

**PASCO COUNTY TOURIST DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING**

MINUTES

JANUARY 14, 2015

**PREPARED IN THE OFFICE OF
PAULA S. O'NEIL, CLERK & COMPTROLLER**

**THE MINUTES WERE PREPARED
IN AGENDA ORDER AS
PUBLISHED AND NOT IN THE
ORDER THE ITEMS WERE HEARD**

10:00 A.M.

**HISTORIC PASCO COUNTY COURTHOUSE
BOARD ROOM 2ND FLOOR
37918 MERIDIAN AVENUE
DADE CITY, FL**

Tourist Development Council Members

The Honorable Kathryn Starkey
Board of County Commissioners

The Honorable Camille Hernandez
Vice-Chairman, Mayor, City of Dade City

The Honorable Chopper Davis
Councilman, City of New Port Richey

Kyle Von Kohorn
Fairfield Inn and Suites Ranch

Gail Cushman
Days Inn and Suites

Toby Caroline
Paradise Lakes Resorts

Jack Phethean
Little Everglades

Pat Ciaccio
Saddlebrook Resort

Piyush Mulji
Hampton Inn

1. CALL TO ORDER – 10:00 A.M. Chairman

Chairman Starkey called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

2. Invocation, Pledge of Allegiance

Ms. Marie Miller, Deputy Clerk, gave the Invocation and led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

3. Roll Call

Ms. Miller called the roll. All members were present with the exception of Mr. Phethean who was absent during the roll call, but arrived at 10:02 a.m.

4. Public Comment

Chairman Starkey called for public comment.

There was no public comment.

5. Approval of Minutes

a. October 22, 2014

Chairman Starkey requested a motion to approve the October 22, 2014 TDC minutes.

MAYOR HERNANDEZ MOVED to approve the October 22, 2014 minutes; **MS. CUSHMAN SECONDED.**

Chairman Starkey called on the motion; the vote was unanimous and the motion carried.

6. New Business

a. Event Sponsorship Agreement – PBA 50, Gary Beck - TD15-028

Mr. Gary Beck, Killer 'B' Promotions, explained the Pasco County Open would be the kickoff event for the PBA's Senior Tour and in the past two years the event had attracted participants from across the US and six foreign Countries. The event would be held April 11-14, 2015 at Lane Glo Bowl in New Port Richey. The requested sponsorship funds will cover the PBA's Rights Fee and would allow for leverage of the PBA's media platforms which included ESPN, the PBA email list (400,000+), the PBA Facebook Fan Page (110,000+ likes), and the PBA Twitter account (28,900 followers). He spoke regarding international exposure for the County, the PBA website receiving over 2 million visits per year, live streaming video, the PBA YouTube channel, a constant tag line showing the event's location as Pasco County Florida, emails

promoting the event, PBA stars and PBA Hall of Fame inductees that would be in attendance, that a European based bowling website (Bowling Digital) would cover the event, the involvement of Tourism Staff, the event's growth, the ongoing effort to increase heads and beds, the bowling centers at The Villages, and events held that encouraged participants to arrive early taking advantage of what Pasco County had to offer.

The Council, Staff, and Mr. Beck held discussion regarding hotel stays associated with the event; adding Florida to Pasco County in the marketing and promotional materials; spectators coming to the area due to player notoriety; recommendations for more regional events; marketing opportunities of this type of event; Pasco County flyers handed out at a Las Vegas ESPN PBA event; using the event as a marketing tool to promote Pasco County; funding procedures; room night generation; \$15,000.00 was budgeted but not guaranteed and would give Pasco County the title sponsorship; marketing funds; other location evaluations; the promoters loyalty to Pasco County; facility updates to Lane Glo Bowl; the promoters goal to keep the event in Pasco County; investments made by the promotor; the potential of the event; a committed bowling proprietor and strong senior community; and the event provided more exposure for Pasco County than any other event sponsored by the TDC.

Mr. Ciaccio stated the request was a unique marketing opportunity. He spoke regarding the economic effects on the community, the participant demographics, the recommendations for more regional events, and the benefits of live streaming events.

Mayor Hernandez stated she agreed with Mr. Ciaccio. She spoke regarding reaching out to other communities, similar funding in the past, and the requirement of the TDC to look at events differently to help with marketing.

The Council, Staff, and Mr. Beck held discussion regarding the need to add Florida to the marketing tools; marketing the event to Pasco County residents; the potential for the West Pasco Chamber to be involved; marketing partnerships; local community impact potential; the exposure being worth the investment; internal marketing; local business sponsorships; news releases to local businesses letting them know about the event; the event schedule; and a charity corporate event to benefit Sand Soldiers of America.

COUNCILMAN DAVIS MOVED to approve entering into an ESA for \$15,000.00;
MAYOR HERNANDEZ SECONDED.

Ms. Cushman spoke regarding the participation growth of the SunCoast Senior Regional Bowling Tournament.

Chairman Starkey stated she would include information about the event in her newsletter which reached approximately 15,000 people.

Mr. Von Kohorn noted he would be abstaining from the vote due to a conflict of interest.

Chairman Starkey called on the motion; the motion carried with Mr. Von Kohorn abstaining from the vote.

7. Old Business

a. Fund Balance Report – Future Projections - Dan Risola/OMB

Chairman Starkey introduced Mr. Dan Risola, Budget Manager, who would present the Fund Balance Report. Chairman Starkey noted for the record that Mr. Phethean had arrived to the meeting.

Mr. Ed Caum, Tourism Manager, explained the item would show how funds were managed.

Mr. Risola thanked Mr. Thomas Bruno, Budget Analyst, for his contributions to the presentation. Mr. Risola gave a PowerPoint presentation which reviewed Tourism revenue, Tourism Tax of approximately \$765,000.00 per year, allocation of the Tourism funds, and a spreadsheet showing expenses continuing to outpace the fund balance.

Mr. Caum noted the accumulated construction fund could not be used for promotions or advertising due to the way it was collected.

Councilman Davis asked what was the difference between projected funding and contracted funding.

Mr. Risola spoke regarding budgeted funding, fluctuation of revenues, small increased revenue, and a three percent growth factor added for normal increased expenses.

The Council and Staff held extensive discussion regarding the preferred methodology; increased expenses; additional hotel rooms; future growth patterns; the ULI Report projections for 2020; programming a flat budget; trimming expenses if no new growth; how to project revenue; construction funding being spent without results; Wiregrass Sports Complex delegated funding and new bid process; shortfalls with Administration and promotions; that Visit Florida indicated tourists generated 24 percent of sales and fuel tax revenue; without tourism the average citizen would pay an additional \$38.00 in property tax, small businesses would pay an additional \$916.32 per year to cover the lost revenue, and alternatives included decreased expenditures, changed allocations, or increased revenues; Wiregrass Sports Complex; hotel growth would generate Tourism Tax; increased funding included a cost of living increase; Tourism percentages collected by surrounding Counties; using Tourism Tax to replenish communities; increased hotel stays; the STAR report showed a six percent increase since October; comparisons of hotel room rates along County lines; hotel contracts for corporate events; marketing and advertising growth; penny allocations; and branding Pasco County as a destination location and premier County.

Ms. Michele Baker, County Administrator, spoke regarding the law surrounding the use of the Penny for Pasco funds, operation and maintenance of a spring training facility and convention center, qualifications for a fourth penny, promotions and marketing, small venue promotions, changing the Performing Arts Center to a convention center to obtain the fourth penny, a major league sports deal would access the fifth penny, and the last two pennies could only be used for operation and maintenance.

The Council and Staff held discussion regarding fourth penny spending; the Board of County Commissioners was not inclined to levy an additional penny without purpose; promotions and marketing would require increased revenue or decreased expenses; the definition of a sports facility; sufficient funding for what the TDC was doing; national level advertising; dredging for additional boat access; trails around the San Antonio hills; the most important factor of a sports facility was that they were publicly owned and operated, operated through a contractor/management entity, and they were promoted to tourists; individual and corporate tourists; increased heads and beds; room night percentages associated with Dick's Tournament of Champions; other Counties benefiting from Dick's Tournament of Champions and the fields at Wiregrass; and incentivizing people to stay in Pasco County.

Chairman Starkey suggested the item be tabled and discussed at a workshop setting.

Ms. Baker spoke regarding incorrect revenue projections. She requested assumptions that the TDC would want built into the terms of occupancy rate and growth in room rates.

Mr. Risola stated people were not staying in Pasco County and if the growth rate was increase by three percent it would not cover the expenses.

Ms. Baker spoke regarding increased promotional expenses, budgeted expenses for this event, changes in promotion allocations, a joint workshop was scheduled to discuss the draft strategic plan with the Board of County Commissioners on March 3rd, the need for more funding, and the hoteliers sharing their forecast with Staff who would create a blended growth rate to be included in the revenue forecast.

Mr. Von Kohorn requested an email be sent from Staff to the hoteliers regarding their forecast.

Mr. Caum stated he would also include a chart referenced by Ms. Baker earlier in the meeting.

Mr. Phethean noted a change three years prior to allocate more promotion and festival funding. He stated there was no need to increase the Tourism Staff.

The item was for information only.

b. Update on Tourism Office's move downstairs - Ed Caum

Mr. Ed Caum, Tourism Manager, stated the Tourism Department's office move was scheduled for April.

The item was for information only.

c. Update Dick's TOC 2014 - Roni Lloyd

Mr. Ed Caum, Tourism Manager, introduced Ms. Roni Lloyd, Sports Marketing Coordinator, who would give a presentation regarding the preliminary numbers for Dick's Tournament of Champions.

Ms. Roni Lloyd, Sports Marketing Coordinator, presented the preliminary findings associated with the Dick's Tournament of Champions. She spoke regarding the economic impact to the Tampa Bay region, the Florida Sports Foundation Grant used for expenses, as the title sponsor Dick's Sporting Goods received the majority of the promotions and marketing, a four percent increased Rights Fee, the number of participating teams (97), post event reports should be received within 60 days, additional expenses for the Pasco County District School Board, additional fields created additional expenses for the Parks and Recreation department, forty percent of the room nights where in Pasco County, support from The Florida Sports Foundation and The Sports Facility Advisory, interest from the Tampa Bay Sports Commission going forward, Staff was building a stronger partnership with the Tampa Bay Sports Commission, increased room nights for other Counties based on partnership opportunities, better working relationships between the NDP and hoteliers to ensure Pasco County hotels were filled first, and renegotiation of the contract would take place as early as spring 2015.

Ms. Cushman asked why some hotels did not work with the NDP.

Ms. Lloyd stated some hoteliers would not negotiate the 24-hour cancellation room block and the 15 percent rebate requested by NDP.

Mr. Ciaccio spoke regarding normal rebate percentage rates, 24-hour cancellations were not a problem for hotels that had waiting lists, non-supporting hotels increased their room rates to benefit from the event, and the NDP's request was higher than industry standards but was not excessive.

Mr. Von Kohorn spoke regarding room rates given to teams, the location of his hotel, amenities in the area, and his hotel's support of the event.

Mr. Ciaccio spoke regarding longer tournaments held in Orlando that afforded participants time to enjoy the area versus a tournament in which participants were at the fields all day with no down time.

Mr. Mulji stated travel time was the main challenge for his hotel. He spoke regarding the lack of rental activity after contracting through Dick's Sporting Goods and the business he lost the prior year due to committed teams cancelling at the last minute.

Chairman Starkey spoke regarding better contract conditions and hotel locations near the fields.

Mr. Ciaccio spoke regarding the Hillsborough County Tampa Sports Commission and Visit Tampa Bay which was funded through the Bed Tax.

The Council and Staff held discussion regarding participation of the Tampa Sports Commission; the current agreement between Pasco County and the NDP; the benefits of the event staying in the Tampa Bay area; a potential political engagement between Pasco County and Tampa Sports Commission; ten hotels in Tampa that benefited from the event; New Tampa residents' desire to have events in other areas; government contracts and allocated funding; Tampa hotels receiving triple room nights and two and half times tax percentages without investing; requests for post event information; the team registration process; funding paid only if and when requested information was received; the inability to budget allocated money to something was a financial consideration not a threat; and the Tampa Sports Commission Board of Directors members.

The item was for information only.

8. Tourism Manager's Report - TD15-027

Mr. Ed Caum, Tourism Manager, noted that Ms. Baker presented a Resolution from the Miami/Dade County Commissioners to the Pasco County Board of Commissioners asking State Legislators to consider reinstating Film in Florida tax incentives. The Board decided to support the request by sending a Resolution to Tallahassee reflecting the business opportunities.

The Board and Staff held discussions regarding a Resolution to present to the Board; that the movie Edward Scissor Hands was filmed in Tampa Bay; and Hillsborough County was working on incentives to bring the director of Edward Scissor Hands back for another project.

Mr. Caum noted that he attended the Visit Florida marketing retreat and would attend the Rally in Tally, Tourism Day in Tallahassee on March 10th, 11th, and 12th. He spoke regarding the County being on track, Visit Florida co-ops used to ensure matched funding, the use of Brand USA which leveraged two dollars for each dollar from Visit Florida, getting Pasco County on the Legislative Agenda, Legislator partnerships, it was a good day when Pasco County initiatives were advanced within the industry directly to

our representatives, Facebook numbers, past and upcoming events, and public relations.

Chairman Starkey stated all TDC members were welcome to attend Tourism Day in Tallahassee.

The item was for information only.

9. Board Member Comments

Councilman Davis noted a contract would be signed in early February to move forward with the Hacienda, a destination and hotel.

Chairman Starkey noted the Board approved RESTORE funds for New Port Richey and the City of Port Richey for the Orange Lake restoration project, Nick's Park, and Sun West.

Councilman Davis spoke regarding Sims Park project.

10. Chairman's Comments

Chairman Starkey introduced Mr. Allen Howell, Metropolitan Planning Planner II.

Mr. Allen Howell, Metropolitan Planning Planner II, spoke regarding northeast Pasco County's involvement with the Grand Fondo bike event which was the beginning of a national circuit that toured the Country, signage, creating a safer environment, and international bicycling promotions.

Chairman Starkey spoke regarding international tourism opportunities. She asked the TDC for input regarding their meeting schedule.

Mr. Caum reviewed the meeting schedule which included scheduled speakers for the February meeting, a joint workshop to be held in March, the spring break schedule, Tourism Week in May, grant presentations scheduled for July, the June, August, and October meetings could be skipped, a budget presentation in September, and the 2016 meeting schedule.

The Council and Staff held discussions regarding meetings cancelled in July; how schedule changes would affect applicants; earlier start times for the TDC meetings; the requirements to hold meetings; and the members who would be available to attend the February 18th meeting.

11. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 12:01 p.m.

TOURIST DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING
JANUARY 14, 2015

(SEAL)

Office of Paula S. O'Neil, Clerk & Comptroller

Prepared by: _____
Tammy Glisson, Records Clerk
Board Records Department