

TOURIST DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

There was a meeting of the Indian River County (IRC) Tourist Development Council (TDC) on Wednesday, February 18, 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 Wesley S. Davis, County Commissioner; Members: Jon Bates, Owner/Operator Tourist Accommodations; Councilmember Debra Fromang (arrived at 2:35 p.m.), Vero Beach Municipal Officer; Sheryl Koenes and Kathryn Beatty-Self, Owner/Operator Tourist Accommodations Appointees; and Susan Hunt and Mayor Susan Adams, Interested in Tourist Development Appointees.

Absent was Vice Mayor Jim Hill, Sebastian Municipal Officer and Ervin Roberts, Interested in Tourist Development Appointee (both excused).

Also present were IRC Staff: Peter D. O'Bryan, Commissioner, District 4; Jason Brown, Office of Management and Budget Director; Bill DeBaal, Deputy County Attorney and Misty L. Horton, Commissioner Assistant, District 1. Others present: Penny Chandler, Tom Colucci, Rich Nalbandian, Lori Burns, Becci Hyde, Scott Dipetrio, Rebecca Rickey, Mary Jayne Kelly, Chris Morhardt, Genevieve Introcaso, Charlie Wilson, Helen Murray, Donna Barone and Trina Smith.

Call to Order

Chairman Wesley S. Davis called the meeting to order at 2:04 p.m.

Additions or Deletions to the Agenda

ON MOTION BY Mayor Adams, SECONDED BY Mrs. Koenes, the members voted unanimously (6-0) to approve the February 18, 2009 agenda with no additions or deletions, as submitted.

Approval of Minutes of the December 3, 2008 Meeting

ON MOTION BY Mayor Adams, SECONDED BY Commissioner Wesley Davis, the members voted unanimously (6-0) to approve the December 3, 2008 meeting minutes as submitted. (2:05)

Tourist Tax Revenues Updates

a. Budget Item re fees of County equipment

Mr. Jason Brown, IRC Office of Management and Budget Director, briefly reviewed the Tourist Tax Report Highlights monthly report for January, 2009, a copy of which is on file in the Commission Office. He reminded the Committee the Tourist taxes reported were collected in the month of December, and indicated revenues were down by 3.2% from last year and budgeted revenues were slightly up by \$356 or .35 percent.

Mr. Brown responded to a question regarding the Spring Training Facility Fund revenues exceeding expenses with an explanation it was the fourth cent of the Tourist Tax levied for the Dodgertown bonds. He advised the year-to-date revenues for December were down 3 percent; however, through December, remained slightly ahead of budget or in line with the budget for the first quarter.

Budget Updates (2:08)

Mr. Brown directed the Committee to a worksheet, a copy of which is on file in the Commission Office, indicating the actual total year-to-date expenditures were less than budget, which was typical largely due to the one month delay in getting billings.

A brief discussion followed regarding whether the decrease in revenue was from increased vacancies of hotel rooms or discounted room rates. Mr. Brown advised it was difficult to obtain data from hotels because the proprietary information was not broadcasted and not subjected to public record.

Mr. Jon Bates mentioned the number of rooms which had become on-line increased from than the previous year and the increase was padding the numbers.

Treasure Coast Sports Commission Presentation by Tom Colucci (2:10)

Mr. Tom Colucci provided a brief presentation regarding the Treasure Coast Sports Commission (TCSC), a non-profit organization focused on sports development, in conjunction with 3 counties, including Indian River County, was hosting the Florida Police & Fire Games in 2009 and 2010. A copy of the Powerpoint presentation is on file in the Commission Office.

ON MOTION BY Mrs. Beatty-Self, SECONDED BY Commissioner Davis, the members voted unanimously (6-0) to recommend a budget amendment for the \$15,000.00 sponsor fee increase to allow the Police and Fire Games (2:28).

Ms. Donna Barone, President of the Sebastian High School Rowing Sharks Booster Club handed out a booklet titled "Crews Control" and mentioned the club's

partnership with TCSC in the promotion of the upcoming rowing regatta. She advised informational packets were sent to visiting teams and would like to include a DVD showing what to expect, where to shop, where to eat.

Commissioner Davis suggested the Sebastian Chamber of Commerce DVD be included; wherein Ms. Barone offered to place the DVD at the event's concession.

Mrs. Debra Fromang arrived at 2:35 p.m.

Ms. Barone indicated the biggest obstacle in making the event larger for next year would include sponsorship funding to advertise.

Discussion ensued regarding local hotels' participation in events.

Commissioner O'Bryan mentioned Item (a) under Tourist Tax Revenues Updates may have been skipped on the agenda. He suggested for next year's budget, this Committee have a line item for tourist tax funding, approximately \$5,000, to assist the nonprofits, i.e., the rowing regatta event, in applying for bleachers rental given the event's positive economic impact.

Mr. Brown recited who utilized the stage to date and the economic benefit brought to the community.

Commissioner Davis theorized the budgetary steps were taking dollars out of tourist tax funding and transferring them to the recreation department's budget to facilitate the county equipment (stage/bleachers). Mr. Brown confirmed it was necessary to cover the overtime of the parks department employees who setup the stage/bleachers.

ON MOTION BY Mayor Adams, SECONDED BY Ms. Hunt, the members voted unanimously (7-0) to consider a line item in next year's budget to transfer funds from tourist tax to the recreation department and to establish policy with criteria and parameters on how funds are distributed. (2:59).

Other Matters

a. Treasure Coast Business Summit by Chris Morhardt & Helen Murray

Mr. Chris Morhardt announced the Treasure Coast Business Summit was a one-day concentrated business session on April 29, 2009 to educate, inform and motivate business as an economic stimulus with a purpose to bring together business owners interested in doing business in this area.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 3:06 p.m.