

TDC Board of Directors
September 1, 2016
Tiger Point Community Center, Gulf Breeze, FL

Board Members Present:

Vernon Compton (Chairman)
Alan Lowery
Norm Crowder
April Sarver
Liz Horton
Rob Williamson

Attendees:

Julie Morgan
Nicole Dees
Scott Rayner
Judd Smith
Donna Tucker
Tiffany Sullivan
Rhett Fendley
Lee Parker

Sharon Pitts
JoAnn Sisson
Rudy Webb
Tom Merrick
Cedar Hames
Larry Meador
Chris LeBlanc
Stewart Hill

Perry Henry
Nina Zapala
Ashten Ross
Don Davis
Meredith South
Dave Barnette
W. Ira Patrick
Shannon Rice

The meeting was called to order by Compton at 8:39 a.m.

- 1) First on the agenda was review of the agenda.

Horton moved approval of the agenda as presented. Crowder seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Second on the agenda was the approval of the August 4, 2016 minutes.

Crowder moved approval of the August 4, 2016 minutes. Horton seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

- 2) Abstain from Vote/CE Form 8B- Vernon Compton

Compton said in the last meeting he abstained from voting on the agenda item: Connecting Nature and Commerce/Developing Regional Trail Opportunities because he is involved with a leadership role and helped organized the workshop. He read aloud the abstention form (CE Form 8B) to include with the minutes.

Julie Morgan (Tourism Development Director) said Roy Andrews (County Attorney) will speak at the next Board of Directors meeting to give the board guidance on the CE Form 8B.

- 3) Local Event/Marketing Grant Applications - Nicole Dees (Tourism Information Specialist)

- Lagerheads on the Gulf - Southeastern Volleyball Tournament Championship and 3 AVP Tour events on Navarre Beach - Request: \$5,000.00.

Dees said this is a first event request by Lagerheads on the Gulf for the county. Morgan said this event and was not planned during the open cycle timeline. She said Smith has been working with Lagerheads on the Gulf and has been putting on tournaments for quite some time. Morgan said once she found out about these events and how big of a following Smith has, she said the TDC needs to work with and help him. She said he agreed and she asked him to fill out the request. Morgan said Smith will be contracting to get the professional tour to the county, which is the professional series, next spring.

Scott Rayner, owner of Lagerheads on the Gulf, said this happened organically. He said Judd Smith, Professional Beach Volleyball Player and founder of Bulldog Beach Volleyball Club, has a

big local and professional following. Rayner said Smith holds clinics and teaches area youth. He said Smith started these “back-door” events which have grown from 20 – 50 people to 200 – 300 people showing up for events that Smith advertises on his Facebook account. Rayner said these events are putting Navarre on the map for volleyball. He said Bulldog Beach in Navarre was recently approved for the Southeastern Volleyball Tour Championships, sponsored by McGuire’s Irish Pub of Destin and Pensacola. Rayner said the request to the TDC is for \$5,000.00 to market and advertise 4 events. He said he will spend \$1,000.00 of the grant on marketing and advertising the upcoming Southeastern Volleyball Championship Tour and expects 300 – 400 people for the event.

Rayner said he and Smith have been working for approximately 2 years to get the AVP (Association of Volleyball Professionals) tour to Navarre. He said all of the Olympic beach volleyball players are part of AVP. Rayner said AVP scouted the area looking at the sand, nets, parking and infrastructure. He said he and Smith have to successfully host 3 minor league events, next year, to be awarded a 3 year contract for a main event. Rayner said the 3 minor league events will require a special event permit because he expects at least 1,000 people for each event. He said a main event can draw 8,000 – 10,000 people.

Sarver said Okaloosa County has done a good job with Emerald Coast Volley Ball League and creating a significant economic impact and she would love to see something similar here. She asked Rayner about market advertising. Rayner said he was not doing any out of market advertising until recently.

Morgan said once she explained to Rayner that she is here to help him, he was on board. Rayner said if he and Smith can bring in 200- 300 local people with Facebook posts then with the help of marketing and advertising the event size could easily double.

Crowder asked if the intended use for the funds meets the TDC qualifications. Morgan said yes.

Williamson said he loves the idea of the event and has been hoping the county could have something like this for a while. He said he is in support of the grant but suggests the application be reviewed. Williamson said it is a great event to bring forward and he has no doubt that it will be a success. Morgan said she and Meredith South sat down with Rayner and Smith when the application was completed for accuracy. Williamson said it is important to get expectations right on the front end so that there are no complications.

Williamson moved approval. Sarver seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

- Southern Raceway - Southern 100 - Request: \$5,000.

Dees said Southern Raceway applied with the TDC last year, in the 2015 grant cycle. She said she did not receive the requested post event report for 2015. Dees said she notified Southern Raceway of the 2016 open grant cycle that ran from April 1st through May 31st, on several occasions. She said this year Southern Raceway’s application was submitted on July 28, 2016 and requests \$5,000.00.

Compton said this is another great event for the county. He said this is an event that has come to the TDC before but Southern Raceway did not apply during the open cycle for yearly grants.

Williamson asked Dees if Southern Raceway supplied a reason as to why they were unable to meet the deadline. Dees said no. Williamson said the TDC cannot continue to allow programs to consistently request funding outside of the open cycle and maintain the integrity of the grant program. He said he agrees with Compton that this is a great event and an opportunity for

growth for the county. Williamson said his recommendation is to let Southern Raceway know that if they do not make the deadline again, the TDC will not recommend funding. He said he believes in the growth segment potential of this event and wants the event organizer to come before the board and give an idea of what they are going to do and why they could not make the deadline. Williamson said his recommendation will be an approval, pending the event organizer appear before the board to answer questions.

Morgan said she requested the event organizers appear to explain but they are not here. Compton said Dees contacts event organizers repeatedly and offers assistance. There was further discussion about the consequence of recommending funding outside of the open cycle and against policy.

Compton said the TDC wants to work closely with Southern Raceway and wants this to be a successful event. Morgan said the TDC budgeted \$5,000.00 for this event last fiscal year but Southern Raceway never requested reimbursement funding. She said the TDC needs to utilize and maximize every dollar in the budget. Morgan said she appeared before the Board of County Commissioners on June 20th and reiterated that the TDC will not accept grants out of cycle unless it is a new event to the county.

Horton moved the TDC not accept the application from Southern Raceway. Lowery seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

- 4) Presentation of Top 3 Submittals for Ad Agency Contract/Discussion of the presentation and ranking of the firms in response to the RFP.

The following firms gave presentations to the board (in the following order):

- Paradise – Represented by Cedar Hames (CEO and Chief Strategy Officer), Tom Merrick (Chief Creative Officer) and Rudy Webb (VP, Account Services).
- EVOK – Represented by Larry Meador (Founder, Chief Strategy Officer), Perry Henry (Account Manager), Stuart Hill (Strategic Planner), Nina Zapala (Public Relations Strategist), Chris LeBlanc (Executive Creative Director) and Ashten Ross (Interactive Project Manager).
- Davis, South, Barnette & Patrick – Represented by Meredith South (Partner/Client Services), Don Davis (Partner/New Business Development), Dave Barnette (Partner/Co-creative Director) and W. Ira Patrick (Partner/Co-creative Director).

Compton said each firm will have 15 minutes to make a presentation to the board and then there will be a 15 minute question and answer period. Morgan said the Procurement Officer (David “Dave” King) is present and will tally votes at the end of the presentations. Williamson said the goal today is to provide a ranking that will go along with the Tourist Development Director, Staff and Public Information Officer to present to the Board of County Commissioners. Compton said the Board of County Commissioners will make the final decision of the firm that will be selected.

After discussion and ranking, King tallied the votes and announced the firms were ranked as follows:

- **DBSP – 1st**
- **Paradise – 2nd**
- **EVOK – 3rd**

Morgan said King will contact the vendors. Williamson asked King to copy the chairman and Morgan on the email to the vendors.

5) Budget for TDC FY 2016/17- Julie Morgan

Morgan said the only modification to the budget was for item 581-001 Aide to Municipalities in that the TDC Board of Directors recommended \$45,000.00 for the City of Milton Riverwalk. She said the formula used brings the amount allocated to \$34,000.00.

Morgan said item 534-0076, the Bicycle Pedestrian Plan, was \$207,430.00 but now it shows \$184,840.00 in that line because more money has been spent. She said the money is set aside for the Bicycle Pedestrian Plan, goes straight through the grant process and cannot be touched, moved or used elsewhere.

Lowery moved approval to recommend modification of the budget to the county commission. Horton seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

6) Santa Rosa County Chamber/VIC- Donna Tucker

Donna Tucker (President/CEO at Santa Rosa County Chamber of Commerce) said she is here to speak about the funding request that was presented to the board during the last meeting. She presented the board members with a packet of information about the plan for the new Santa Rosa County Chamber and Visitors Information Center.

Tucker said one of the reasons the Chamber considered Avalon Boulevard is because of the corridor coming into Santa Rosa County. She said the Chamber hosts a lot of community meetings and incubates numerous projects. Tucker said the new building will be almost twice the size as the current building and will allow for separate meeting spaces. She said the 2nd floor will be her office and private meeting space. Tucker presented a list of current committee members and partners for the project. She said the total square footage of the building's interior will be 3,190 square feet. Tucker said the Chamber has been keeping statistics since 2013 on walk-ins, calls, meetings and tourism projects to determine how much time is spent doing chamber business versus tourism. She said time spent between functions is pretty close to 50/50 with two people in the office. Tucker said based on an estimate of \$250.00 per square foot for a commercial building, the request for \$120,000.00 from the TDC is less than 12.5 percent of the total cost of the project. She said the chamber is not asking for a lot but is asking for enough to state that the TDC and tourism has been a big part of what the chamber is doing. Tucker said a Chamber of Commerce can go anywhere but a Tourist Information Center or visitor's center needs to attract people. She said the presentation packet includes financial compilation reports.

There was further discussion.

Williamson said this request is already reflected in the budget.

Williamson moved approval of funds for a \$120,000.00 commitment for \$60,000.00 for this year and \$60,000.00 in the following year's budget. Horton seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

7) TDC BOD/Committee Meeting Schedule

Morgan said the new committee meeting schedule is available online as part of backup supporting documents. She said the committee meetings are no longer northend or southend;

all attendees come together now. Morgan said the locations have been switched to make sure location is split between north and south. Lowery asked if the same committee members will still attend. Morgan said yes. She said it will be for the better because it will help get everyone on the same page.

8) TDC BOD Position of Kyle Holley Expiring Oct. 2016 / Letters of Interest- Julie Morgan

Compton said Holley has added so much in the years since he has been involved and he wants to see Holley's continued engagement and involvement on this board. Morgan said the TDC appropriately advertised the opening and there was interest expressed from people in the southend but no one submitted a letter. She said the letter from Holley was the only one received.

Williamson moved approval for the board to recommend Holley remain in his current TDC BOD position. Horton seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

9) Sports Tourism Discussion

Morgan said sports tourism and medical tourism is something the county really wants. She said Rayner and Smith did not know to reach out to her. Morgan said Smith is a wealth of knowledge. She said she, the PIO and DSBP are working jointly to get the information out. Morgan said her team could have done more if it knew sooner. She said with Smith's experience and expertise this is something that can be huge, especially with AVP tours coming next season. Morgan said this was in the game plan during her interview and something the county wants to get involved in and now are moving forward.

10) Director's Report- Julie Morgan

- Bed Tax Update – Morgan said June numbers are up 11% from last June.
- Calypso the Turtle – Morgan said this is the second turtle for the turtle trail. She said this turtle is a boy named Calypso. Morgan said in moving forward with the turtle trail, through the county, her thoughts are that since the first turtle is at the I-10 Welcome Center that this turtle should be at the Navarre Welcome Center. She said the next turtle should be in central Santa Rosa County and then after that keep moving forward. Morgan asked the board if it wishes to move forward and order another turtle now. She said the TDC has the funding to do it. Morgan said her idea on the next turtle is to commission an art class at one of the schools. She said she wants to get some artists from Milton involved as well.

Crowder moved to put the second turtle in the Navarre Visitors Center. Lowery seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Crowder moved to commission the third turtle. Lowery seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

- Medical Tourism - Morgan said people come from all over the world to visit Andrews Institute for specialized orthopedic surgery. She said she, Andrews Institute and DSBP have met to develop a partnership.
- Airbnb- Morgan said as of today, Santa Rosa County will be collecting taxes from Airbnb.

11) North End requests- None

12) South End Requests- None

13) Other Business

Morgan said she has been receiving emails, over the last several hours, regarding the tropical storm coming through. She said Governor Scott has directed all state offices in Santa Rosa County to close at noon, in preparation. Morgan said she has received emails from VisitFlorida that their crisis team will continue to monitor the storm and update the county on normal basis. She said the Public Information Officer (Brandi Whitehurst) is working on this right now and DSBP is ready to be responsive to Whitehurst. Morgan said lifeguards on Navarre Beach are flying double red flags, due to rough seas and a high risk of rip current. She said the Gulf Beaches are currently closed to the public for wading, swimming and surfing.

There being no further business to come before the board the meeting adjourned.