



Tourism Council Development Meeting
May 18, 2017
County Services Building, Room 3024

PRESENT: Chairman Brender, Bruce Skwarlo, Brenda Urias, Frank Cirrincione, George Speake, Don Dougherty, Commissioner Horan in for Commissioner Henley

NOT PRESENT: Mayor Jeff Triplett

A quorum was present

Chairman Brender started meeting at 3:02pm with a moment of silence, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance and introductions

APPROVAL OF JANUARY 19, 2017 MINUTES

Motion: Bruce Skwarlo

Second: Don Dougherty

Vote: Motion passes

APPROVAL OF MARCH 16, 2017 MINUTES

Motion: Bruce Skwarlo

Second: Don Dougherty

Vote: Motion passes

CENTRAL FLORIDA ZOO UPDATE

Stephanie Williams – Director of Education

- Brews Around the Zoo (April, 2017) sold out with more than 2,000 attendees, 51% came from outside of Seminole County, 50% were within the Zoo's core demographic of 25-44 years of age;
- Hippy-Hop Spring Celebration hosted 2,500 people, 41% from Seminole County, 21% from Volusia, 19% from Orange;
- Three Sunset at the Zoo events have taken place; the event is ongoing;
- May 6th – Partnered with Florida Fish and Wildlife for a Pet Amnesty Day where 84 animals were relinquished and adopted;
- Bear Awareness is this weekend (May 20); the Zoo has launched a campaign to promote spring bear awareness;
- The Zoo is partnering with City of Sanford Community Redevelopment to begin shuttle service from the SunRail station, to the Zoo, to downtown Sanford; free service will be offered June 1 – Labor Day.

Q: When does Bear exhibit open?

A: End of June, 2017

Q: Although financials have improved, can we please see the breakdown of how the Zoo utilizes the TDC grant funds?

A: Yes, will do so for the July Meeting

TOURISM UPDATE

Tricia Setzer – Chief Administrator

- Zoo will present their annual funding request at July TDC meeting. TDC will approve or change the amount requested; the TDC recommendation will then go to the BCC for consideration and vote;
- The recommended budget for 2017/18 will be presented to the TDC at the July 20 meeting;
- Central Florida Sports Commission update: staff reviewing contract and discussing bringing sports in-house. Jason Siegel, ED of CFSC, has met with County leadership to discuss a potential contract proposal that will accommodate both groups. Staff will bring recommendations to TDC.

Q: Where else does sports commission get funding?

A: Funding for the CFSC from Seminole County comes from the tourism budget, which is fully-funded by the tourist development tax. All other Counties that support the CFSC also fund those contracts with TDT dollars except for the City of Orlando, which funds the CFSC through their general fund.

Q: Are we still operating under the original contract?

A: We are still in the bounds of the original contract. It was a three-year contract that permitted the County to terminate at any time.

Q: Would the County like a recommendation from the TDC?

A: Depends on timing of when the proposal, however, we can call a special meeting if the TDC feels they would like to see proposal before it goes before the board.

Commission Horan shared that at any time the TDC can chime in on the relationship between the County and the CFSC. What the county is trying to assess is since the first year is under our belt, is what type of relationship should we have at this point with the sports commission and what is the 'right size' of that partnership. We want to make sure we serve the hotelier community and the economic impact sports makes on our County. We want to make sure we do it in a way that serves all of tourism. The BCC will welcome any input the TDC has.

Q: Can TDC get a copy of the contract?

A: Yes

Q: A lot of movement of staff has occurred at the CFSC. What is the course of action right now?

A: Until the contract finalized, currently minimal number of people are representing Seminole County from the CFSC.

- Marketing RFP closed on May 17, 2017. Tricia Setzer, Meloney Lung, Chairman Gary Brender, George Speake, and Joe Abel will serve on the evaluation committee. They will evaluate and

review all applications, then discuss and interview finalists. The goal is to have the BCC vote on the recommendation of the committee by 2nd BCC meeting in July (7/25).

Q: How many firms responded?

A: 12 – That doesn't mean all 12 applicants have responded to all three services outlined in the RFP; we won't know until we see the applicants.

- Visit Florida funding was cut by \$75 million. Enterprise Florida did not receive as large of a cut, however both will experience impacts. This means that \$2.2 billion in travel spending won't occur and \$225 million in tax revenues will not be collected. This could lead to a trickle-down effect on tourism. Visit Florida cuts don't impact Seminole County directly, but they do impact tourism for the state as a whole.

Gui Cunha – Tourism Manager

- The blog has been a successful; we have seen an increase in website traffic;
- Interjet and Visit Florida FAM dates may change; we are stilling hoping for a FAM in June but it may be moved to August or September;
- 'How to Do Florida' Seminole County episode with Chad Crawford video to air on Fox Sports in July;
- Orlandoattractions.com is partnering with Orland North and will host a feature page on their site for Seminole County;
- Telemundo will be filming an episode in Seminole County about Lake Mary and Sanford tourism later this summer;
- Orlando North is the only destination outside of Orlando that will have its own unique cover in the Orlando tourism guidebook (specific to Seminole County hotels);
- NXT wrestling events are looking at opportunities at Orland Live;
- First Annual National Tourism Week happy hour was hosted in May at Route 46;
- Tourism Service Industry night – brainstorming packages and discounts for service industry workers;
- Working with Lake Mary Shuttle Service to use ground transportation for FAMs, Instameets and other travel-related packages;
- Occupancy number went up in both Feb and March, 2017; we are experiencing the highest occupancy since 2009; ADR also increased.
- Red's April numbers are also showing an increase.

Q: What are typical high months for occupancy?

A: Feb through the end of April, we always dip in summer, but the Sports Complex has supported Seminole County hotels during slower months;

Q: Can we see what days are busiest and what those days look like, since hotels use those reports to help market and advertise?

A: Will include the breakdown at the next meeting and will give a breakdown for sports pre-complex and after the opening of the complex; Red uses a snapshot of 18 hotels in 'hub' zones whereas STR uses all 38 properties.

Q: We we execute an analysis of weekday, weekend numbers. Will help advertising, etc. for hotels.

A: Yes

Q: Do the hoteliers know information about those that stay at the hotels – who they are, why they are here, what they are doing, etc? Do we have surveys, etc. that tell us that?

A: Research Data Services gathered such information over the past year; they surveyed each hotel twice. Food was the #1 reason (dining experience). Tourism now uses Google Analytics to make these determinations.

SPORTS UPDATE

Danny Trosset – Sports Tourism Manager

- Event organizers were at the Soldiers Creek grand opening and were extremely impressed with the facility; the Diamond Girls participated in a scrimmage game;
- We have 20 tournaments scheduled at Soldiers Creek. Memorial Day weekend will host the first tournament;
- Sports Complex: 58 tournaments, more than 148,000 visitors, 11, 337 room nights generated;
- For the next TDC meeting we will put a weekend analysis of pre-complex versus after post-complex room nights, etc;
- Projections were that by 2021 the complex would generate \$25 million in economic impact; that has almost been surpassed in the first year of operation;
- ***Note that ECNL dates have changed: boys will be Dec 31-Jan 2; girls will be Jan 6-8***

PARADISE UPDATE

Kristen Murphy – Account Director

- Launched spring/summer campaign at beginning of April-won't have results until end of July. So far though, the numbers have been positive;
- Instameets have been successful – they have huge potential to reach more people through those that post and their followers.

Q: Can we utilize celebrities in the area who have huge following to post about Seminole County? Suggested Kaka from OCS, but there are contractual issues with using a professional athlete.

George Speake inquired about an email from a Sanford resident who pointed out issues on the website and asked if the issues that he discussed had been changed? According to Gui, they have, and he and Leon had nice discussion about what those were and most of them have been corrected.

OLD BUSINESS: None

NEW BUSINESS: Linda Ponton from the Rivership shared that Rosangela Parker has been an outstanding asset to her company and working with Orlando North has helped her generate additional business. They had 30,000 passengers on the boat in 2016

ANNUAL ETHICS TRAINING – TDC ONLY

Meeting Adjourned at 5:45pm.

