

**PASCO COUNTY TOURIST DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL  
REGULAR MEETING**

**MINUTES**

**JULY 15, 2015**

**PREPARED IN THE OFFICE OF  
PAULA S. O'NEIL, CLERK & COMPTROLLER**

**THE MINUTES WERE PREPARED  
IN AGENDA ORDER AS  
PUBLISHED AND NOT IN THE  
ORDER THE ITEMS WERE HEARD**

**9:00 A.M.**

**HISTORIC PASCO COUNTY COURTHOUSE  
BOARD ROOM 2ND FLOOR  
37918 MERIDIAN AVENUE  
DADE CITY, FL**

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**Tourist Development Council Members**

**The Honorable Kathryn Starkey**  
Chairman, Board of County Commissioners

**The Honorable Camille Hernandez**  
Vice-Chairman, Mayor, City of Dade City

**The Honorable Chopper Davis - ABSENT**  
Councilman, City of New Port Richey

**Toby Caroline**  
Paradise Lakes Resorts

**Gail Cushman**  
Days Inn and Suites

**Pat Ciaccio**  
Saddlebrook Resort

**Jack Phethean**  
Little Everglades

**Piyush Mulji**  
Hampton Inn Dade City / Zephyrhills

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**1. CALL TO ORDER – 9:00 A.M. Chairman**

Chairman Starkey called the meeting to order at 9:03 a.m.

## 2. Invocation, Pledge of Allegiance

Ms. Donalee Schmidt, Deputy Clerk, gave the invocation and led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

## 3. Roll Call

Ms. Schmidt called the roll. All members were present with the exception of Councilman Chopper Davis who was absent.

## 4. Adoption of Minutes

### a. TDC Minutes April 15, 2015

Chairman Starkey requested a motion to approve the April 15, 2015 meeting minutes.

**MAYOR HERNANDEZ MOVED** approval of the April 15, 2015 minutes; **MR. CACCIO SECONDED.**

Chairman Starkey called on the motion; the vote was unanimous and the motion carried.

## 5. Public Comment

No one spoke.

## 6. New Business

### a. Presentation – Coast to Coast Trail, Allen Howell - TD15-051

Mr. Allen Howell, Planner II, reviewed the item and noted a large portion of the trail was located within Pasco County. He spoke extensively regarding the trail alignment, partners involved, trail standards and guidelines, marketing, branding, comfort stations, trail access, and the coordination of signage.

Discussion followed between the Committee Members and Staff regarding the request being to pay the consultant for the comprehensive package which would make the trail a cohesive unit across the State; that the trail real estate had been secured; the wayfinding was important to Pasco County in order to market amenities near the trail; economic benefits from the trail; the need to take advantage of this type of idea; trail events; Pasco had a good reputation for trails and roadways for biking; Dade City had the potential of benefiting greatly from the trail; the request was for \$2,500.00; and possible future financial requests.

Mr. Ed Caum, Tourism Manager, stated Staff's recommendation was to fund the \$2,500.00. He explained the funding was available under "Other Contracted Services".

**MAYOR HERNANDEZ MOVED** to recommend approval of the \$2,500.00 to be allocated to the Coast to Coast Trail Connector; **MS. CUSHMAN SECONDED.**

Chairman Starkey called on the motion; the vote was unanimous and the motion carried.

Chairman Starkey noted a gentleman in Dade City was working on a website called "bikepasco". She explained further that he had joined the BPAC and requested he be invited to make a presentation before the Committee.

**b. Special Events Grants Presentation - TD15-050**

Mr. Ed Caum, Tourism Manager, explained this item would all the use of tourism dollars to help local events market their events. He felt Staff had done a great job of providing the Committee with the best packet which included Staff recommendations for scoring and funding, as well as comments regarding the packets submitted. He reviewed the process that would be followed.

Each of the following organizations gave presentations regarding their event, past events held, economic impacts, associated events, past and projected event attendance, event marketing and advertising, marketing plans, recycling, and room night projections.

The Council Members asked various questions regarding the events. The representatives responded to the questions asked by the Council Members.

**Bug Jam – Randy Yoho**  
**Funding Requested - \$26,500.00**  
**OTD recommended funding in the amount of \$10,000.00**

**Chasco Fiesta – Dan Sullivan**  
**Funding Requested – \$26,600.00**  
**OTD recommended funding in the amount of \$18,000.00**

**Cotee River Bike Fest – Chip Wichmanowski**  
**Funding Requested – \$0**  
**OTD recommended funding in the amount of \$2,200.00**

**Kumquat Festival – Joey Wubbena**  
**Funding Requested – \$7,300.00**

**OTD recommended funding in the amount of \$7,300.00**

**Pasco County Fair – Richard Brown**

**Funding Requested – \$25,000.00**

**OTD recommended funding in the amount of \$5,000.00**

**Rattlesnake Festival – Betty Burke**

**Funding Requested – \$2,200.00**

**OTD recommended funding in the amount of \$2,200.00**

**Suncoast Arts Festival – Jennifer Douglas & Pam Marron**

**Funding Requested – \$5,749.00**

**OTD recommended funding in the amount of \$5,800.00**

Mr. Caum explained that Staff had prepared a memorandum with a recommended funding amount and spoke regarding Staff's efforts for marketing the events outside of the grant funding.

Ms. Lauren St. Martin, Tourism Marketing Coordinator, spoke regarding the need for transparency and reviewed the process followed.

Mr. Caum noted in some instances they were being asked for 100 percent of the event marketing budget. Staff felt to pay 100 percent of their marketing budget was too high. He explained there was \$80,000.00 available with \$93,000.00 requested. He stated they were not required to use all of the funding available. Last year they did not use all of the funding which allowed Staff to strategically invest money in other markets in order to collaterally market with their partners. Staff recommended to fund the events to \$50,500.00 which would leave \$29,000.00 to allow Staff to continue to use unique marketing to bring people in from outside of the County.

Ms. St. Martin reviewed the breakdown of the suggested funding amounts and possible use of social media campaigning. She reviewed possible marketing efforts.

Mr. Caum spoke regarding Visit Florida Grants and a suggestion of funding Visit Florida memberships for the grant applicants. He spoke regarding Visit Florida Grants received from other local events. He explained Staff had made recommendations and the Committee could move forward with those recommendations or go through the scoring process.

The Committee Members commended Staff for their efforts regarding the information contained in the packet.

Ms. Roni Lloyd, Sports Marketing Coordinator, explained Staff reviewed the criteria and evaluation process knowing this was not the right time to make changes. She felt they could tighten up the criteria and noted the current system could be manipulated. She

felt the scoring and evaluation process needed to be revised in order to remove the manipulation that could be done.

Several of the Grant Applicants spoke regarding their appreciation for Staff's assistance; that Staff had more buying power than the small events; the majority of the events were run by volunteers; the Go Digital marketing; and the applicants wanted to know the results of Staff's efforts.

Extensive Discussion followed between the Committee Members and Staff regarding the comments listed by Staff; the monitoring process followed for the events; that the information contained in the post-event reports would benefit the TDC; the addition of a housing authority to assist in tracking room nights; event advertising done by Staff; the scoring matrix; subjectivity; the event coordinators were not marketing or advertising people; the process followed by Staff in developing their funding recommendation for the Bug Jam and Chasco Fiesta; the Return on Investment (ROI); brand power; advertising partnerships; the need for thorough applications; they were a Destination Marketing Organization (DMO); some packets were returned to the applicant in order to submit additional information; the amount requested should not be for their full marketing plan; the Bug Jam and the Chasco Fiesta funding requests versus Staff's recommended funding amounts; Staff's review processes; the Kumquat Festival and the Cotee River Bike Fest; not funding events at prior funding levels; partnerships between the County and the event planners; retail marketing; the target range for marketing efforts; scoring processes; event marketing done by Staff; local advertising did not lead to Pasco County becoming a regional player; TDC funding was supposed to be used for Regional/out-of-County advertising that was monitored by Staff; event cutbacks; the TDC advertising budget; the approval process for event marketing plans; marketing time lines; Staff's recommended amounts for each event; event sponsors did not ask for matching funds; Staff did what was asked of them by the TDC; the Bug Jam and the Pasco County Fair would not benefit from the scoring; the Pasco County Fair requested increased funding; advertising with more than one cable provider; overnight stays generated money; there was no increase in participation at the Pasco County Fair; marketing that worked best for the Pasco County Fair; County Fairs were not a Tourism generator; the Statute did not mandate overnight stays and it may be easier to review each event individually; hotels would have a conflict of interest if they were contracted as the host hotel; increased marketing budgets; and well-crafted marketing plans.

Mr. Randy Yoho, President Florida Bug Jam, noted they spent more on advertising than what was listed on their application. He spoke regarding advertising dollars, TDC percentages, grant amounts, and outside advertising budgets.

Mr. Richard Brown, Vice-President Pasco County Fair, noted they spent \$16,000.00 in advertising the year before. He appreciated the social and go-digital efforts; however, he felt the amounts being suggested by Staff would hurt both events. He spoke regarding increased television ads with Bright House, the total advertising budget for 2015 was \$29,400.00, the marketing budget for 2012 was approximately eighteen to twenty thousand dollars, and decreased attendance due to weather. He noted receiving

\$5,000.00 for the event would not be worth their efforts and he would not come back to the TDC for future funding.

Ms. Jennifer Douglas, Suncoast Arts Festival representative, spoke regarding in-kind support and being able to quantify what the grant allowed event planners to leverage.

Chairman Starkey spoke regarding next steps, the experience Staff brought to event volunteers, and whether the Committee Members wanted to discuss events individually or simply score the events.

Mr. Caum stated the Committee Members could do the scoring process or they could make adjustments to Staff's recommendations based on their own knowledge of each event. He spoke regarding the scoring process, specific event support, Staff's marketing value, and that Suncoast Arts Festival had obtained a professional event planner.

Discussion followed between the Committee Members and Staff regarding the Pasco County Fair; the Bug Jam; the available amount of TDC funding; spending TDC money with greater ROI; and the value of smaller events.

**MAYOR HERNANDEZ MOVED** approval of Staff's recommendation for funding of the following events; Chasco Fiesta, Cotee River Bike Fest, Kumquat Festival, Rattlesnake Festival, and Suncoast Arts Festival. **THERE WAS NO SECOND TO THE MOTION.**

Mr. Caum suggested that each event be voted on individually due to conflicts of interest on select events. He spoke regarding fair treatment to all events.

Chairman Starkey recommended lower amounts for the Chasco Fiesta, Cotee River Bike Fest, Kumquat Festival, Rattlesnake Festival, and Suncoast Arts Festival in order to give more funding to the Pasco County Fair and the Bug Jam.

**MAYOR HERNANDEZ MOVED** approval to grant the Chasco Fiesta \$18,000.00; **MS. CUSHMAN SECONDED.**

Chairman Starkey called on the motion; the vote was unanimous and the motion carried.

**MAYOR HERNANDEZ MOVED** approval to grant the Cotee River Bike Fest \$2,200.00; **MR. MULJI SECONDED.**

Chairman Starkey called on the motion; the vote was unanimous and the motion carried.

**MAYOR HERNANDEZ MOVED** approval to grant the Kumquat Festival \$7,300.00; **MS. CUSHMAN SECONDED.**

Chairman Starkey called on the motion; the vote was unanimous and the motion carried.

**MAYOR HERNANDEZ MOVED** approval to grant the Rattlesnake Festival \$2,200.00; **MS. CAROLINE SECONDED.**

Chairman Starkey called on the motion; the vote was unanimous and the motion carried.

**MAYOR HERNANDEZ MOVED** approval to grant the Suncoast Arts Festival \$5,800.00; **MS. CAROLINE SECONDED.**

Chairman Starkey called on the motion; the vote was unanimous and the motion carried.

Chairman Starkey noted the Bug Jam requested \$26,500.00 and Staff recommended \$10,000.00. She requested a motion for the Bug Jam.

**MR. PHETHEAN MOVED** approval to grant the Bug Jam \$15,000.00; **MAYOR HERNANDEZ SECONDED.**

Chairman Starkey called on the motion; the vote was unanimous and the motion carried.

Chairman Starkey requested a motion for the Pasco County Fair.

**MR. PHETHEAN MOVED** approval to grant the Pasco County Fair \$15,000.00; **MAYOR HERNANDEZ SECONDED.**

The Committee and Staff held discussion regarding the motion; and events that did not collect entry fees.

**MR. PHETHEAN AMENDED** his motion of approval to grant the Pasco County Fair \$12,500.00; **MAYOR HERNANDEZ SECONDED THE AMENDMENT.**

Chairman Starkey called on the motion; the vote was unanimous and the motion carried.

Mr. Caum asked Ms. Cushman if she abstained from the vote for the Cotee River Bike Fest.

Ms. Cushman noted she did not have an agreement with the event and therefore she did not abstain from the vote.

Mr. Caum reviewed the TDC processes. He stated the remaining TDC funds would go toward marketing. He spoke regarding Pasco Partners and scaling back the co-op

marketing, outdoor adventure facilities, Tourism advertising within Pasco County, funding for grant recipients and marketing efforts, and feedback from Pasco County partners.

## **7. Old BUSINESS**

### **a. All Sports Arena - TD15-047**

Mr. Ed Caum, Tourism Manager, stated the flyer that Mr. Matt Garry presented to the TDC for an event to be held at his facility, All Sports Arena, was the only marketing effort made. He noted Staff asked Mr. Garry for a better marketing plan; however, no changes were made. Staff could not recommend the item to the TDC based on the required criteria which was the reason for not moving the item forward to the Board of County Commissioners.

Ms. Roni Lloyd, Sports Marketing Coordinator, explained that the item came to the attention of Ms. Elizabeth Blair, Senior Assistant County Attorney, during the agreement negotiation process. Ms. Lloyd held a meeting with Mr. Garry and his volunteer marketing staff to review good marketing strategies. She stated after ten months Mr. Garry did not have a marketing plan in place and the only marketing tool used was the original flyer. She noted that the Senior Assistant County Attorney was not able to draft a legal agreement based on what she was provided.

Mr. Caum stated the flyer not only had the wrong Pasco County logo but that it also suggested out-of-County activities to the participants.

Ms. Cushman noted a function held in June at All Sports Arena which brought out-of-State visitors to her hotel. She spoke regarding thirty rooms that were booked for six nights by a Canada based team coming to the arena in October, week long stays booked for groups from New Jersey, Georgia, and Alabama, and that whatever marketing efforts were being made produced room nights.

Mr. Caum noted that when it came to TDC funding the Committee Members were the judicial arm of the Board of County Commissioners. He stated that if they were audited there was a shaky paper trail and that Staff had to be cautious on how funding was spent.

Ms. Elizabeth Blair, Senior Assistant County Attorney, spoke regarding how she first became aware of the issue, the process of developing an agreement, her due diligence reviewing the event's website which had no mention of Pasco County, a flyer listed on All Sports Arena's Facebook page, an email sent to Mr. Garry with the County Attorney's Office concerns listed, the flyer mentioned a non-existing Capital Pasco County Casino gambling boat, discounted restaurants and night clubs were not a good way to promote Pasco County, clipart and old logos used on the promotional flyer, and Statute requirement concerns. She stated she had an issue giving TDC funding to Mr. Garry when he was not marketing Pasco County and could not draft an agreement



based on the direction that was given to Mr. Garry and Staff. She asked for direction on drafting a legal binding agreement for an event that occurred without the requested changes.

Mr. Caccio noted the objective of the TDC was to support businesses in the area that would work with the County to help market successful ventures. He did not feel that the Pasco County TDC should fund marketing for several other Counties.

Discussion followed between the Committee Members and Staff regarding Mr. Garry's skill set; suggestions made by the TDC that were not acted on; requested funding without the recommendations from Staff being implemented; the event's multiple titles caused confusion among the spectators; professional marketing was needed for the events; a recommendation to reconsider the prior action made regarding the item; potential auditing situations; out-of-County sponsorships; incorrect figures on post-event reports; and funding recommendations.

Mr. Caum stated Staff's recommendation was to reconsider the prior action made at the April 15, 2015 TDC meeting regarding TDC file number TD15-047, not to fund the June event held at All Sports Arena, and to withdraw the recommendation to present the item to the Board of County Commissioners.

Mayor Hernandez left meeting at 12:00 p.m.

Mr. Caum noted Ms. Cushman was abstaining from the vote due to a conflict of interest and that Mayor Hernandez had left the meeting due to a prior engagement.

**MR. CACCIO MOVED** to reconsider the actions taken place at the April 15, 2015 TDC meeting regarding TDC file number TD15-047; **MR. PHETHEAN SECONDED.**

Chairman Starkey called on the motion; the motion carried with Ms. Cushman abstaining from the vote due to a conflict of interest and with Mayor Hernandez absent during the vote.

Ms. Blair suggested a motion be made to deny or overturn the recommendation for funding.

**MR. CACCIO MOVED** to deny funds to All Sports Arena for the Tampa Bay Shoot Out that was originally awarded on April 15, 2015; **MR. PHETHEAN SECONDED.**

Chairman Starkey called on the motion; the motion carried with Ms. Cushman abstaining from the vote due to a conflict of interest and with Mayor Hernandez was absent during the vote.

## **8. Tourism Manager's Report - TD15-049**

Mr. Ed Caum, Tourism Manager, reviewed the Tourism Manager's Report. He noted that he attended the Marketing Summit. He spoke regarding the Tourism Society Marketing Conference coming in August, his reappointment to the Cultural Heritage Rural Committee for Visit Florida, an invitation extended to him to sit on the Marketing Council for Visit Florida, and being selected to serve on the Leadership Pasco Board.

## **9. Old Business**

Mr. Ed Caum, Tourism Manager, invited everyone to visit the new Tourism Office. He spoke regarding TDC funds that were used to pay for officers to be present at the soft opening held at SunWest Park on July 4<sup>th</sup>, Staff's concern for regional visitors, and discussions held with the County Attorney's Office to provide security for the opening.

Chairman Starkey stated she did not agree with the TDC paying for security at SunWest Park. She spoke regarding entry fees for the park and that the contracted provider who was operating the park should be responsible for providing security.

Mr. Phethean asked about the outcome of additional funding requested by Commissioner Mariano.

Chairman Starkey spoke regarding the building plan for the park, over funding of Phase I, and that although the park was a wonderful amenity for Pasco County citizens it was not a proven Tourism site.

Ms. Roni Lloyd, Sports Marketing Coordinator, gave her thoughts on why the park did not qualify as a Tourism asset. She spoke regarding the opportunity to host one of the top two largest, internationally marketed obstacle races which normally took place in Tampa; however, the private entity could not come to an agreement and the park did not have enough parking to accommodate such a large event.

Mr. Caum thanked Mr. Caccio and Saddlebrook for hosting the July 30<sup>th</sup> TDC Workshop. He spoke regarding the PowerPoint presentation planned for the workshop, growth of the Tourism Office staff, and the TDC's five-year plan that could be changed annually.

Ms. Lloyd stated the grant application for the Dick's Lacrosse Tournament was submitted to the State. She would meet with Dick's Sporting Goods to renegotiate the event contract as well as the Colorado based event management team, NDP. She stated she was searching for new revenue streams with potential Tampa Bay Sports Commission sponsorship opportunities. The Tampa Bay Sports Commission could not make any changes until 2016 and they were open to working with Pasco County. She spoke regarding hotel percentages, support given by Saddlebrook, the Wesley Chapel Athletic Association (WCAA) and Parks & Recreation field fees.

Mr. Caccio stated Mr. Josh Gross from NDP appreciated the information provided by Staff. He noted that Mr. Gross was taking tours of local hotels and he was meeting with the Tampa Bay Sports Commission. Mr. Caccio spoke regarding sponsorship opportunities to offset funding, major sponsors of the event were Dick's Sport Goods and Under Armor, and that local business could be contacted for different levels of sponsorship.

Discussion between the Committee Members and Staff was held regarding event sponsorships; creating a department of sponsorships; WCAA and Parks & Recreation fields; sponsorship solicitation efforts; the event impacted central Pasco County; the County owned property ran by the WCAA; Parks & Recreation charged Visit Pasco to use fields; the Dick's Lacrosse Tournament; the potential to expand a park; the amount and accessibility of available fields; operational issues; the School District was beginning their process for a large complex on overpass; Tourism dollars would pay for the custodian's overtime and for using high school fields; contract requirements; community support and partnerships; and creative opportunities for rebates in the Tampa Bay area or a Tampa Bay Sports Commission sponsorship.

Ms. Lauren St. Martin, Tourism Marketing Coordinator, spoke regarding the Tourism newsletter, website updates, monthly featured articles, and increased social media fans.

Mr. Caum spoke regarding Tree Hoppers which was a cable adventure park that would be opening in the St. Joe area.

#### **10. Board Member Comments**

None.

#### **11. Adjournment**

**MS. CAROLINE MOVED** to adjourn.

The meeting adjourned at 12:34 p.m.

TOURIST DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL  
REGULAR MEETING  
JULY 15, 2015

(SEAL)

*Office of Paula S. O'Neil, Clerk & Comptroller*

Prepared by: \_\_\_\_\_  
Tammy Glisson, Records Clerk  
Board Records Department