



# PUNTA GORDA ENGLEWOOD BEACH

SM

The Charlotte Harbor Gulf Island Coast

## Charlotte County Tourist Development Council Meeting Minutes Friday, April 14, 2023

A meeting of the Charlotte County Tourist Development Council was held Friday, April 14, 2023, at Murdock Administration Building, Conference Room B-106, 18500 Murdock Circle, Port Charlotte, FL.

### **Members Present**

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

### **Staff Present**

Sean Walter, Sales & Sports Marketing Manager  
Jeff Berg, Meetings Market Sales Manager  
Maureen Morgenthien, Marketing Manager  
Lois Croft, Public Relations Manager  
Jerry Jones, Film Commissioner  
Brynja Phipps, Project Coordinator  
Julie Pennock, Senior Administrative Assistant  
Amy Sharpe, Administrative Services Coordinator  
Dan Roe, Tax Collector's Office  
Elie Fischhof, Fiscal Services  
Glinda Pruitt, Assistant County Attorney  
Hector Flores, County Administrator

### **Guests**

Jim Finch, Charlotte Harbor Events & Conference Center  
Doug Izzo, Englewood Chamber of Commerce  
Jerry Cleffi, Smugglers  
Ty Parks, Iguanaland

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

Commissioner Christopher Constance called the Charlotte County Tourist Development Council (TDC) meeting to order at 9:01 a.m.

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

A quorum was established.

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

Jim Finch, Charlotte Harbor Events & Conference Center reported on bookings through the last six months, October 2022 to March 2023. Finch reported they have had 80 events and they lost 6 weeks due to Hurricane Ian. Finch advised the event center is very busy.

John Lai, Florida Restaurant and Lodging Association was not present.

**IV. Approval of TDC Meeting Minutes**

A motion was made by Kathy Burnam, and seconded by Councilmember Mark Kuharski, to approve the February 23, 2023, minutes. Motion carried unanimously.

**V. Tourist Tax Report – Dan Roe**

The tax collector report was presented by Dan Roe. Roe reported January through February collections were \$1,868,537.76. Roe continued to report that there were 2 additional suspect accounts bringing the total to 553. Roe advised that year to date collections so far is \$3,393,437.89. Roe continued to advise that we've increase by 54 rental properties, there are currently 3,056 rental properties.

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

The fiscal report was presented by Elie Fischhof. Fischhof reported that we are seven months into the fiscal year with a \$4.2 million budget. Fischhof continued to report that actual operating expenditures were almost \$2 million and \$614,000 in encumbrances. Fischhof also reported that interfund transfers are almost all complete. Fischhof advised that we have total expenditures of \$1.9 million which is a total budget expended of 62%. Fischhof continued to advise for the 4th and 5th cents has a balance of \$600,000, in actual expenditures we already spent \$259,000 and have \$574,000 in encumbrances.

**VII. Robin Madden – Budget Review**

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

**VIII. Presentations**

Jerry Cleffi, Smugglers provided a presentation about the Peace River Jam Bluegrass Festival for the Event Development Program Funding Application that was submitted by Smugglers.

The Tourist Development Council scored the funding application. Based on the scoring tabulation of 82% in favor of the event planning application, the TDC found that the Peace River Jam Bluegrass Festival does meet and exceed protocol of 60% for funding eligibility. Keith Farlow made a motion to approve funding for \$10,000, which was seconded by Kathy Burnam. The motion carried unanimously.

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

Sean Walter, Sales & Sports Marketing Manager, provided a recap of the Tourism Department Board Report. Walter advised that our Tourism Celebration Breakfast is being held on May 5 at the Twisted Fork. Walter also highlighted the request for quotes of International Representation in the UK and German are finalized and are now being reviewed by legal.

**X. Citizen's Comments**

Ty Parks, Iguanaland introduced himself and advised he built his zoo Iguanaland to do conservation work.

**XI. Council Comments**

David Haynes advised there has been lots of clean up on the Island. Haynes continued to advise Little Gasparilla Island still has some properties that are down. Haynes reported that Hideaway Bay which has 102 units is still closed and they are hoping to be open by October.

Councilmember Mark Kuharski encouraged anyone that has a City Ordinance concern to report the concern.

Councilmember Donna Peterman yielded her minutes.

Keith Farlow reported that West County is doing great, and the business is smooth.

Kelly Williamson reported that the hotel is busy, and they haven't seen a slowdown.

Gary Butler reported admissions at the Military Heritage Museum on Wednesday, April 12, 2023, were the highest daily admissions ever. Butler also reported that the number of families visiting the museum are up, with youth admissions up 60%. Butler continued to report that the Gulf Theater sold just under 10,000 tickets for the season, which was an 80% increase over last year.

Kathy Burnam advised the Craft Beerfest at Fishermen's Village will be on April 22. Burnam also advised traffic has been excellent and just started slowing down in the past week.

Robin Madden reported they are down 4 properties, but they just brought on 2 new rental properties. Madden also reported they have 24 rental properties and booked \$60,000 on rentals for 2023 and 2024 in the last 2 weeks. Madden continued to report that houses are still selling.

**XII. Next Scheduled Meeting**

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

**XIII. Adjourn**

The meeting adjourned at 10:37 a.m.