



PUNTA GORDA ENGLEWOOD BEACH

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The Charlotte Harbor Gulf Island Coast

Charlotte County Tourist Development Council Meeting Minutes Friday, August 18, 2023

A meeting of the Charlotte County Tourist Development Council was held Friday, August 18, 2023, at Charlotte County Centennial Park, Small Conference Room, 18500 Murdock Circle, Port Charlotte, FL.

Members Present

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

Staff Present

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

Guests

Dave DiMaggio, Aqua Marketing & Communications
Andrew Hoffman, Aqua Marketing & Communications
Trisha Lapointe, Peace River Wildlife Center

I. Call to Order & Pledge of allegiance

Commissioner Christopher Constance called the Charlotte County Tourist Development Council (TDC) meeting to order at 9:02 a.m.

II. Roll Call

A quorum was established.

III. Citizens' Input

Trisha Lapointe, Peace River Wildlife Center reported the facility is in the process of a capital campaign moving the current facility 0.5-acre location to a 4.5-acre location off Henry Street in Punta Gorda.

IV. Approval of TDC Meeting Minutes

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

V. Tourist Tax Report – Dan Roe

The tax collector report was presented by Dan Roe. Roe reported April through June, the third quarter collections were \$1,655,351.06. Roe continued to report that there were 556 suspect accounts, 5 accounts were found in the third quarter. Roe advised that year to date for third quarter we are down 9.1% over last year. Roe also advised that year to date collections so far is \$6,180,465.55. Roe continued to advise that we've decreased by 175 rental properties, there are currently 2,827 rental properties. Roe reported the decrease is a result of management companies removing rental properties due to owners selling the property or the owner moving into the property.

VI. Budget Report

The fiscal report was presented by Elie Fischhof. Fischhof reported that we are nine months into the fiscal year 2023 with a \$4.2 million budget. Fischhof continued to report that actual operating expenditures were almost \$2.7 million and \$524,000 in encumbrances. Fischhof also reported that a large portion of the expenditures are interfund transfers. Fischhof advised that we have a total budget expended of 81%. Fischhof continued to advise for the 4th and 5th cents has a balance of \$600,000, in actual expenditures we already spent \$579,000 and have \$54,000 in encumbrances.

Sean Doherty presented the FY 2024 Budget Presentation. Elie Fischhof presented the fiscal portion of the FY 2024 Budget Presentation.

VII. Robin Madden – Budget Review

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

VIII. Event Development Program

A modification was made to the Event Development Program guidelines that the TDC may award partial points for each scoring category. A motion was made by Councilmember Mark Kuharski, and seconded by Kathy Burnam, to approve the modification to the Event Development Program guidelines. Motion carried unanimously.

IX. Presentations

A recorded presentation of Janet Knowlton about the Sunshine Law was played.

Maureen Morgenthien, Marketing Manager provided an introduction highlighting marketing accomplishments from FY 2023. Dave Di Maggio, Aqua presented the FY 2024 Marketing Plan Presentation. Andrew Hoffman, Aqua presented the audience targeting portion of the FY 2024 Marketing Plan Presentation.

X. Approval of the TDC Meeting Dates for FY 2024

A motion was made by Gary Butler, seconded by David Haynes, to approve the TDC Meeting Dates for FY 2024. Motion carried unanimously.

XI. Approval of FY 2024 Budget

A motion was made by Kathy Burnam, seconded by Robin Madden, to approve the FY 2024 Budget. Motion passed unanimously as a recommendation to go to the Board of County Commissioners.

XII. Approval of FY 2024 Marketing Plan

A motion was made by Councilmember Donna Peterman, seconded by Robin Madden, to approve the FY 2024 Marketing Plan. Motion carried unanimously.

XIII. Director/Staff Report – Sean Doherty

Sean Doherty, Tourism Director provided a recap of the Tourism Department Board Report. Doherty advised that we just taped travel segments to be aired on Good Morning Washington D.C. Doherty also advised American Cruise Line is working with our partners to provide opportunities to explore our destination.

XIV. Citizen’s Comments

There were no Citizen Comments.

XV. Council Comments

David Haynes advised that on the rental side seems to have plateaued on long term rental pricing. Haynes continued to advise that the vacation rental side seems to be plateauing as well. Haynes reported they are seeing a bit of a slowdown.

Councilmember Mark Kuharski reported the city is going in a great direction and the Sunseeker opening offers tremendous opportunity for the city.

Councilmember Donna Peterman reported that the city of Punta Gorda has an important vote on land development regulations coming up on September 3, 2023.

Keith Farlow reported that the restaurant business is going well.

Kelly Williamson reported that the hotel is doing great.

Gary Butler reported the city is renting the theater while city hall is being renovated. Gary also reported that they have made changes based on research about what musical genres people want to hear and the theater’s ticket sales are up 70%.

Kathy Burnam advised they have their International Culture Fest on August 26. Burnam also advised recent the GM of the suites has had a lot of last-minute walk ins and they’ve almost sold out.

Robin Madden advised two bigger houses are coming back into the rental program. Madden continued to report rental property owners are wanting to increase rates. Madden also reported real estate inventory is increasing and real estate has slowed down a bit.

XVI. Next Scheduled Meeting

The next scheduled TDC meeting is at 9:00 a.m. Friday, October 13, 2023. The meeting will be held in the B-106 Conference Room, Administration Building, 18500 Murdock Circle, Port Charlotte.

XVII. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 11:13 a.m.