



**MANATEE COUNTY
TOURIST DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL
Minutes – October 17, 2016**

Members who were Present: Chairman Carol Whitmore, Vice-Chairman David Teitelbaum, Doug Copeland, Jack Rynerson, Vernon DeSear, Dale Sconyers, Ed Chiles, Mayor Wayne Poston

Members of Press were also in attendance.

Meeting was called to order at 9:00AM at County Admin Bldg., 1112 Manatee Ave. W., Bradenton, Florida

Moment of Silence

Pledge of Allegiance

Minutes

A motion was made by Vernon DeSear, seconded by Jack Rynerson, to approve the August 15, 2016 TDC minutes. Motion carried unanimously.

Public Comment

1. Joan Voyles, Anna Maria Island Cultural Connections, invited everyone to attend ArtsHop taking place Nov 11 – 13 and Nov 18 – 20, 2016.
2. Dr. Pat Moreo, Dean of the USF Hospitality School, introduced himself; invited everyone to the Culinary Innovation Lab every Thursday where they hold a bistro at 6:45pm and 8:45pm.
3. Cathy Mijou, ArtCenter Manatee, gave an update on ArtCenter Manatee.

Realize Bradenton Update

Johnette Isham and Jody Carroll of Realize Bradenton: gave brief background and purpose of Realize Bradenton as well as an update on recent accomplishments, upcoming events, new artwork in the downtown Bradenton area; Realize Bradenton's innovative work with millennials; showed "Walk Bradenton", a new interactive website that doesn't require users to download an app, it works intuitively with Google Mapping.

Discussion took place re: pride of the thriving downtown Bradenton area; suggested the governments get together to think of creative ways to create Artisan's Avenue.

Resort Tax Collections Update

Michele Schulz and Jennie Johnson, Manatee County Resort Tax Collector's Office: gave update on Airbnb and other on-line short term rental booking companies; record breaking resort tax collections in FY 2015/2016.

Chair Whitmore: major shortage of hotel rooms in the Bradenton area.

It Works! – Green Carpet Conference Update

Kate Carlson, Director of PR, It Works!: gave brief background and history of It Works! as well as an update on their Green Carpet Conference, which was held in July, 2016 in various locations in Manatee County. Carlson also mentioned the local non-profits that benefitted from the event; and thanked all the sponsors including the TDC.

Elliott Falcione, Bradenton Area CVB: having It Works! and Feld Entertainment headquarters in northern Manatee County gives us the best chance to get a convention center full-service hotel.

State of Tourism - Update

Walter Klages, Research Data Services: gave update on October, 2015 – August, 2016 visitor and economic statistics; update on repercussions of Brexit vote; UK pound and Canadian loonie vs US dollar; domestic market vs international market; update on August, 2016 visitor profile stats.

Discussion took place re: interest rates; Brexit.

Public Relations Update

Kelly Clark and Megan Body of the Bradenton Area CVB: gave update on International and domestic press received; travel writers the CVB hosted recently; upcoming promotions/trips; and the results of the CVB's first ever Bloggers Convention.

Upcoming CVB Promotions

Aimee Blenker, Bradenton Area CVB: gave update on promotions/sweepstakes recently held as well as upcoming sweeps events.

Bridge Street Pier Project – Request for Funding up to \$125,000

Elliott Falcione, Bradenton Area CVB: asked members to consider a one-time reimbursement up to \$125,000 so the City of Bradenton Beach can build a day dock to replace the current damaged floating dock at Bridge Street Pier.

Mayor Bill Shearon and Police Chief Sam Speciale of City of Bradenton Beach: thanked the TDC for past partnerships with the City, and gave brief presentation on the plans for the new day dock, which will help bring water taxis, ferries, etc.

A motion was made by Ed Chiles, seconded by David Teitelbaum, to recommend to the Board of County Commissioners approval of one-time reimbursement up to \$125,000 to the City of Bradenton Beach for day dock project at Bridge Street Pier. Motion carried unanimously.

Elliott Falcione: The County did not mandate that a mooring field be created; it is not and will not be a part of the agreement; the County and the Island mayors have met on several occasions and expressed the need for parking and multi-modal initiatives on the island.

Red Tide Beach Clean-Up – Request to move \$15,000 from Reserves to Budget Line Item

Elliott Falcione, Bradenton Area CVB: Anna Maria Island has and still is experiencing red tide; the County's Parks & Natural Resources Dept had to use monies out of the beach maintenance line item that is specifically set aside to pay for extra beach clean-up during busy holiday seasons. We need to replace those funds so there are enough for when the time comes to use it for its initial purpose.

A motion was made by David Teitelbaum, seconded by Jack Rynerson, to recommend to the Board of County Commissioners approval of moving \$15,000 from "Reserves" to the "Beach Maintenance" line item. Motion carried unanimously.

Public Comment

John Chappie, Manatee County Commissioner and long-time resident of Bradenton Beach thanked TDC for partnerships with the City of Bradenton Beach throughout the years.

New Old Business

1. Jack Rynerson: gave airport update; requested an update on beach renourishment funds. Charlie Hunsicker, Director of the Parks & Natural Resources Dept, will be invited to give update at a future TDC Meeting.
2. Chair Whitmore: requested County Attorney Office attend future TDC meeting to give update on current uses of Tourist Development Taxes and the procedures of how to change the laws that govern those taxes so we could be able to pay for extra Public Safety and other types of expenditures.
3. Dale Sconyers: gave update on the friendly go-kart race that was held recently at Andersen Race Park in Palmetto between several local hotels and the Sarasota and Bradenton CVB's; great updates being made at Premier Sports Campus.
4. Elliott Falcione, Bradenton Area CVB: gave an update on meetings held recently with the Florida Railroad Museum and Myakka Schoolhouse; upcoming CVB meetings; changing CVB's industry meetings to include educational component; the need for our industry members to cooperate when being asked for comps when travel writers are coming to the area; CVB's new visitors guides coming December, 2016.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 10:55am

Approved in Open Session: *December 12, 2016*