



**PUNTA GORDA
ENGLEWOOD BEACH**

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The Charlotte Harbor Gulf Island Coast

Charlotte County Tourist Development Council Meeting Minutes Friday, February 21, 2025

A meeting of the Charlotte County Tourist Development Council was held Friday, February 21, 2024, at Murdock Administration Building, Conference Room B-106, 18500 Murdock Circle, Port Charlotte, FL.

Members Present

Commissioner Christopher Constance
Mayor Councilmember Deborah Lux
Councilmember Janis Denton
Kathy Burnam
Robin Madden
David Haynes
Gary Butler

Members Absent

Keith Farlow
Kelly Williamson

Staff Present

Claire Jubb, Assistant County Administrator
Glinda Pruitt, Assistant County Attorney
Sean Doherty, Tourism Development Director
Sean Walter, Sales & Sports Marketing Manager
Lois Croft, Public Relations Manager
Maureen Morgenthien, Marketing Manager
Katie Patterson, Marketing
Amy Sharpe, Sales Assistant
Kimberly Powell, Admin. Services Coordinator
Brynja Phipps, Project Coordinator
Dan Roe, Tax Collector's Office
Roger Davis, Fiscal Services
Michelle Oquendo, IT Business Analyst

Guests

Doug Izzo, Englewood Chamber of Commerce
Chris Lopez, FRLA
Joseph St. Germain, Downs & Saint Germain Research
Isaac James, Military Heritage Museum
Tina Figliuolo, Military Heritage Museum
Jeff Lustig, Citizen

I. Call to Order & Pledge of Allegiance

Commissioner Christopher Constance called the Charlotte County Tourist Development Council (TDC) meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

II. Roll Call

A quorum was established.

III. Approval of the Agenda

A motion was made by Commissioner Christopher Constance and seconded by Kathy Burnam to approve the agenda. Motion carried unanimously.

IV. Citizens' Input

There was no Citizen's input on any agenda items.

V. Approval of TDC Meeting Minutes

A motion was made by Kathy Burnam and seconded by Gary Butler, to approve the August 16, 2024, minutes. Motion carried unanimously.

VI. Tourist Tax Report – Dan Roe

The tax collector report was presented by Dan Roe. Roe reported that 4th Quarter 2024 July - September collections were at \$1,582,211.10. Roe continued to report there were 563 suspect accounts on file for the last quarter with an overall 4th Quarter with 3,020 accounts on file adding 78 new accounts. Roe advised that overall collections were up 16.1%. Roe then reported on 1st Quarter 2024 – 2025 collections were at \$1,587,866.52. Suspect accounts were at 589 with 3072 accounts on file a gain of 53 so far for the 1st Quarter. Roe continued to advise the numbers are up 9.5% over last fiscal year. Amy Sharpe, Sales Assistant provided a TDT breakdown by zip code.

VII. Budget Report – Roger Davis

The fiscal report was presented by Roger Davis. Davis reported that for fiscal year 2024 the first three cent fund 1027 total budget expended was 97.59%. The largest portion were for promo activities at \$814,000, promo activities advertising \$736,000 and inter fund transfers for \$755,000. Davis continued to report the tourist development trust fund, fourth and fifth cent, total of \$600,000 using \$507,011.00 for advertising promotional activities. Davis advised we are five months into the fiscal year 2025 with the first three cent budget of 6.1 million. Davis continued to advise so far \$1,280,605.00 has been spent with \$2,211,586.00 encumbered. Total budget expended is 21.01% because of inter fund transfers which happen in the first quarter. This number will be closer to 40% once the pending review amount of \$755,000.00 goes through. Davis reports that most of the encumbrances are in promotional activities advertising and other contractual services. The tourist development trust fund fourth and fifth cent promotional activities budget of \$600,000.00. Spending to date is for promotional activities for 141,000 and 453,000 with encumbrances of \$209,539.

VIII. Budget Review

Budget was not reviewed. Robin Madden stepped down. Gary Butler volunteered to review the budget moving forward.

IX. Presentations

Isaac James, Military Heritage Museum and Tina Figliuolo Io, Military Heritage Museum provided a verbal presentation on behalf of the Military Heritage Museum application for funding for the Patriots Gala 2025. Based on the scoring tabulation of 75.5% in favor of the application, the TDC found that the Military Heritage Museum, "Patriots Gala 2025 does meet and exceed the protocol of 60% for funding eligibility. Councilmember Kathy Burnam made a motion to approve funding for up to \$10,000, which was seconded by David Haynes. The motion carried unanimously.

Joseph St. Germain presented the Annual Visitor Tracking & Research Report.

Maureen Morgenthien, Marketing Manager, provided a Marketing Presentation highlighting marketing for fiscal year 2024.

X. Director/Staff Report – Sean Doherty

Sean Doherty, Tourism Director, provided a recap of the Tourism Department Board Report. Doherty reported on new staff Katie Patterson in marketing, Amy Cantrell in sales, and Kimberly Powell in Administrative with the new meetings and convention sales manager starting in March. Doherty provided an update that the president of Visit Florida is retiring, and they are in the process of hiring a new president. Doherty highlighted that 100% of hotels are open and almost 100% of restaurants are open post hurricane.

XI. Citizen's Comments

Chris Lopez from FRLA spoke about the importance of educating the public and elected officials on the importance of tourism and value the tax revenue brings to Florida and local communities.

Jim Finch, Charlotte Harbor Event and Conference Center, who was not present for the meeting, provided a written report on the conference center.

Jeff Lustig, Citizen, discussed the Military Heritage Museum and the decision to rescind an invitation to Commissioner Deutsch for the Patriots Gala 2025.

Doug Izzo, Englewood Chamber of Commerce reported on the recovery of west county and red tide.

XII. Council Comments

David Haynes provided an update on vacation rentals for Little Gasparilla Island.

Mayor, Councilmember Deborah Lux, thanked the Tourist Development Council for allowing her participation on the council.

Councilmember Janis Denton thanked the Tourist Development Council for continuing to do a great job and encouraged more activities for Charlotte County.

Gary Butler provided an update on the American Cruise Line expanding its visits to Charlotte County. The cruise line has added more stops and participants have visited Peace River Botanical Gardens and Artisan Village at the History Park. The cruise line is encouraging passengers to visit the experiences we offer in Charlotte County.

Kathy Burnam provided an update on Fisherman's Village. Burnam reports that sales at Fisherman's Village are soft. Burnam advised that the marina is still not open. Burnam advised that Fisherman's Village had a new store open named Monkees and two other stores named Route Florida and Bee and Company opening soon. Burnam advised that Leroy's Fish Shack will continue construction.

Robin Madden provided an update on Islander properties and the Palm Island beach. Madden reported that rentals are hurting with 100 cancellations. Madden states renters are looking to rent properties that are on the beach as opposed to those close to the beach. Madden discussed the impact of red tide and fish kills on the community, with efforts to clean up dead fish and improve water quality.

Commissioner Christopher Constance provided an update on Englewood Beach and Stump Pass. Commissioner Constance discussed the dedication of county employees during the previous storms. Commissioner Chris Constance discussed the challenges of balancing tourism needs with the constraints of limited resources and ongoing recovery efforts.

XIII. Next Scheduled Meeting

The next scheduled TDC meeting is at 9:00 a.m. Friday, April 18, 2025. The meeting will be held in Conference Room B-106, 18500 Murdock Circle, Port Charlotte, FL 33948.

XIV. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 11:28 a.m.

Approved