Huber, Public Relations Manager

Natalie Hinger – Fiscal Services

Diane Mitchell – Internal Audit

Jim Finch, Charlotte Harbor Event & Conference Center

Lori Tetreault, County Attorney's Office

Guests

Denise Dull, Hospitality Association

Ed Hill, Englewood Chamber of Commerce

Gary Quill, Punta Gorda Airport

Todd Taylor, Fiscal Services

Natalie Hinger, Fiscal Services

Dave DiMaggio, Aqua

Katie Varano, Aqua

Meagan Brewster, Aqua
Kelsey Marineau, Aqua
Dr. Walter Klages, Research Data Services

1. Call to Order/Roll Call/Meeting Minutes Approval

Ms. Steiner welcomed everyone to the TDC Meeting. Roll call was taken, all members were present except Mayor Rachel Keesling who was excused. A motion was presented by Julie Mathis and seconded by Vice Mayor Kim Devine and unanimously carried to approve the minutes as written for the Tourist Development Council Meeting November 6, 2015.

2. Citizen's Input

- Denise Dull gave an update on the Hospitality Association.
- Jim Finch gave an overview of bookings at the Event Center. Mr. Finch talked about the emergency assessment that was conducted at the event center.
- Gary Quill with the Punta Gorda Airport gave an update. For calendar year 2015 the airport had 836,472 passengers which was up 33%. Mr. Quill said that Key West flights start next week and the parking expansion project is moving forward.
- Ed Hill with the Englewood Chamber updated the council on chamber events and upcoming activities. Mr. Hill also gave a brief overview of the WaterFest Event.

3. Diane Mitchell – Financial Report

- Diane Mitchell presented the financials. Collections for the 12 months ending September 2015 were up 19%. Total revenue year to date was \$3,622,427.

4. Natalie Hinger – County Budget Report

- Ms. Hinger briefly went through some of the budget numbers. Some account lines have been changed to more accurately reflect the purpose of the expenditures.

5. Dave DiMaggio – Aqua

- Mr. DiMaggio introduced the Aqua team. They went over some upcoming initiatives and marketing strategies for the upcoming year.

6. Director and Staff Reports

- Ms. Steiner mentioned the TDT revenue has been on an upward trajectory for five years now.
- Ms. Steiner talked about the two new positions for the bureau.
- Ms. Steiner also spoke about the use of Roberts Rulers during TDC meetings.
- Ms. Steiner met with the Fisheries forum. This group works to protect and preserve Charlotte Harbor.
- Ms. Steiner also met with the Air Show Board and they will be bringing the show to the area in October. The bureau will assist with marketing.

- Ms. Steiner mentioned the Request for Quote that went out for a feasibility study on the 1-75 Welcome/Visitor Center.
- Mr. Jones gave an overview of two projects he has been working on, “Island Life” TV Show and “ Place in the Sun”, a series from Great Britain which features people looking for real estate in sunny locations.
- Ms. .Steiner briefly talked about the Event Center and bookings. She also talked about the time line for having a person in Tallahassee to assist in getting corporate/association meetings to the event center.

7. Review of Attraction Development Funding

- Ms. Steiner went through the draft of the attraction development fund guidelines and the edits and revisions that were done.
- Ms. Mathis asked how this information will be broadcast. She suggested a press release should be distributed and Ms. Steiner said it will also be on the bureau website.
- A motion was made by Judy Malbuisson, seconded by Councilmember Kim Devine and unanimously carried to approve the attraction funding guidelines with one change to add Kelly Williamson’s name to paragraph 2.2, TDC Board Members.

8. Review of Tourist Development Council Bylaws

- Ms. Steiner reviewed the revisions to the draft of the By-laws. A motion was made by Judy Malbuisson, seconded by Councilmember Devine and unanimously carried to approve the Tourist Development Council Bylaws.

9. Dave DiMaggio – Aqua

Mr. DiMaggio made a presentation to the council on their upcoming initiatives and public relations efforts for the bureau.

10. Dr. Walter Klages – Research Data Report

- Dr. Klages went through his report on the 2015 summer tourism numbers. He briefly went through the impact numbers on the Englewood Beach Waterfest. The economic impact is estimated to have reached \$2,322,300 and visitors supported approximately 4,800 room nights in the Charlotte County area.
- Dr. Klages reviewed the key visitor metrics from Apr-Sep 2015. He went through more specific visitor numbers.
- Ms. Steiner mentioned the County’s 100 year anniversary coming up in 6 years and suggested plans should begin now for a centennial celebration,

11. Citizens Comments

- Mr. Ed Hill mentioned the Englewood Chamber will be celebrating its 75th year anniversary and big celebrations will be planned.

12. Council Comments

- Vice Mayor Devine reiterated that there is a need to maintain our natural resources in the county and be strategic about the budget moving forward.
- Commissioner Constance said we should also be prepared, in regard to the budget, for a downturn in the economy.
- Ms. Williamson said the Four Points by Sheraton had a great 2015. She has been assisting with the other properties and is looking for a new sales person.
- Mr. Brunette is looking forward to the March 4th retreat. He briefly talked about the downturn cycle in the economy.
- Ms. Madden said Islander Properties were up 35%. Bookings are coming in strong for the summer and she mentioned the beach dredging project.
- Ms. Burnam thanked Lorah and the staff for all their hard work and gave an update on Fishermen's Village renovations.
- Judy Malbuisson thanked the bureau for meeting the deadline for the new 2016 guides.
- Commissioner Constance adjourned the meeting and thanked everyone for attending.