

TOURIST DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

There was a meeting of the Indian River County (IRC) Tourist Development Council (TDC) on Wednesday, December 16, 2009, at 2:00 p.m. in the Commission Chambers of the County Administration Building, 1801 27th Street, Building A, Vero Beach, Florida.

Present were **Chairman Peter D. O'Bryan**, County Commissioner; **Kathryn Beatty-Self**, Owner/Operator Tourist Accommodations Appointee; **Sheryl Koenes**, Owner/Operator Tourist Accommodations Appointee; and **Daniel Fourmont**, **Ursula Gunter** and **Mayor Susan Adams**, Interested in Tourist Development Appointees.

Absent was **Vice Mayor Jim Hill**, Sebastian Municipal Officer; **Brian Heady**, **Alternate**, Vero Beach Municipal Officer; **Jon Bates**, Owner/Operator Tourist Accommodations (all excused).

Also present were IRC Staff: **Jason Brown**, Office of Management, Budget Director; **William DeBraul**, Deputy County Attorney; and **Terri Collins-Lister**, Commissioner Assistant, District 4.

Others present: **Penny Chandler** and **Sue Hunt**, Indian River Chamber of Commerce; **Tom Colucci** and **Rich Nalbandian**, Treasure Coast Sports Commission and **Jennifer Bates**, Holiday Inn Oceanside Sales Manager.

Call to Order

Chairman Peter D. O'Bryan called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m. and introductions were made.

Additions or deletions to the Agenda

Chairman O'Bryan added to the December 16, 2009 TDC Meeting Agenda, a Presentation by Mr. Rich Nalbandian, Treasure Coast Sports Commission as Agenda Item 5B.

ON MOTION BY Mr. Fourmont, SECONDED BY Mayor Adams, the members voted (6-0) to approve the December 16, 2009 agenda with the addition of agenda Item 5B, a presentation by the Treasure Coast Sports Commission.

Approval of Minutes of the September 16, 2009 Meeting

Mr. Fourmont referred to page 3 of the September 16, 2009 meeting minutes and noted the misspelling of his name.

ON MOTION BY Ms. Self, SECONDED BY Mr. Fourmont, the members voted unanimously (6-0) to approve the September 16, 2009 meeting minutes as amended.

Tourism Update – PowerPoint Presentation by the Indian River County Chamber of Commerce (IRCOC)

Ms. Penny Chandler, President, IRCOC, provided a PowerPoint Presentation entitled “Shout about Indian River County”, a copy of which is on file in the Commission Office.

Ms. Sue Hunt, Director, IRCOC Tourism Division, detailed in her PowerPoint Presentation, an update on the IRCOC Tourism and Marketing Plan, a copy of which is on file in the Commission Office.

Tourist Tax Revenues Update

Mr. Jason Brown, Office of Management and Budget Director, provided the Quarterly Update on the Tourist Tax Revenue Report, a copy of which is on file in the Commission Office. He indicated the information contained in the report stated November 2009; however the actual data was from October 2009, the beginning of the new fiscal year.

Mr. Brown gave a brief review on the total tourist tax amount and allocations for new members. He detailed the County collects a total of four cents on all tourist overnight accommodations of six months or less in addition to the sales tax divided toward the following:

- 1 ½ Cents directed toward Tourism Promotion
- 1 ½ Cents Beach Renourishment Activities

Mr. Brown noted in the year 2001, the County levied an additional one cent towards the bonds used for the Dodgertown Spring Training Facilities. He referred to the Tourist Tax Revenue Report and stated for the month of October the total revenue was \$61,805.73, a decrease of 10.2% from the previous year. He directed the attention of the committee to the previous fiscal year’s total which was slightly under \$1.3 million, a decrease of \$200,000 from the prior year.

A question was raised concerning the salaries under the expenditures for the Beach Restoration Revenues and Expenses. Mr. Brown replied the County has a

Coastal Division consisting of a Coastal Manager, Coastal Engineer, and a Sea Turtle Specialist of which the entirety of their salaries were housed in the report, however 75% of their salaries were reimbursed from the County's General Fund back into the Tourist Tax funds.

Presentation By The Treasure Coast Sports Commission

Mr. Tom Colucci summarized Treasure Coast Sports Commission (TCSC) comprised of Indian River, Martin and St. Lucie Counties was 1 of 22 regional sports commissions in the State of Florida and was funded through the Bed Tax. He indicated the TCSC focuses on sports development and planned to make their internet site more proactive to promote sporting events in all three counties. He played a clip of a DVD that the TCSC has put together for St. Lucie County and has planned to do for events in Indian River and Martin County. A discussion followed on events held in IRC and the economic impact.

Mr. Rich Nalbandian gave an overview of Dodgertown and pointed out the TCSC was working very closely with them to bring events to IRC. He stated the challenge was that event makers have many choices and they want sponsorship dollars and discounted rates from the hotels. He reviewed the Suggested Sponsorship Criteria for TCSC, a copy of which is on file in the Commission Office and indicated there were several events the TCSC could bring to IRC; however they were in need of additional funds.

Mr. Colucci gave an example of the upcoming soccer tournament event of which had been secured. He added this event would bring an estimated 1200 to 2000 room nights for over a million dollar economic impact to IRC and the cost to the County was approximately \$15,000. He thanked the IRCOC for stepping up and helping to fund the event. Mayor Adams wanted to know the TCSC main source of funding. Mr. Colucci replied the TCSC main source of funding comes from the three area counties: St. Lucie County, \$250,000; Martin County, \$90,000 to \$100,000; Indian River County, \$92,000 to include an additional \$15,000 for the Florida Fire and Police Games. He asked for direction from the TDC Board for additional funds in the amount of \$41,000 in order to bid on sporting events for IRC.

Ms. Chandler wanted to clarify the funds for the Florida Fire and Police Games were not taken out of the Chamber's tourism budget. She explained that IRCOC had contacted Mr. Joe Baird, IRC County Administrator for funding when Ms. Hunt was working to secure the contract with the U.S. Club Soccer.

Mayor Adams questioned whether Minor League Baseball had contributed toward the bid fees. She felt the sponsorship funds should be coming from Minor League Baseball who would be benefiting from the events since it was their facility and hotel rooms. Her concern was the additional funds helped one venue

such as Dodgertown when most other funds were used to support multiple venues.

Mr. Colucci further explained the bid and sponsorship process and indicated no funds would be given out until after the event takes place. He added at the conclusion of an event, the event maker fills out a post event report including an economic impact and room night report. Upon completion of the report, the TCSC would pay the sponsorship dollars to the event maker based on the number of room nights confirmed, marketing and media coverage criteria met. He concluded in order to be competitive, events needed to be secured at least two years in advance, however the TCSC was unable to commit to events due to the funding.

A lengthy discussion ensued on the bid fees. Chairman O'Bryan asked the TCSC to come back to a future TDC Meeting, with a report with the following information:

- Committed Events and Funded
- Committed Events and Funds Needed
- Not Committed to Events and Funds Needed

Chairman O'Bryan wanted to see the information on all of the events in order to develop a future economic activity indicator that would illustrate whether the event was a one-time deal or ten year deal in order for the TDC to better evaluate what to fund going forward.

Proposed 2010 TDC Meeting Schedule

ON MOTION BY Mayor Adams, SECONDED BY Chairman O'Bryan, the members voted unanimously (6-0) to approve the Proposed 2010 Tourist Development Council Meeting Schedule as presented.

Other Matters

Ms. Jennifer Bates representing the Holiday Inn Oceanside, Country Inn, and Hampton Inn commented on the revenue from sporting events.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 3:40 p.m.