



# PUNTA GORDA ENGLEWOOD BEACH

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The Charlotte Harbor Gulf Island Coast

## Charlotte County Tourist Development Council Meeting Minutes Friday, February 24, 2023

A meeting of the Charlotte County Tourist Development Council was held Friday, February 24, 2023, at Charlotte County Centennial Park, Large Conference Room A172, 1120 Centennial Boulevard, Port Charlotte, FL.

### **Members Present**

Commissioner Christopher Constance  
Councilmember Mark Kuharski  
Kathy Burnam  
David Haynes  
Robin Madden  
Kelly Williamson  
Gary Butler

### **Members Absent**

Keith Farlow  
Councilmember Donna Peterman

### **Staff Present**

Sean Doherty, Tourism Development Director  
Jeff Berg, Meetings Market Sales Manager  
Maureen Morgenthien, Marketing Manager  
Lois Croft, Public Relations Manager  
Julie Pennock, Senior Administrative Assistant  
Amy Sharpe, Administrative Services Coordinator  
Dan Roe, Tax Collector's Office  
Elie Fischhof, Fiscal Services  
Janette Knowlton, County Attorney  
Claire Jubb, Assistant County Administrator

### **Guests**

John Lai, Florida Restaurant & Lodging Association  
Bob White, Charlotte County Chamber of Commerce  
Craig Holt, Four Points by Sheraton Punta Gorda Harborside

#### **I. Call to Order & Pledge of allegiance**

Councilmember Mark Kuharski called the Charlotte County Tourist Development Council (TDC) meeting to order at 9:28 a.m.

#### **II. Roll Call**

A quorum was established.

#### **III. Citizens' Input**

John Lai, Florida Restaurant & Lodging Association reported that he is the new the new regional director of FRLA as well of the current President and CEO of the Sanibel & Captiva Islands Chamber of Commerce. Lai continued to report that the second annual Craft Beer Fest at Fisherman's Village is scheduled for April 22, 2023, from 12 PM to 4 PM.

**IV. Approval of TDC Meeting Minutes**

A motion was made by Kathy Burnam, and seconded by David Hanes, to approve the December 9, 2023 minutes. Motion carried unanimously.

**V. Tourist Tax Report – Dan Roe**

The tax collector report was presented by Dan Roe. Roe reported that first quarter of fiscal year 2023 October through December collections were \$1,524,900.13. Roe continued to report that there were 551 suspect accounts. Roe advised for the first quarter over last year was up 11.4%. Roe continued to advise there are currently 3,002 rental properties, which is a decrease of 16 properties from last quarter.

**VI. Budget Report – Elie Fischhof, Fiscal Services**

The fiscal report was presented by Elie Fischhof. Fischhof reported that we are six months into the fiscal year with a \$4.2 million budget. Fischhof continued to report that current operating expenditures for the first 3 cents were \$886,000 and \$668,000 in encumbrances. Fischhof also reported that all interfund transfers have been paid except one which is a vehicle replacement of \$4,000. Fischhof advised that we have total expenditures of \$1.6 million which is a total budget expended of 56%. Fischhof continued to advise actual expenditures for the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> cents are approximately \$10,000 for Promo Activities General and approximately \$10,000 in encumbrances. Promo Activities Advertising showed over \$88,000 in actual expenditure and \$744,000 in encumbrances.

**VII. Robin Madden – Budget Review**

Robin Madden confirmed that the budget appeared to be in order.

**VIII. Director/Staff Report – Sean Doherty**

Sean Doherty, Tourism Director, provided a recap of the Tourism Department Board Report. Doherty introduced our new Public Relations Manager, Lois Croft. Doherty highlighted post hurricane 90% of our restaurants, all our attractions, and all but one of our golf courses are now open. Doherty reported 75% of our hotel and resort inventory is reopened. Doherty continued to report that 5 properties make up the 25% of hotel and resort inventory that are not reopened. Doherty advised that our annual tourism celebration is going to be a breakfast and be held on Friday, May 5, 2023.

**IX. Citizen's Comments**

There were no Citizen Comments.

**X. Council Comments**

Kathy Burnam advised Fishermen's Village is very busy and business is great. Burnam reported that they have some new business, and a new Mexican themed restaurant will be opening.

Gary Butler reported attendance struggled a bit after Hurricane Ian but recently numbers at the Military Heritage Museum have been at capacity. Butler continued to report that the Gulf Theater has 50 shows scheduled and 40 of them are sold out.

Kelly Williamson reported the hotel and tiki bar are very busy. Williamson advised that the new pavilion called Harborside Garden is now open and has 8 weddings booked.

Councilmember Mark Kuharski advised the Punta Gorda City Council, and the Charlotte County Board of County Commissioners are having a joint meeting March 21, 2023.

David Haynes advised that Little Gasparilla Island properties is down 40% of the housing inventory. Haynes also advised properties are slowly coming back online.

Robin Madden reported 4 of the rental properties are still down and they added 2 additional rental listings. Madden also reported rentals are booking very fast. Madden continued to report that the real estate properties are still selling.

Commissioner Christopher Constance the commission is working on getting the Charlotte Sports Park open for spring training 2024.

**XI. Next Scheduled Meeting**

The next scheduled TDC meeting is at 9:00 a.m. Friday, April 14, 2023. The meeting will be held in the B-106 Conference Room, Administration Building, 18500 Murdock Circle, Port Charlotte.

**XII. Adjourn**

The meeting adjourned at 10.46 a.m.