

**MINUTES OF MEETING
TOURIST DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL
ST. JOHNS COUNTY, FLORIDA
OCTOBER 17, 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: Jack Peter, Chairman
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
Fred E. Cozby, District 4
Bill Hughes, District 4
John B. Yanni, District 5
Pam Halterman, Deputy Clerk

Absent: Jeffrey Mayers, District 4

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

(10/17/11 - 1 - 1:30 p.m.)

1. CALL TO ORDER

Jack Peter called the meeting to order.

(10/17/11 - 1 - 1:30 p.m.)

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Fred Cozby led the Pledge of Allegiance.

(10/17/11 - 1 - 1:30 p.m.)

3. ROLL CALL

Dena Masters called the roll and stated that Jeffrey Mayers would not be in attendance.

(10/17/11 - 1 - 1:31 p.m.)

4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion by Yanni, seconded by Hughes, carried 8/0, with Mayers absent, to approve the Agenda.

(10/17/11 - 1 - 1:31 p.m.)

5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Yanni directed attention to page 5, bold print, at 2:42 p.m., and stated that consensus of the Council was that the consultant would contact each Council member individually for a discussion in regards to the issue, then it would be discussed later at the TDC meeting.

(1:31 p.m.) **Motion by Peter, seconded by Boles, carried 8/0, with Mayers absent, to approve the minutes for the September 19, 2011, meeting as amended.**

(10/17/11 - 2 - 1:31 p.m.)

6. PUBLIC COMMENT

Melinda Bergbom, 6327 Salado Road, Secretary of the St. Johns Cultural Council, offer an update of their results in the executive director search. She noted that an offered had been extended to an individual and should be able to identify the individual at the next TDC meeting.

(10/17/11 - 2 - 1:33 p.m.)

7. 450TH UPDATE - John Regan, City of St. Augustine Manager

John Regan, Manager, City of St. Augustine, introduced City of St. Augustine Commissioners in attendance. He presented a gold bar from the sunken 1622 Spanish fleet which was a priceless artifact on loan from the museum. He reviewed the history of the ship and its track to Florida, and presented a PowerPoint presentation in regards to the history of the City of St. Augustine. He noted that, through the entire 450th commemorative program, the City planned to blend with the mission statement of the St. Johns County Tourist Development Council. He stated that the organizational structure included the City Commission, the Federal Commission, and many community organizations and agencies. He added that the West Augustine sewer system upgrade would be part of the City's infrastructure program. He explained that a long list of community partners existed, as well as the Library of Congress and the Smithsonian Museum. He noted that the City had a business proposal, which was currently being prepared for each and every one of the signature partners. He voiced that they had identified early on that the TDC was one of the major partners, as well as the Visitors' Convention Bureau. He summarized that one initiative, under the guidance of Commissioner Sikes-Kline, had re-established the St. Augustine Heritage Council, which was a round-table system to allow the different institutions to collaborate on the programming. He noted that Spain had committed a funding stream of 400,000 Euros to build a Spanish exhibition under the leadership of the Florida Espana Foundation. He introduced two important people involved in the 450th program which included Dana Ste. Claire, Development Director, and Jennifer Zuberer, Communications and Resources Manager. He suggested that one of the largest issues involved the financial fuel for the commemoration program. He emphasized and explained the four-year calendar of events, including the 450 Partner Event and Signature Programming events. He pointed out that the first event had already been paid for which would take place between 2012 and 2015 involving the Miami Tri Events. He stated that the Aviles Business Merchants planned an event during Easter time in 2012. He said the Casa Monica was the first business to join in a partnership with the City of St. Augustine for the event. He went over marketing and promotions, and budgeting for the 450th celebration event.

(2:06 p.m.) Bryan thanked Regan for his presentation and commented that he liked what had been presented and the inclusion of all people. He thanked the City Commissioners for attending the meeting. Regan advised that a process had been started with the Pro Golfers' Association to integrate, as a major platform of delivery, the Tournament Players Championship, Industrial Development Agency, City, Airport Authority, and the County by way of a monthly collaboration process to integrate Ponte Vedra to help build awareness and sponsorship. Bryan asked for any plans on a dedicated website. Regan noted that a dedicated website was live and the proposed plan could be downloaded from the site by an individual. He advised that the plan was a work in progress and changed frequently but the latest version would be on the website. Boles stated that Duval County had utilized a non-profit foundation to work with for the Super Bowl when the event was held in Jacksonville. Although, the attempt to use a non-profit foundation had not worked for the City, he suggested that the plan was workable and thanked Regan and his staff for the presentation.

(2:13 p.m.) Bartosch said he had been outspoken about the controversial issue and lack of progress involved with the 450th commemorative celebration event and how it had been handled thus far. In response to an inquiry from Bartosch, Regan explained that two staff members would be paid through the funding stream, and both positions were currently in the budget. He said the City was creating a total sponsorship budget and wanted national exposure. He advised that the City was in negotiations with several companies. He stated that the City Commission had made the 450th commemorative event their highest priority.

(2:16 p.m.) Bryan asked how the license plates for the celebration were coming. Regan stated that Ste. Clair had been given that task in regards to stamps, license, and the commemorative series and was currently working on the task. Directing attention to the infrastructure project list, O'Brien asked whether other opportunities existed outside of St. Augustine for infrastructure improvements and repairs. Regan affirmed that to be correct and explained that awareness in the community drove the ability to discuss everything outside the City as well as inside the City. He said the West Augustine area had been identified as an area in need of improvements. Boles noted that as the process continued, they might find a sponsor that had a desire to be tied to waterfront or ocean sites, etc. Regan said, through the awareness of the 450th, the Chamber of Commerce and the City had shown the San Sebastian project to four major development opportunities to bring the area into service. He noted that the City had the first African American business owner to be awarded a contract for the 450th Commemorative event. He added that the business owner planned to relocate to the area.

(2:19 p.m.) Bryan stated that much revenue was being left on the table and not being captured involving online bookings. Regan said the City had a difficulty with outward messaging; however, the difficulty should ease in the future. Hughes said he liked that the City had obtained the support of the PGA. He suggested that the City would generate more interest by conducting larger events compared to the smaller Signature events. Peter thanked Regan for the PowerPoint presentation and asked how large the 450th celebration would be. Regan suggested that the project could be close to \$5 million; however, the impact, what had already been invested, and long-term legacy was much larger. He added that the \$23 million parking garage structure had been planned for the 450th celebration and could load and unload eleven buses simultaneously. Regan offered a special thanks to Pat Croce and the Pirate Treasure Museum who lent the gold piece to show the Council.

(10/17/11 - 3 - 2:26 p.m.)

8. DESTINATION & MARKETING CATEGORY
 - a. VCB Monthly Report – Richard Goldman

Richard Goldman reviewed details of the VCB August Report and offered the following details for the Council:

- August occupancy was down -1.2%, but the average rate was 1.2% higher
- August 2011 had seen Hurricane Irene but remained generally positive
- August 2010 had shown an increase in visitor numbers because of the oil spill
- BP had provided \$100 million to assist with the oil spill
- \$70 million of the BP dollars had been spent just on marketing and advertising
- Gulf Port area had returned to their normal number of tourists
- St. Johns County, Charleston, and Jacksonville had the least decline in occupancy
- Website unique visits were down 22% compared to August 2010
- Currently working on a new website
- Telemarketing calls for YTD was 9% ahead of goal
- Total leads distributed for September 2011 was 45, and over 250 YTD
- Communications had a 124% increase in total impressions

- October would show the fruits of their labor involving Spanish heritage

(2:33 p.m.) Goldman pointed out the following current and upcoming events:

- Redesigned FloridasHistoricCoast.com went live
- Book Direct / Jack Rabbit went live for online booking capabilities
- St. Augustine and Ponte Vedra were included in the discount Gator Bowl Association's Patch Plus program
- 2nd Annual Flavors of Florida's Historic Coast
- Hosting Univision network talent shows
- Preparing for the Bridal and Quinceanera Expo in November
- Ponte Vedra Inn & Club and the Lodge & Club were honored by two different news organizations and had been rated as 1 of 100 best travel experiences in the world
- Ponte Vedra Inn and Club was listed as one of the top ten experience in the world
- Based on a call around, all types of lodging had increased in October 2011

In response to an inquiry from Hughes, Goldman stated that they had 16 exhibitors and were distributing tickets through their vendor partners. He suggested that the Bridal Show would be special because the Quinceanera Expo was included in the show. In response to an inquiry from O'Brien, Goldman noted that they worked with Miles Media.

(10/17/11 - 4 - 2:42 p.m.)

9. ARTS, CULTURAL & HERITAGE CATEGORY

- a. Update on FY12 Grant Recommendations – Rich O'Brien

O'Brien explained that while developing funding recommendations, one or more organizations would not be able to complete their program so a backup plan had been developed. He stated that they created a priority list by funding amounts. He noted that the Italian festival was not able to conduct their function with a funding amount of \$7,000. Therefore, he said the Music festival received \$2,000, Spanish Maritime received \$4,000, and the 2012 Sawgrass Wine Festival had been increased by \$1,000, for a total of \$7,000 not spent by the Italian Festival.

(10/17/11 - 4 - 2:45 p.m.)

10. LEISURE & RECREATION CATEGORY – Glenn Hastings

- a. Funding request – World Junior Masters Golf Championship Tournament

Hastings summarized that the World Junior Masters had requested \$10,000 for the tournament; however, after review by the Recreation Advisory Board, \$5,000 was recommended. Hughes noted that the tournament was an international field and was growing.

(2:47 p.m.) Motion by Hughes, seconded by Yanni, carried 8/0, with Mayers absent, to grant \$5,000, as they had in prior years, to the World Junior Masters Golf Championship Tournament.

(10/17/11 - 4 - 2:48 p.m.)

11. ADMIN & SPECIAL USES CATEGORY – Glenn Hastings

- Executive Director Job Description
- Holiday Meeting Schedule

Hastings explained that the County had been using Condrey & Associates for a pay and compensation study involving all county employees which included his position. He noted that the job description in the Council packet was a starting point for a collaborative effort with the Council and the Personnel Department. Cozby asked if Hastings had been operating without a job description. Hastings affirmed that a job

description existed; however, the description was over ten years old. In response to an inquiry from Peter, Hastings noted that any comments in regards to his job description would be sent directly to Stacey Stanish, SJC Interim Director of Personnel. Based on discussion at the previous meeting, Hughes noted that it had not been unnoticed by constituents. He stated that it was a case of the three D's; defer, delay, and distract. He pointed out that the last offense was when Bryan, in an August meeting, asked Hastings to ensure that County Administrator Wanchick attend the September TDC meeting to explain Hastings role in salary sharing, manager/advisor to the Amphitheatre and Ponte Vedra Concert Hall; however, Wanchick did not attend that meeting, nor was their an explanation offered regarding his absence. He stated that the TDC members were still waiting on an answer on the amount of time Hastings worked on the Amphitheatre. He suggested that it was a sensitive topic and should not be delayed any further. Hastings expressed that Wanchick had input on the current document before the Council. O'Brien voiced that he had found an almost identical description on the internet that day, which was vague, the time waiting around, going from meeting to meeting, emailed comments, and the issue had been mentioned over a year earlier. He articulated that he would like a Committee to study and make recommendation on Hastings' job description. He voiced that he was disappointed with the material submitted to the Council. Hughes said the way the issue was being handled was disrespectful. Yanni noted that the Council's idea was for a subcommittee meeting to design their input in the process. He noted that the subcommittee idea was abandoned in favor of individual conferences with the consultant which never happened. He suggested that the tone of the memo was disturbing. He stated that the industry that was taxed as well as the beneficiaries of the tax should have a very direct and profound input into the description. He suggested that whoever was responsible was not being managed effectively nor transparently. Hughes stated that it was not the work of Wanchick because he was much more quality driven and detailed. Bartosch voiced that a job description should start with what the company desired and what they want to accomplish and not what could be done. He agreed with the Council members in regards to a subcommittee. Boles asked whether they had a deadline regarding the job description.

(2:58 p.m.) Bryan stated that no deadline existed and noted that he had asked Wanchick to attend the meeting to explain the duties of Hastings. He voiced that he would talk with Wanchick about the issue because Wanchick worked for Bryan as a member of the Board of County Commissioners. He advised that it was clear that Hastings worked for the County Administrator. He reiterated that he would talk with the Administrator as well as the Interim Director of Personnel on what thoughts they had on the issue and whether input should be from the TDC. He pointed out that the TDC's requests from the past several meetings had yet to be answered by Administration and it was evident that they would not be coming forward. Agreeing to Bryan's statement, Peter added that the Council was quite eager to contribute and should be heard. Bryan reiterated that he would contact Wanchick for some discussion and return to the Council in November with some direction. Hastings suggested that a workshop on policy might be in order to help design the job description. In response to an inquiry, Bryan noted that review of job descriptions had not been completed for the County in a very long time.

(3:03 p.m.) Hastings pointed out that his Amphitheatre involvement was only five percent of his time based on a 40 hour week. He described his involvement as a mentoring position. Bryan noted that he had provided a pamphlet during the previous meeting and said he specified what an executive director would not do. He affirmed that much of Hastings' position involved oversight and other duties assigned by the County Administrator. Acknowledging the resignation of the Director of Parks and Recreation, Hughes asked to be notified of any resignation of Category executive

directors in the future prior to reading it in the local newspaper. Hastings advised that an announcement from Administration would notify the public on such matters.

(3:08 p.m.) Holiday meeting schedule:

Discussion ensued between Council members and Hastings in regards to combining November and December meetings to be held on December 5, 2011. *Consensus of the Council was to hold the November and December meetings on December 5, 2011; January TDC meeting on January 23, 2012; and moved the February TDC meeting to February 27, 2012.*

(3:11 p.m.) Hastings noted that some of the members' terms had expired; however, under County policy, members would serve until reappointed by the Board of County Commissioners. He advised that they were currently advertising for applications through November. He noted that at the December 5, 2011, TDC meeting, the Council would review the applications and newly appointed members would take their place at the January 2012 TDC meeting.

(10/17/11 - 6 - 3:13 p.m.)

12. MONTHLY FINANCIAL REPORTS

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

Hastings noted that the reports were included in the packet. He pointed out the following:

- Fiscal year 2011 TD tax collections at 91% of their fiscal year
- 96.4 % of budget projection
- FY10 Leisure & Hospitality employment
- 11,044 average monthly employment
- \$19,575 average monthly wage
- \$216,184,228 total 2010 annual wages
- 20.5% total SJC workforce in the hospitality area

Visitor related expenditures:

- Up 7.3% in August compared to same month last year
- YTD - \$475,617,576 expenditures
- Expenditures up 5.87% compared to same period last year

(10/17/11 - 6 - 3:16 p.m.)

13. COMMENTS BY MEMBERS

Bryan mentioned that he attended the First Tee function and had a great time. He asked whether they had a figure on how much Tourist Development online tax dollars the county was missing out on. Hastings noted that, according to the last evaluation, the figure was approximately \$500,000 for St. Johns County. Bryan pointed out that the issue had been raised at the Legislative Delegation meeting held in the auditorium the previous week. He noted that a couple Representatives who had voted in opposition of the exemption. He stated that Duval County had generated a large amount of money; however, Putnam County had settled with the State on the issue.

(3:18 p.m.) O'Brien stated that goals needed to be set for the upcoming year of 2012.

(3:19 p.m.) Hughes reminded everyone about the Winn-Dixie / Jacksonville Open which started on October 20, 2011 and would end Sunday.

(3:20 p.m.) Boles stated that the finalization and presentation of the strategic plan was important because the next meeting of the National Commission involved the adoption of the plan. He noted that the next meeting would be held in Miami in December 2011.

(3:21 p.m.) Yanni voiced that he had attended the First Friday Art Walk in downtown City of St. Augustine. He agreed that the internet booking fees were important and consisted of much money. He added that the public was becoming more reliant on the internet and online sales taxes were paid in-state and not forwarded. Bryan suggested that educating the legislators was difficult but could occur. He stated that Lobbyists were selling the idea that the exemption should be considered an extra tax when it was not. He pointed out that Proctor had voted in opposition of both bills. Boles noted that the State of Florida, Department of Revenue, was actively seeking sales tax on purchases placed online. Bryan noted that businesses were required to place money aside in the event that they lose the lawsuits currently being played out in the courts.

(3:25 p.m.) Cozby mirrored Council members' views on the sales tax issue.

(3:26 p.m.) Bartosch had no comment.

(3:26 p.m.) Peter had no comment.

(10/17/11 - 7 - 3:27 p.m.)

14. ADJOURN

Motion by Hughes, seconded by Bryan, carried 8/0, with Mayers absent, to adjourn the meeting.

With there being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting adjourned at 3:27 p.m.

Approved _____, 2011

TOURIST DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL
OF ST. JOHNS COUNTY, FLORIDA

By: _____
Jack Peter, Chair

ATTEST: CHERYL STRICKLAND, CLERK

By: _____
Deputy Clerk