



**Tourism Development Council Meeting**  
**May 17, 2018**  
**CBS, Room 3024**

Meeting called to order by Chairman Skwarlo at 3:04pm

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Bruce Skwarlo, Brenda Urias, Commissioner Henley, Gary Brender, Don Dougherty, George Speak

**NOT PRESENT:** Mayor Triplett, Mary Sue Weinaug, Frank Cirrincione

***A quorum was present.***

Invocation  
Pledge of Allegiance  
Introductions

**APPROVAL OF MARCH 2018 TDC MINUTES**

**Motion:** Gary Brender

**Second:** Don Dougherty

**Vote:** Unanimous

**HANDS ONLY CPR TRAINING PRESENTATION:**

**Paula Thompson, *Seminole County Fire Department PIO***

- CPR alliance with firefighters, hospitals and cities to promote Hands Only CPR training;
- Thousands trained since program inception;
- Would like to get local businesses involved in order to build community-wide support;
- In search of a venue to host 3,000-4,000 people (in shifts) on Saturday, September 29, 2018;
- This is a free program; a certificate of completion is awarded upon completion of the training session, but not a CPR card, however this training is equally as effective as a full CPR program;

**ACTION: Tricia will work with Paula to send emails to DOS, GMs, and larger ONSC venues with venue requirements, date of event, etc.**

**ANNUAL ZOO REQUEST FOR FUNDING PRESENTATION:**

**Charles Davis, *Board Chairman***

**Dino Ferri, *CEO-Central Florida Zoo***

- \$550,000 funding request for FY 2018-19;
- Project list for 2018-19 is \$559,518
- Most of the Zoo's current revenue base is generated from gate collections;

- Guests are asked when they purchase tickets where they are from, where they are staying;
- Data collected is used for some targeted marketing efforts

**Question:** Do you ask people what hotel they are staying in?

**Answer:** We track when they show us their key card from the hotel

- TDC dollars have supported projects such as boardwalk repairs and maintenance and a new event deck;
- The Zoo partnered with SunRail and the City of Sanford on “Choo Choo to the Zoo” in 2017. More than 1,000 people utilized this service. The Zoo also had a wrapped van at the station that promotes the Zoo and transports guests;
- Sonny’s BBQ is now the concessionaire which has increased business by three times what was estimated. Sonny’s supplies the labor which was previously managed by the Zoo;

**Comments from public:**

- Rich Maladecki, CFHLA President: The Zoo has requested nearly double the funding awarded for FY 2017-18. Mr. Maladecki is concerned with the validity of the increase when other attractions and venues draw visitors to this destination. Has the Zoo worked with or discussed strategic planning with Seminole County Tourism. Maybe they can work together to market the zoo.

**Discussion:**

The Zoo has requested a 72% increase (2017-18 funding: \$325,000).

Commissioner Henley stated he would not support an increase. The Zoo is not owned by the County and, by increasing funding support, the Zoo is putting more ownership on the County and the TDC.

Charles Davis stated that the Zoo has complied with all the requests for information that the TDC has made over the years, whether it be for more-detailed financials, room night tracking, how TDC dollars are utilized, marketing dollars, etc. He also stated that the Zoo has not requested anything about \$550k over the previous two years.

Don Dougherty stated that it is difficult to agree to fund the Zoo with a higher dollar amount, when TDC distributions are based on room nights, and the Zoo only brought in 157.

Tricia Johnson clarified funding history: 2016-17 budget year the TDC recommended \$325,000. The Board approved \$225,000 with a mid-year review, and approved an additional \$100,000 that was moved from reserves. The \$225,000 could be used for anything the zoo needed, but that \$100,000 was to be used only for capital projects.

**Question:** What is the breakdown of the maintenance and repair line item?

**Answer:** This is for unplanned maintenance – almost reserves for maintenance issues that arise. George Speake suggested instead of calculating that as part of the fund request, that they put that dollar amount towards another project, and use their own monies to fund maintenance and upkeep. It shouldn’t be up to the TDC to allow the zoo to get up to par or AZA requirements.

The TDC discussed whether it would make sense for the Zoo to be funded with an annual progression plan/percentage increase based on the percentage increase in TDT collections annually.

Based on 2016-17 TDT collections, the amount the zoo would be funded for this fiscal year would be \$324,000.

Commissioner Brender believes funding should come down to heads-in-beds, as this is how TDT dollars are generated, and the Zoo does not generate enough to justify an increase. However, the TDC is responsible for developing tourism in the County, and Zoo funding benefits that development. Although the Zoo is not funded via the County's General Fund, but through TDT, is \$550k really so much that we cannot support an attraction? The more the County limits the expansion or improvements of the Zoo, the less it will generate for the County. When the City of Lake Mary build the Events Center, they did not increase the budget since it was considered an improvement. This is how the TDC should view the Zoo request. It is unfair to judge the Zoo based on heads-in-beds, since most visitors are here for other reasons, not just to go to the zoo.

Chairman Skwarlo said it is difficult to promote the Zoo when hotels do not have adequate information packets, such as rack brochures. Dino shared that the Zoo will utilize \$141,000 of the grant request to create rack-cards to market the attraction.

George Speake would like to see the Zoo present at every TDC meeting to give updates on progress and where TDT dollars are allocated.

Brenda Urias mentions that she is the TDC representative on the Zoo BOD. She believes there is value to supporting the Zoo, but should the number be between \$325K and \$550k?

Dino shared that the Zoo currently spends approximately 3% of their general budget, about \$131,000, on marketing, and the \$141,000 would be in addition to the current \$131k that is budgeted.

**Question:** Are your marketing dollars going to increase? Are you going to have online sales ability?

**Answer:** Yes the marketing dollars are going up, and the Zoo is asking for the TDC to supplement what is currently budgeted. And when the new website is up and running the Zoo will include online ticket sales. That will assist with visitor tracking.

**Motion** to fund zoo at \$325,000

**Second:** None

**Motion dies**

**Motion** to fund zoo at \$425,000

**Second:** Gary Brender

**Vote:** 2-4 against. Motion does not pass

Attorney Paul Chipok said that if you use the increase in TDT revenues over past years, and use that increase of 9%, you would be considering a grant of appx. \$355,000.

**Question:** Can the Zoo return to the TDC to request additional funding a later date if they don't get the full amount they are requesting today?

**Answer:** Yes, but that additional request would go before the BCC, just as this request will go before the board for a vote.

**Question:** What is more important to the zoo: marketing dollars or repair dollars?

**Answer:** Marketing is more important

**Motion** to fund zoo at 9% increase to \$355,000

**Second:** Gary Brender

**Vote:** 4-2 in favor. Motion passes

Charles Davis said that the TDC is welcome to contact either himself or Dino or tourism staff with any questions.

Chairman Skwarlo said that the hotels need to have rack brochures for the Zoo and ZoomAir.

#### **TOURISM UPDATE:**

##### **Tricia Johnson, *Chief Administrator***

- Ethics training video will meet the requirements for everyone on the TDC board;
- TDC members are invited to attend the annual training held in the BCC chambers in December. It is a 4 hour class;
- Paul reminded the TDC and Tourism staff to blind copy distribution lists so a reply won't be seen by everyone;
- Staff can no longer include the STR report in the TDC booklet per contract. Gui will continue to put together an occupancy report that meets the needs of the TDC.

**ACTION: Tricia will send Brenda and Mary Sue the video.**

**ACTION: Gui will collate an occupancy report on a monthly basis and distribute to the DOS and GMs**

##### **Gui Cunha, *Tourism Manager***

- Tourism is now utilizing Chute, a program that consolidates content such as video, photos, etc., into a library. Chute also allows for the tracking of social media posts through the use of #. Gui is working with County staff to potentially utilize Chute through the EOC during activation. This is a cloud-based program, not software;
- We have partnered with Telemundo for the World Cup. 15-second video will run during specific games. Goal is to tap into the Hispanic market primarily in Tampa;
- We are pursuing an opportunity with Raw Travel TV episode-similar to the Chad Crawford episode of 'How to do Florida.' More to come at the next TDC meeting;
- Occupancy for February, 2018 increased by 6.6 %. It increased by 11.8% in March, 2018. RevPar increased as well, with weekdays at 79.4% and weekends at 84%;
- When comparing weekend versus weekdays, the weekend typically drive ADR, however the difference between weekend;
- Big key point: when talking weekend versus weekday, usually the weekend drives the dollars for ADR, however, the monetary difference between weekday versus weekend was less than \$1, so big groups are still paying at the high ADR.

**Rosangela Parker, *Travel Trade Representative***

- FADMO trip recap – reviewed posted on travel sites are utilized more-and-more as marketing and tools for visitors to make travel decisions. DMOs need to rethink website functionality and what the purpose of a website is for travelers. Voice search is becoming more-popular and it should be considered as content is developed. Storytelling is another focus towards generating website traffic, as stories are relatable and not generic;
- FAMS: Rosangela hosted two FAMS – Via Air and Allegiant travel agents. Weather did impact some of the planned stops, but the partners were very accommodating. Via Air is a local, homegrown business (Maitland). It currently serves four markets: Charlotte, Montgomery, Mobile, Jackson, MS and two cities in West VA.

**SPORTS UPDATE:**

**Danny Trosset, *Sports Tourism Manager***

\*Report is in the booklet TDC members received. Due to time constraints, if you have any questions, please contact Danny and he will be happy to answer them\*

**PARADISE UPDATE:**

**Kristen Murphy, *Account Manager***  
**MJ Kolassa, *PR***

- The new leisure website is live. It is much more content driven than before and utilizes Trip Advisor as a tool for visitors to plan their stay, book hotels, attractions, etc;
- Public Relations distributed five press released since the March TDC meeting;
- Local drive and National media are considering Wekiva Island stories, and the destination has received interest from Edible Orlando and Reader's Digest.

**ACTION: MJ to send travel pod cast out to TDC members**

**EVOK UPDATE:**

**Brian Wilder, *Social Media***  
**Holly Fuller, *Social Media***

- Evok commenced with management of Social Media in March, this includes the Play Orlando North social platforms;
- Visits from social platforms to the Tourism Website have increased more than 190% - big numbers in March due to February being 'dark' with the transition from Paradise to Evok;
- Instagram is a good platform for Seminole County since as it is very visual;
- Once Evok has full budget and full management capabilities of all social platforms, the numbers will continue to increase.

**Question:** Describe “paid” social media.

**Answer:** We don’t pay for followers or “likes.” When a follower “likes” a page that was paid for through a media buy or promoted post is the benefit of paid social media.

**Question:** What is current social media budget?

**Answer:** Current budget now is \$2k per month

**OLD BUSINESS:**

- The BCC presented a proclamation for National Tourism Week (May 7-12) and also presented a resolution in honor of the late Red McCullough at the May 8 BCC meeting. Red’s family accepted the resolution in his honor.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

- Tourism should work with City of Sanford to help promote their new businesses and attractions;
- The Visitor Guide will be updated at the beginning of the next fiscal year, 10/1/18. Tourism has found that the traditional hard-copy guides are not as popular and more-expensive to update annually, therefore an electronic guide is the continued priority.
- The website moved to Trip Advisor because updating food/beverage locations in a separate guide is challenging.
- George Speake shared that the terminal expansion has broken ground.

***Meeting adjourned 5:18 pm***



**Tourist Development Council Meeting**  
**July 19, 2018**  
**CSB, room 3024**

**Revisions to May 2018 Minutes**

- *Page 5 of booklet, within discussion of Zoo grant- typo in paragraph 3: should be above not about*
- *Page 6 of booklet-paragraph 3: Commission Brender believes funding should NOT come down to heads-in-beds.*
- *Page 6 of booklet-paragraph 4: a portion of the \$141,000 will go towards new Zoo rack brochures(not the entire \$141,000)*
- *Page 6 of -paragraph 7: Zoo marketing is total request of \$141,00 NOT a combined of \$141,000 plus \$131,000*