



## Charlotte County Tourist Development Council

### Meeting Minutes

July 8, 2016

B-106 Conference Room

#### Members Present

Commissioner Chris Constance

Mayor Rachel Keesling

Judy Malbuisson

Julie Mathis

Vice Mayor Kim Devine

Kelly Williamson

Robin Madden

Kathy Burnam

Rick Brunette

#### Staff Present

Chip Futch, Marketing Director

Jerry Jones, Charlotte County Film Director

Elizabeth Parker, Admin Svc Coordinator

Jennifer Huber, Public Relations Manager

Julie Pennock, Marketing Assistant

Jerry Jones, Film Director

Cindy Mize, Project Manager

Todd Taylor, Fiscal Services

Diane Mitchell, Internal Audit

Lori Tetreault, County Attorney's Office

#### Guests

Ed Hill, Englewood Chamber of Commerce

Craig Holt, Four Points

John Zacarri, A to Z Management

Joe Suriol, Interdevco IMS

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

- Commissioner Constance welcomed everyone. Roll call was taken, all members were present. Ms. Steiner was excused due to illness. A motion was presented by Judy Malbuisson and seconded by Robin Madden and unanimously carried, to approve the minutes as written for the Tourist Development Council Meeting held May 6, 2016.

### **2. Citizen's Input**

- Judy Malbuisson updated the council on the Charlotte County Hospitality Association. She handed out a media release letting everyone know that the CCHA is going through a reorganization. Commissioner Constance said that the Chambers will be moving forward with their tourism committees and hopefully these groups can pick up where the CCHA has left off. Ms., Pennock added that all the meetings schedule to the end of the year will still take place.
- Ed Hill mentioned the "Let's Eat, Englewood" event coming up Sept 15-Sept 29. Mr. Hill talked about the tourism assembly and the junior naturalist program which will be called Englewood Youth Explorers. He briefly went over some details on this program. Manasota Mystique will be held Nov 5<sup>th</sup>. This is the Chamber's signature fund raising event. Mr. Hill briefly mentioned the printed Chamber newsletter that will be sent out to area industry partners.
- Craig Holt briefly spoke about marketing meetings or possibly having an accommodations meeting with all hoteliers in the county. Commissioner Constance suggested having another retreat and one of the components could be dedicated to hoteliers.
- Ms. Futch also mentioned the bureau will bring back quarterly marketing meetings.
- Mr. Suriol spoke about low season and getting the hotel rooms filled during this time. He also would like a meeting with local hoteliers.
- Ms. Williamson spoke briefly about local events and how important they are to our area. She mentioned the great rapport she has with Visana's Comedy Club and what a great asset they are to the county.

### **3. Diane Mitchell – Financial Report**

- Diane Mitchell presented the financials. She went through the numbers for six months ending March 31, 2016. Collections for the quarter were \$1,886,008. This is an increase of \$104,471 or 6% compared to prior year. She briefly went through some geographical statistics.

### **4. Todd Taylor – County Budget Report**

- Todd Taylor briefly went through some of the budget numbers, He said all numbers are in line where they should be at this point in the year.

## 5. Director and Staff Reports

- Commissioner Constance gave the council a brief overview on the Visitor Center. One of the main issues has been the land. Commissioner Constance demonstrated on google map the area where the proposed site could be and gave an overview of a possible land swap deal. He will keep the council updated on this project.
- Commissioner Constance touched on some items in the Director's report.
- Ms. Futch also went over some of the items on Ms. Steiner's Report.
- Mr. Futch went over some summer campaign numbers.
- Mr. Doherty mentioned the Snowbird Baseball Classic event which won the Best Sporting Event for a small market through the Florida Sports Foundation.
- Ms. Doherty also mentioned the Women's Lacrosse tournament Mar 4 -23 coming to our area.
- The Bureau is moving along with the branding process. Commissioner Constance mentioned the fact that the Economic Development Department is also looking into rebranding and that perhaps both department should collaborate on this project.
- Mr. Futch went over the advertising/marketing budget line items.
- Commissioner Constance briefly talked about advertising at the PG Airport. He said it is very difficult as this time because there is a third party handling advertising for the airport. He suggested council members try to attend the airport board meetings and bring up their concerns.
- Commissioner Constance asked about Sugar Bert boxing and Mr. Doherty gave a brief overview of this event.

## 6. Event Funding Program Discussion

- Commissioner Constance briefly went over some changes to the Event Funding Program. The council talked about changing the amount for each event to \$10,000 and editing some of the criteria for the event.
- Mayor Keesling liked Ms. Malbuisson tabulation idea for the Event Funding Program.
- Ms. Malbuisson said her and Ms. Steiner are going to meet to finalize some additional changes. A final event guideline will be completed and brought back to the council for final approval at the a future meeting.
- Councilmember Devine asked about additional events that might come forward after the funds have already been allocated.
- Commissioner Constance mentioned the Vietnam Wall Attraction which will be very positive for the Charlotte County area. Ms. Williamson said this will be a weeklong event
- Commissioner Constance suggested if anyone else had comments or suggestions regarding the Event Funding Program to call Ms. Steiner.

## 7. Lori Tetreault

- Lori Tetreault gave the council a brief overview on the Airbnb situation. This organization has presented an agreement to collect Tourist Tax. Ms. Tetreault is involved in the Florida Association of County Attorney's. The Dept of Revenue is now involved as well and would like the counties to waive the past due tax collections. She said at this time they are not recommending the waiver of the past due funds. Ms. Tetreault will keep the council posted on any additional updates.

- **Citizens Comments**

- Mr. Zaccari from A to Z Marketing commented on the area hotel room rates. He said how pleased he was at how area accommodations make the housing affordable for groups to come to the area for their events.

- **Council Comments.**

- Ms. Mathis mentioned that this meeting was Ms. Malbuisson's last. Commissioner Constance would like the board to make an allowance for her to attend the next couple of meetings to assist in getting the Event Guidelines finalized.
- Ms. Williamson said she appreciated the Marketing Meetings being resurrected. She mentioned that the Fucillo KIA dealership will be a great addition to the area.
- Ms. Madden really liked the quarterly meetings as well but did not like the Monday timing. She would like off-site meeting places and for the Realty Community to be more involved in Tourism.
- Tish Sheesly applied for Ms. Malbuisson's position on the TDC.
- Kathy Burnam will attend an airport board meeting with Ms. Steiner.
- Mayor Keesling attended the Blues, Brews & BBQ event. She said it was a wonderful event.
- Ms. Malbuisson thanked the Tourism Staff for their efforts and hard work.
- Meeting was adjourned.