



Tourist Development Council Meeting Minutes
July 21, 2016
County Service Building, Room 3024

IN ATTENDANCE

Theo Hollerbach, Chairman, Commissioner Gary Brender, Vice-Chairman, Commissioner Carlton Henley
Don Dougherty, Bruce Skwarlo, George Speak, Mayor Jeff Triplett

NOT PRESENT

Chipp Frame

A quorum was present

Chairman Hollerbach called the meeting to order at 3:00pm with a moment of silence followed by the Pledge of Allegiance

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion: Bruce Skwarlo made motion to approve May 19, 2016 minutes

Second: Don Dougherty

Vote: Motion passed unanimously

GRANT APPLICATIONS

- Phil Flynn from the Central Florida Zoo requested funding in the amount of \$600,000 for zoo operations, repairs, and renovations. Zoo infrastructure is not keeping pace with visitor demands. Exhibits need to be changed to habitats per AZA recommendations. Boardwalks need to be replaced. Zoo maintenance has been deferred for years; demand for improvements is needed. The zoo hasn't had ability to put aside monies toward capital improvements.
- The Zoo received a \$225,000 TDC grant in 2015

Question: Gary Brender asked how many zoo visitors come generate room nights in the County? According to the proposal, 190,000 visited the Zoo from out-of-state with approximately 118,000 in-state. **Answer:** Phil answered that there is no way to currently track room nights. The zoo has replaced their Point of Sales software to better track visitors and where they are staying \, however this is a recent change and currently there is no data to show as of yet (POS replaced in March).

Question: George Speak asked Phil for the Zoo's project priority list. **Answer:** Phil listed the Habitat renewal, sewage/drainage work, and boardwalk replacement as the current top priorities.

Continued discussion among TDC regarding the total amount of the Zoo request. George Speake suggested the Zoo provide projections or a five-year plan for operations, capital projects and maintenance work. The TDC would prefer not to pull funds from reserves to support grants.

Motion by Bruce Skwarlo to increase Zoo grant from \$225,000 to \$300,000

Seconded by George Speake

Vote called by Chairman. Vote failed 3-4.

Discussion continued regarding Zoo funding.

Motion by Gary Brender to keep the \$225,000 grant intact while also awarding a one-time capital expenditure of \$100,000 for capital improvements at the zoo

Second by Bruce Skwarlo.

Vote called by Chairman. **Passed 5-2**

Support: Gary Brender, Don Dougherty, Theo Hollerbach, Bruce Skwarlo, Jeff Triplett

Opposed: Carlton Henley, George Speake

TOURISM UPDATE

Tricia Setzer: Seminole County Government

- Update on Zika virus and action taken by Seminole County Government to educate residents and tourists regarding mitigation efforts
- The BCC has scheduled a follow-up work session on **August 23, 2016** to discuss Sports Complex bookings and Central Florida Sports Commission performance
- Advertising and marketing contract update: The BCC has asked to extend Paradise Marketing and Advertising contract for one year, to expire in September, 2017 (rather than September, 2016). The purpose of the extension is to provide tourism staff the opportunity to workshop the writing of the next scope of services with the BCC before it goes out to bid

Stephanie Hunicke: Orlando North

- Introduction of Jennifer Durr as new Management Support Specialist
- Working on annual plan. Travel Trade Representative, Rosangela Santiago, is meeting with partners reestablish Seminole County Tourism with partners and attractions so staff can better sell our destination.
- Family reunions have become more popular within the destination based on calls received at the tourism office.
- Recap of Fishing FAM: Smiling Bison, Shula's 347 and a few charters donated services for the FAM, guests enjoyed Little Econ and New Smyrna Beach fishing. Overall, a positive FAM.
- Brewery and Foodie FAM scheduled for September 21-23. Goal to involve national and in-state writers.
- Next DOS meeting is **August 31, 2016** at Courtyard by Marriott.
- Save the Date for the Annual Tourism Luncheon: Wednesday, **October 12, 2016** at the Lake Mary Marriot

SPORTS UPDATE

Danny Trosset: Orlando North, Hannah Sedigh: Central Florida Sports Commission

- Introduction of Jason Siegel as new interim-President and CEO of CFSC
- The Sports Complex has been open 60 days.
- There have been some issues with events not meeting the projected room nights and/or field usage. Staff and CFSC have scheduled a **July 27, 2016** meeting to discuss attrition and cancellation policy ideas with General Managers and Directors of Sales from area hotels.

- **NOTE:** Events do not receive grant dollars until room nights are documented. If a hotel or tournament did not contract with CFSC, then it is more difficult for the CFSC to get accurate room night reports.
- A monthly performance report is being compiled to track events. Information may take up to 45 days to compile due to hotel and tournament organizer response time.
- At July 27 meeting staff and CFSC will discuss how events are created and managed, as well as the difference between “newly created tournaments” versus “established tournaments.”
- CFSC will be placing bids on the 2019-2022 NCAA Division 2 and 3 Tennis Championships
- ASA National and Regional events for 2017; Southern Regional Youth under 14 events as well can be held at the new Soldier’s Creek venue once it is open.
- YTD room nights: 8445 *Bruce Skwarlo asked what effect the new Lake Nona Tennis Complex will have on local NCAA tournaments. Hannah said that USTA has committed to bringing certain smaller events to Sanlando. Will guide smaller events to the Sanlando complex since they have a great working relationship with Central Florida and want to keep these events in the area. As far as the soccer contingency, the Orlando City men’s team and their men’s B team and the Academy will be moving to the Lake Nona complex, but the Ladies’ Team, the Orlando Pride, will continue to remain in Seminole County at Sylvan Lake Park. The youth teams will continue to play at the Orlando City Youth fields out on Markham Road.*

MARKETING AND ADVERTISING UPDATE

Mary Jane Kolassa: Paradise

- Presented quick report re. public relations and press reports that have gone out this year: baseball press releases, kid friendly things to do, the brewery scene
- New technological advances in how we can reach those flying into the area with television spots. More directed and specific
- Brewery FAM in September: Visit Florida would like to partner to bring international writers from the UK and Germany, as well as national writers. Better possibilities to expand reach about our destination with partnership with Visit Florida.

HOTEL OCCUPANCY

Red McCullough

- Occupancy rate at 79%
- June ADR up \$5.44 to 96.77
- Looking for sports complex to show higher occupancy in the mid 80%’s in the Spring/Summer

OLD BUSINESS

- None

NEW BUSINESS

- Sanford Brewing Company opening in one month
- The Willow Tree is celebrating 15 years on August 1, 2016

OTHER REMARKS

George Speake would like the Central Florida Zoo to provide a more detailed breakdown of their expenses and costs. Possibly meet prior to grant discussion to review their budget and business plan. Need a year-to-year breakdown that shows numbers. Need to have more accountability in their approach to receive funding.

Chairman Hollerbach adjourned the meeting at 5:15pm