

**MINUTES OF MEETING
TOURIST DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL
ST. JOHNS COUNTY, FLORIDA
DECEMBER 5, 2011
(1:30 P.M.)**

Proceedings of a regular meeting of the Tourist Development Council of St. Johns County, Florida, held in the auditorium at the County Administration Building, 500 San Sebastian View, St. Augustine, Florida.

Present: J. Ken Bryan, BCC Representative
Joseph Boles, City of St. Augustine Representative
Richard O'Brien, City of St. Augustine Beach Representative
Scott M. Bartosch, District 3
Jeffrey Mayers, District 4
Fred E. Cozby, District 4
John B. Yanni, District 5
Pam Halterman, Deputy Clerk

Absent: Jack Peter and Bill Hughes

Also present: Glenn Hastings, Carrie Horn, and Regina Ross, Assistant County Attorney

(12/05/11 - 1 - 1:34 p.m.)

1. CALL TO ORDER

Scott Bartosch called the meeting to order.

(12/05/11 - 1 - 1:35 p.m.)

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Jeffrey Mayers led the Pledge of Allegiance.

(12/05/11 - 1 - 1:35 p.m.)

3. ROLL CALL

Carrie Horn called the roll and stated that Jack Peter and Bill Hughes would not be in attendance.

(12/05/11 - 1 - 1:35 p.m.)

4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Hastings asked that the Executive Director's position description be added to the agenda and placed in after the financial reports.

(1:35 p.m.) Motion by Bryan, seconded by Yanni, carried 7/0, with Peter and Hughes absent, to approve the change to the agenda.

(1:36 p.m.) Motion by O'Brien, seconded by Boles, carried 7/0, with Peter and Hughes absent, to approve the changed Agenda.

(12/05/11 - 2 - 1:37 p.m.)

5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion by Boles, seconded by O'Brien, carried 7/0, with Peter and Hughes absent, to approve the minutes for the October 17, 2011, meeting.

(12/05/11 - 2 - 1:37 p.m.)

6. PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no public comments.

(12/05/11 - 2 - 1:37 p.m.)

7. DESTINATION & MARKETING CATEGORY

a. VCB Monthly Report - Richard Goldman

Richard Goldman spoke about the Destination & Marketing Category and offered the following points about the monthly report:

- Bed tax collections up 4% YTD, before the 4th penny
- October numbers were up across the board except for supply
- Occupancy was up and were in the middle of the pack
- ADR and REVPAR up over 7% for the past 12 months
- ADR had the second highest percent increase of all competitive sets
- Performance for unique visits to the website exceeded the past four years, YTD remained off for the year at 8%
- Telemarketing leads were up 8% compared to target goals
- Communications were over the top with story production at 284% higher than the previous year

(1:42 p.m.) Goldman noted some events they had assisted with:

- Assisted with promotion of the first annual Columbia-St. Augustine Marathon weekend
- Helped to represent St. Johns County Golf Resorts, golf courses, hotels and attractions, at the Int'l Golf Travel Market
- Conducted 16 meeting planner sites & tours in the month of November
- Participated in the Visit Florida marketing summit
- Actively facilitating with the City of St. Augustine and tourism industry collaboration in the improvements to the downtown Visitor Information Center
- Univision First Thanksgiving episode played to 9 million households
- Travel Channel in town to shoot an episode on "Park Secrets" which focused on Anastasia State Park
- Launching the VCB's Ponce 500 initiative
- Working with St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce to heighten awareness and the importance of Nights of Lights to local businesses
- Participating in informal meetings with the new Arts, Cultural & Heritage Executive Director, Andy Witt

Goldman distributed an advertisement to the Council concerning the Group & Meeting Guide which they had published.

(12/05/11 - 2 - 1:51 p.m.)

8. ARTS, CULTURAL & HERITAGE CATEGORY

a. St. Johns Cultural Council Marketing Plan and Budget - Andy Witt

Hastings introduced Andrew Witt as the new Executive Director of the St. Johns County Cultural Council.

(1:51 p.m.) Witt offered a brief history of himself and pointed out future plans for the Visitors and Convention Bureau. He noted that one issue he planned to delve into involved the new grants program. In addition to the program goals, he voiced that he would also include generating incremental overnight stays in paid accommodations, increase incremental economic activity within St. Johns County, and grow the Arts and Cultural industry in quality and quantity for a comprehensive business and marketing strategy. He pointed out that he would revise the grant program to reflect and comply with TDC policies and Florida Statutes. He reviewed information in regards to the research and analysis plans. He said he would survey the Board of County Commissioners, the Tourist Development Council, and the St. Johns Chamber of Commerce to determine expectations, and hospitality industry relationships. He pointed out that it was important to create lodging packages and plans for the cultural industry. He summarized the current Tourist Development Council and the Arts, Cultural, and Heritage event survey documents.

(2:02 p.m.) Witt offered the following points to the Council:

- Complete a very significant zip code analysis
- Review and evaluate 2012 Arts, Cultural, & Heritage Grant award program
- Evaluate potential of a combined ACH constituency contact data base
- Develop media (electronic, print, social networking) relationships and partnerships
- Provide content other than specific event information
- Develop ACH video and print library
- Lay groundwork for technical assistance, media relations, lodging & restaurant partnerships, shared services, and grant guideline workshop to be developed and included in the Strategic Plan
- Revise guidelines and processes as determined by results of research, evaluation, and TDC guidance
- Establish linkages and information sharing with other TDC initiatives
- Begin specific guideline development for Viva Florida 500th and 450th

(2:10 p.m.) Witt said he was proud to be in St. Johns County and asked that the Council recommend approval of the proposed budget. In response to an inquiry from Yanni, he reviewed the proposed budget numbers for the Council.

(2:16 p.m.) Yanni questioned whether Witt had what he needed in his budget to begin his plan. Witt voiced that he had been in the non-profit arts world for over twenty-five years and said he had much confidence that he could make things work. Yanni said he was uncomfortable leaving grant funds unspoken for due to the size of the amount which was \$1.5 million. Hastings advised that the BCC and TDC had approved the budget. He noted that the reserves had been placed in individual line items of the reserve budget. Discussion ensued between Council Members regarding the \$1.5 million in the Category II budget. Yanni stated that the intent of the \$1.069 million was to be used by the Cultural Council and not something else. Bartosch explained that the funds could not leave the Category II budget. Yanni reiterated that it was the intention that the funds be returned to the Cultural Council because it was needed in the forward operations. Hastings clarified that the \$1.5 million titled Capital Outlay Reserve under FY2012 was the total for the figures in the column created under the *12/5 amend* title in the budget. He stated that unspent funds would rollover to become the beginning balance for the next fiscal year. Discussion ensued with Hastings detailing the budget numbers for the Council. After clarification by Hastings, Yanni voiced that he was satisfied.

(2:22 p.m.) **Motion by Yanni to approve the proposed budget amendment.**

(2:22 p.m.) O'Brien mentioned the web marketing cost of \$85,000, and asked whether the proposed cost involved the initial design of the website and the first years' sponsor marketing searches. Witt expressed that the current website was not adequate to promote the ACH universe that exist in St. Johns County. He advised that it was difficult to create a website for less than \$25,000, which would not include maintenance. O'Brien said the strategy was good and he liked what he had heard, and welcomed Witt to St. Johns County and St. Augustine Beach.

(2:24 p.m.) Bryan spoke about oversight and the budget. He stated that oversight would be highlighted when the Council reviewed the job description later in the meeting.

(2:25 p.m.) Boles welcomed Witt to the County. He questioned whether Witt planned to obtain demographic data information on behalf of the Cultural Council or would it be information gleaned from the VCB. He stated that he did not want to overlap research. Witt communicated that a series of demographic data was available to him from a variety of venues. Boles noted that Witt would be questioned from the community about the \$1.5 million in the budget with only \$450,000 of that amount being distributed. In response to an inquiry from Boles, Witt assured the Council that a fee was not required to apply and receive funding from the TDC. He noted that additional services were available from the Cultural Council which involved exhibition opportunities, etc.

(2:29 p.m.) In response to an inquiry from Boles, Ross explained that the Cultural Council had a variety of services; however, the Council was only providing eight contractual services to market the arts and cultural aspects of St. Johns County for the specific purpose of increasing tourism and bringing people from outside the county to inside the county. She said the other services that the Cultural Council provided were separate and apart from the County. She stated that the only concern would be related to the contractual services that they provided for the County. Witt added that a grant usually represented less than 25% of an organizations' budget which would mean that the organization would need to generate the 75% difference.

(2:31 p.m.) Bartosch stated that he was operating under the assumption that they would be paid \$145,000 which would be spent enhancing the knowledge of people outside the area to what was available in St. Johns County. He questioned whether it would include individual festivals and venues or would it be generic advertising. Witt stated that they would do their best to market both individual events and St. Johns County as a cultural tourism destination. Bartosch pointed out that the Arts & Crafts Festival had given away a prize but required a zip code for demographic data collection in order to be in the drawing.

(2:33 p.m.) Motion reiterated by Yanni, seconded by Cozby, carried 7/0, with Peter and Hughes absent, to recommend approval of the budget presented by Witt to the Board of County Commissioners.

Witt thanked the Council Members and said he looked forward to working with the Council.

(2:34 p.m.) Fred Cozby pointed out that he had missed a public comment card for Item #7 on the agenda. He called the speaker to the podium in order to speak.

(2:34 p.m.) Robert Samuels, 110 Mickler Blvd, representative of the St. Augustine Beach Civic Association, spoke about Item #7 concerning funds of \$600,000 being spent which were not directly grant related. He suggested that the Cultural Council and the VCB attempt to work together and not duplicate processes or advertising. He voiced that the budget was exceedingly high and asked that the budget be reviewed again.

(12/05/11 - 5 - 2: 37 p.m.)

9. LEISURE & RECREATION CATEGORY - Wil Smith

a. Funding request - Ancient City Road Runners/Matanzas 5K & Fun Run

Wil Smith, Interim Director of Parks and Recreation, stated that Staff had reviewed the request and the Recreation Advisory Board unanimously recommended approval for the requested funding. Yanni agreed that the Matanzas Run was a good cause, had name recognition, and he would recommend approval. Discussion ensued between Hastings and Boles regarding the funding request. Bryan suggested that the request should be included in the annual budget. Smith noted that with the state of the economy they were seeing less team numbers but agreed that the event be included in the annual budget. He stated that Triple Crown did give money to the local high schools. Mayers questioned whether handling the event in such a way could cause a precedence or become the norm. He suggested that a deadline be set for the Category applications. Yanni noted that the Matanzas Run had proven themselves for funding. Boles stated that any event that had repeated over several years in the City of St. Augustine should be signed as a partner with the City which placed them on the main calendar, etc. Bartosch asked Hastings to set operating procedures to be reviewed by the TDC in February or March 2012. Cozby questioned whether the \$1,500 for marketing and promotions, and \$2,500 for t-shirts would be proper purchases. Ross noted that the funding was appropriate for t-shirts because they promoted the event. She advised that the distribution of funds remained under the direction of the Council. Smith pointed out that the SJC and TDC logo were printed on the shirts. In response to an inquiry, he noted that the registration fee was \$15.00 per participant for the Matanzas Run.

(2:52 p.m.) **Motion by Yanni, seconded by Boles, carried 7/0, with Peter and Hughes absent, to recommend the funding approval for Ancient City Road Runners.**

Note: Item #10b was heard prior to #10a.

(12/05/11 - 5 - 2:53 p.m.)

10. ADMIN & SPECIAL USES CATEGORY - Glenn Hastings

b. Budget Amendment in FY 2012 Recreation & Leisure Budget

Hastings noted that the first item had been handled earlier that day (see motion page 4). He stated that he would give a brief refresher on how the budget was built.

(2:53 p.m.) Hastings reviewed the budget and estimates of new revenue and FY2011 expenditures. He noted that the numbers had not been audited; however, the numbers were accurate. He offered details of the 13th month review for FY2011 Tourist Development Tax Collections. He stated that they would be watching the budget carefully once March came which involved new revenue and expenses from FY2011. In response to an inquiry from Boles, Hastings explained that they would have a budget revenue shortfall of approximately 8%. He reiterated that staff would be watching the numbers closely as spring arrived. In response to an inquiry from Yanni, he explained staff's plans regarding the budget shortfall to the Council. He stated that expected collections were lower than actual collections. Mayers questioned whether a re-forecast should be completed on the budget. Yanni agreed with Mayers. Hastings affirmed that staff was aware of the issue, would continue to monitor, and were making budget adjustments. He pointed out that the Council received the cash flow sheet which showed the position at the end of any given month. Bartosch voiced that he was not comfortable with delaying adjustments until March. He stated that he did not want a new budget but wanted to know what would not be spent from the budget until a collection figure was available. Hastings affirmed that they were monitoring and would not be caught short in March. He voiced that they would not be caught in a bind

in regards to the budget. Goldman affirmed that he would provide a re-forecast to the Council at the next meeting.

(3:08 p.m.) Hastings directed attention to the Council's agenda packet, and noted that the financial information reports were in the packet for their review.

(12/05/11 - 6 - 3:08 p.m.)

11. MONTHLY FINANCIAL REPORTS

- Local Option Tourist Development Tax YTD
- Cash Flow
- Departmental YTD Expenditures
- Visitor Related Economic Activity

a. Review & Recommend TDC Board Member Applications

Hastings thanked Yanni for his service to the Council and noted that Yanni did not wish to be re-appointed on the Tourist Development Council. He pointed out that Jack Peter's term was also expiring; however, Peter had asked to be reappointed to the TDC. Discussion ensued between Hastings and Council Members regarding the applications, districts, available seats, and advertising of the Council positions. Yanni voiced that he felt he was a St. Augustine representative, and suggested that his position remain as a St. Augustine resident to uphold the tradition.

(3:14 p.m.) **Motion by Bryan, seconded by O'Brien, failed 3/4, with Yanni, Mayers, Bartosch, and Cozby dissenting, and with Peter and Hughes absent, to recommend appointment of Lindsey Davis for the accommodation seat on the TDC.**

(3:17 p.m.) **Motion by Cozby, seconded by Yanni, carried 5/2, with Bryan and O'Brien dissenting, and with Peter and Hughes absent, to recommend appointment of Irving Kass to the accommodation seat on the TDC.**

Discussion ensued between Council Members and staff regarding types of accommodation seats to fill the vacancy.

(3:19 p.m.) **Motion by Mayers, seconded by Boles, carried 7/0, with Peter and Hughes absent, to recommend the re-appointment of Jack Peter for the non-accommodation seat on the TDC.**

(12/05/11 - 6 - 3:22 p.m.)

MAJOR DUTIES OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Bryan reviewed the Executive Director of the Tourism Development and Cultural Events job description and summary. Discussion ensued between Hastings and the Council Members regarding items in the Major Duties element of the document provided to the Council. Bartosch questioned Hastings' involvement in the Amphitheatre and Ponte Vedra Concert Hall venues. Hastings stated that his involvement would continue short-term for a year at the most. Bryan pointed out that a transitional timeline was occurring to assure a smooth change. Hastings voiced that his position involving the Amphitheatre and Ponte Vedra Concert Hall was more of a mentoring position. After much discussion between Council Members and staff, Bartosch suggested that the Executive Director's position, based on the submitted document, was not a full-time position. Bryan pointed out that the Consultant hired by the County had completed an interview and evaluation of Hastings' position and had determined that the position was fulltime. Mayers stated that the document had much to digest and should be reviewed when time allowed. Bryan explained that it was difficult to evaluate the document because the County Administrator directed other duties and functions not listed for Hastings to handle, making the position full time. He

voiced that he was not opposed to re-evaluating the document and returning to the Council in January. In reference to the job description document, Bartosch questioned whether a clerical worker could handle the position. Cozby asked that the document be emailed to the Council in order to make corrections and return to staff with changes.

Boles left the meeting at 3:52 p.m.

(3:52 p.m.) In response to an inquiry from O'Brien, Bryan stated that Wanchick was open to suggestions from the Council concerning Hastings' position; although, Wanchick would have the final say as County Administrator. O'Brien stated that Hastings' position should be based on the needs of the TDC; whereas the job description should be formulated also on the needs of the TDC. He said that the Council might not have the luxury of Hastings' expertise; however, the position could be part time because of the shared duties and those changes should be considered at the next meeting. Hastings said he was happy that the conversation happened which helped clarify his position. He noted that the next TDC meeting would be held on January 23, 2012.

(12/05/11 - 7 - 3:55 p.m.)

12. COMMENTS BY MEMBERS

Mayers said it had been a pleasure working with Yanni and wished everyone a happy holiday.

(3:55 p.m.) Yanni said it had been a pleasure working with the Council. He noted that the first TDC budget consisted of \$600,000; however, the current budget was \$6.5 million. He offered a history of the TDC and how the budget had grown over that time. He suggested that people honor the intent of the voters and the tourism industry who had imposed a tax upon themselves with the start of the 4th penny. He pointed out that overhead needed to be carefully watched because it could get out of hand quickly. He stated that the TDC policy manual should be brought up to date.

(4:03 p.m.) Cozby thanked Yanni for his service to the TDC. He wished everyone a wonderful holiday.

(4:03 p.m.) Bryan provided a brochure highlighting a visit to St. Augustine. He thanked Yanni for his service and insight on the TDC. He voiced happy holidays to everyone.

(4:04 p.m.) O'Brien thanked Yanni for his service on the TDC. He pointed out that the Civic Association had hosted Surf Illumination and were looking forward to the New Years' Eve chili cook-off and fireworks. He wished all a Merry Christmas and happy holidays.

(4:05 p.m.) Bartosch wished everyone a safe and happy holiday season.

(12/05/11 - 7 - 4:06 p.m.)

13. ADJOURN

With there being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting adjourned at 4:06 p.m.

Approved _____, 2011

TOURIST DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL
OF ST. JOHNS COUNTY, FLORIDA

By: _____
Jack Peter, Chair

ATTEST: CHERYL STRICKLAND, CLERK

By: _____
Deputy Clerk