

TDC- Board of Directors Meeting
August 19th 2015 – 8:00 a.m.
8543 Navarre Parkway
Navarre, Florida

Board Members Present:

Alan Lowery
Mike Loera
Liz Horton
Laurie Gallup
Kyle Holley
Vernon Compton
Jack Sanborn
Rob Williamson

Attendees:

Nancy Sandler	Hunter Walker
Mike Sandler	Shannon Ogletree
Julie Morgan	Brandy Kea
Nicole Dees	Chanda Ryan
Mary Peterzen	Meridith South
John Lewis	Michele Tucker
Larry Sims	Miller Simpson
Don Davis	

8:00 a.m. Sign-Confirmation of a Quorum

Approval of the June 17, 2015 Minutes – Gallup moved approval. Holley seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

TDC BOD Discussions

TDC BOD Roles

Hunter Walker, (County Administrator) discussed the roles of the Tourist Development Council (TDC) Director and the TDC Board of Directors (BOD). He said the role of the TDC, which is outlined in Florida State Statute, is to advise and make recommendations to the Board of County Commissioners on the promotion of tourism. He further discussed the history and establishment of the Santa Rosa County TDC.

Gallup said she is not sure that tourism should be under the supervision of economic development. She said she feels tourism should be on the same level as economic development and report to the County Administrator. Sanborn said in other counties, some of the TDC's are under economic development and in other counties they stand alone. Walker said agrees that this may be better. Holley said he suggests that the TDC Board of Directors work with staff to develop a detailed strategic plan to present to the Board of County Commissioners to make the case that economic development may or may not be the right choice for supervision of the TDC. He said he does not see this as any sort of a division, but sees this as maximizing the talent that the county has. Walker said it may be time to stand tourism up on its own.

Loera asked Walker about an email he received about the TDC meetings being moved to the Tiger Point Community Center. Walker said with TDC being a statutory body, he feels it is very important that these meetings be held in the Board of Commissioners meeting room, like the other Board of Commissioners advisory boards, because the meetings can be archived, recorded, and streamed. He said the Tiger Point Community Center gives this option.

Williamson said he thinks this is important from a transparency standpoint. He said this will provide all the county's tourism partners, whether they can attend a meeting or not, the opportunity to review the meeting online.

After further discussion regarding the meeting location, it was decided that the September meeting will be held at the Navarre Visitors Center as scheduled.

Gallup asked Walker if the local county tourism ordinance is being looked at and/or changed. Walker said not to his knowledge.

Williamson said he has been talking with Andrews about the need to look at the ordinance. He said the ordinance is old and from time to time things need to be looked at to see if they are in line with today's desired outcomes.

Gallup said she feels this ordinance needs to be updated.

Tourist Development Council Board of Directors role per FL Statute and Tourist Development Director Travel Authorization

Roy Andrews (County Attorney) was not present to discuss this agenda item.

Holley asked the reason the TDC director travel authorization is on the agenda and if there is a problem. Ogletree said because there were questions regarding who authorizes the TDC Directors travel. He said either himself or the County Administrator will authorize Morgan's travel. Ogletree said in the past Morgan has given the Board of Directors a report on where she has been and the purpose of her travel. He said moving forward, Morgan will have a TDC Director's report stating where, when and why in regards to travel. Walker said there is a specific travel policy for all county employees.

Gallup said she believes travel plans should be before the board, in order for the board, to give input and feedback. Walker said no other Boards authorize or give input on the TDC Director's travel. Williamson said he feels the recommendation piece is good when the BOD is going through the budget.

Williamson said he thinks it is time to clearly articulate what the roles and responsibilities are of a \$120,000,000.00 economic impact industry. He said he hopes the ordinance is reviewed to identify what the roles and responsibilities are of all the stake holders.

Departmental Vehicle

Ogletree (Economic Development Director) discussed the need for a departmental vehicle for TDC director and staff. He said he would like to purchase a Ford Explorer and said he estimates this to cost \$27,000.00 - \$28,000.00 to purchase a Ford Explorer. Ogletree said the vehicle will be parked at the TDC office and will be used for daily business. There was further discussion regarding the amount of money spent on

mileage for staff. Sanborn asked if this will come from the TDC budget. Ogletree said this will come from TDC reserves.

TDC BOD Signature Event Discussion

Morgan said the northend and the southend committees have supplied lists of events they wish to be called “signature events”. She said in the budget there is a \$70,000.00 line item, for all the community based events, and the BOD will be tasked with allocating the funds for this next fiscal year. Morgan said she needs to know what the BOD is aiming for.

Compton said these are events that are supported by grants and these grants are for a three year period. He said the “signature event” idea was more along the line of the board wanting to see an event continue and how TDC could support the event, more as a sponsor rather than organizations having to come back every year with a grant request.

Holley said it may be helpful to think of “signature event” more as an annual reoccurring sponsorship.

Loera said the BOD will have to go through the events and tally up the total cost to see what the total looks like against that \$70,000.00.

Williamson said he would like to fund every single one of the events, as it is today, and then moving forward have a grant application that funds all new events every year.

Holley said there was also a line item for the sand sculpting contest and he is not sure what is happening with this. Williamson asked if the sand sculpting contest was funded with reserve funding. Morgan said no. Williamson said he wants to make sure TDC is not taking money from reserves.

Morgan said last year the TDC did not spend the entire \$70,000.00 budgeted amount. She said she does not foresee an issue, going into this year, with all of the applications and feels the TDC may be able to fund them all. She said so far the TDC has received 4 applications.

There was further discussion regarding the grant cycle process.

TDC BOD Board Positions to be filled October 2015

Morgan said in October there will be two accommodation positions to fill on the TDC BOD. She said this is for Loera and Sanborn’s positions. She said the TDC is now accepting letters of interest. She said next month the Board of Directors will make a selection based on the northend and southend committees’ recommendation. She said she will then present the TDC recommendation to the Board of County Commissioners at their first meeting in October.

New Meeting Dates

Morgan said she feels it will be more beneficial to the committees and the business of this TDC to have all of the meetings in one week, in order to expedite the process. She said it is taking too long to get TDC recommendations to the BOD. Morgan said both the northend and the southend committees are in favor of moving all of the meetings to one week. She said holding the BOD meeting the first Thursday of the month and then the north and southend committee meetings, the proceeding Monday. Ogletree said he will look into the availability of the Tiger Point Community Center Facility on the first Thursday of the month.

There was further discussion of the meeting times and dates.

Compton asked if the committee meetings could be held on Monday and Tuesday's so that Morgan can attend both. He said he feels it is important, as the director, that Morgan is at all of the meetings. Holley said he agrees.

Sanborn made a motion for the northend TDC committee, the southend TDC committee and the TDC Board of Directors meetings to all begin at 8:30 a.m. Holley seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Visitor Center Weekend Hours

Morgan discussed a report of the weekend average visitor traffic at the Navarre Visitors Center from January 2014 – August 2015. She said she is not sure that the Return on Investments is all that great.

There was further discussion regarding the cost associated with staffing the Navarre Visitors Center on the weekend.

Morgan said she thinks TDC needs to close about 6 months out of the year on Saturdays and Sundays and about 4-5 months be closed only on Sundays. Horton said she agrees.

After further discussion the Board of Directors decided that the Navarre Visitors Center will be closed on Saturdays and Sundays for the months of November-March.

Lodging Tax Update

Morgan gave the Board of Directors an update regarding the lodging tax.

Report and Update – DSBP

South gave a report to the BOD regarding TDC's advertising and website

North End Request – None

South End Request

Morgan said the Country on the Sound event will take place on September 25th and 26th. She said the southend committee has recommended the \$20,000.00 that this event requested. Morgan said the northend committee has recommended supporting the southend decision with spending half of this on talent and the other half on advertising as a stipulation. She said the event organizers want to use the entire amount on talent. Morgan said she was being conservative when she recommended spending \$10,000.00 because this is their first year.

Gallup said at first she was skeptical because of the location of the event. She said when the event moved locations, to the Navarre Beach Marine Park; she had concerns about the environment and security. Gallup said the event coordinators have answered every question she had and they seemed very concerned to make sure nothing is harmed.

There was discussion of Country on the Sound tickets being used as a TDC promotion.

Holley made a motion that the TDC recommend to the Board of Commissioners to allocate \$20,000.00 out of TDC reserves to support the Country on the Sound event, with the stipulation that \$10,000.00 to be spent on advertising, to include ticket buy, and \$10,000.00 to be spent on talent. Compton seconded.

R. Williamson said TDC does not need to tell the event coordinator that it is going to give \$10,000.00 of this grant award for advertising. He said if TDC wants to spend an additional \$10,000.00 on advertising then the TDC directs the advertising partners to spend \$10,000.00 on advertising.

Holley amended the motion to allocate \$10,000.00 to honor this event promoters request for talent from TDC reserves. R. Williamson seconded this motion.

Morgan said there is \$10,000.00 for advertising in the budget. She said that \$10,000.00 will not have to come out of reserves.

R. Williamson said he would like to get away from allocating money from reserves when it is not absolutely necessary. He said he is in favor of \$10,000.00 for talent but thinks the funding should come from the TDC budget, if available, instead of from reserves.

Holley amended the motion to fund \$10,000.00 for talent from the general fund and the TDC spend an additional \$10,000.00 to promote the event. Gallup seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Sand Sculpting Festival discussion

Morgan said she has had several phone calls from people who are not happy that this festival is not going on. She said the festival was in the budget this year for \$55,000.00.

Morgan said the Navarre Chamber has said they want to come together and make this event bigger and better. She said the BOD need to make a decision in order to move forward with the planning of the sand sculpting festival which will be held the last weekend in April with a budget of \$55,000.00. Morgan said the sand sculpting festival is already a budgeted line item in next year's fiscal budget.

Gallup moved approval to move forward with the coordination of the sand sculpting festival in coordination with the Fun Fest working with the Navarre Area Chamber of Commerce at \$55,000.00. Holley seconded.

There was continued discussion regarding the hiring of an event coordinator.

Morgan said this recommendation was made to the BOCC at the same time as the sand sculpting festival recommendation was made. She said she does not feel the county is in the position, this year, to hire any new employees.

R. Williamson asked how the \$55,000.00 translates into the TDC's desired outcome. He said he is not in favor of approving any funds until he has clear metrics that show that this event is going to return some type of positive return for TDC funds. He said he is in favor of the event but wants to be able to defend it.

Loera referred to an equation sheet in the backup material and said the numbers just have to be plugged into this sheet. He said that is the measurable that Williamson is looking for.

Morgan discussed the TDC's reasoning for hiring a full-time event coordinator.

There was further discussion regarding the cost of the sand sculpting festival and the probable collaboration of this event with the Navarre Chambers Fun Fest event.

Holley moved approval for staff to present an expenditure plan for the \$55,000.00, already budgeted this year, on specialized events to highlight Navarre Beach. Gallup seconded the motion.

Morgan said a decision needs to be made on whether or not the TDC is going to go forward with the sand sculpting festival, because the sculptor's need to be booked.

R. Williamson said Morgan has requested a recommendation from this BOD on whether the TDC wants to move forward, with the sand sculpting event and at what funding level, or does it not want to move forward.

The motion did not pass.

R. Williamson said he cannot support this event. He said he does not know if it is the proper return on investment.

Loera said he feels mixing this with the fun fest will make this event what it needs to be to show that return. He said now that the TDC and the Navarre Chamber has combined this event, he is in favor of spending \$55,000.00.

Sanborn said the reason he will not support this is because there is not a staff person to handle the event.

Holley said he also feels there should be a person on staff who knows how to coordinate an event such as this to insure the return on investment.

Gallup moved approval of the \$55,000.00 towards the Fun Fest Sand Sculpting event for Navarre Beach in April. Loera seconded the motion. The motion passed with Gallup, Loera, Lowery, Horton, Holley in favor. Williamson and Sanborn opposed.

Gallup moved approval to look for an events coordinator that will work with the TDC Director to coordinate all of the TDC events and that this person be an independent contractor, not a government employee. Loera seconded the motion.

Williamson said he cannot think of anything that he would support less, than this board bringing forward another employee to basically be in competition with the services that the TDC Director has been hired to do.

Loera said Morgan stated at the last meeting that she was extremely under staffed. He said this will not be in competition with the TDC Director it will be assistance to her.

There was further discussion.

Gallup withdrew her motion. She said Williamson is the Commissioner that represents Navarre that is supposed to be in support of the TDC board.

Loera, Williamson, Gallup and Horton left the meeting at this time.

Morgan said she does not think the Tourist Development Office is going to get another staff member this year.

Other Business

Discussion of Beach TV

Morgan said last year the TDC ran the Beaches to Woodland's segment on Beach TV and the markets that were targeted were Mobile to Pensacola and Panama City. She asked South her opinion of which market to target with Beach TV. South said the Mobile and Destin market and at most Panama City.

Sanborn and Compton suggested Morgan recommend targeting the Destin and Mobile markets.

Directors Report

Morgan said the TDC is purchasing an ad with the Florida Sports Foundation. She said the TDC has also purchased a small advertisement in International Motor Coach Group.

Morgan said she was appointed to the Visit Florida Visitors Services Committee and attended a meeting yesterday. She discussed Navarre Visitors Center becoming a certified visitor's center and said that she will be looking into this. Morgan said the Tourist Development Office has two new interns from the University of West Florida's Tourism and Hospitality Program.

Holley said he encourages staff to look at the Florida Sports Foundation information.

Morgan said herself and Dees will be attending the Florida Governors Conference on Tourism on August 31, 2015 in Tampa.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at approximately 10:55 a.m.