

PASCO COUNTY TOURIST DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL
HYBRID/VIRTUAL MEETING

ANNOTATED MINUTES

AUGUST 12, 2020

PREPARED IN THE OFFICE OF
NIKKI ALVAREZ-SOWLES, Esq., CLERK & COMPTROLLER

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

9:30 A.M.

HISTORIC PASCO COUNTY COURTHOUSE BOARD ROOM 2ND FLOOR
37918 MERIDIAN AVENUE, DADE CITY, FL 33525

Tourist Development Council

The Honorable Mike Moore
Chairman, BCC

The Honorable Kenneth M. Burgess, Jr.
Council President, City of Zephyrhills

The Honorable Chopper Davis
Councilman, City of New Port Richey

Mike Kidd
Hilton Garden Inn, Lutz

Judy Sutton
Quality Inn, Port Richey

Robert Riehle
Saddlebrook Resort

Wendy Longman
Windsong Charters

Greg Lenner
Shoppes at Wiregrass

Legal Staff:
Elizabeth Blair
Senior Assistant County Attorney

Mike Bishop
Director of Stakeholder Engagement
for the Pasco EDC

Staff:
Adam Thomas, DMO Director
Experience Florida's Sports Coast
Shelly Bandy, Project Coordinator III
Maria Gabriela LaJeunesse
Industry Relations Coordinator
Anthony Stinsman
Tourism Sales Manager

Consuelo Sanchez
Tourism Program Manager
Kolby Gayson
Communications Manager
Kayla Getz
Visitor Service Representative

A. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Moore called the meeting to order at 9:30a.m.

Invocation

Pledge of Allegiance

Ms. Shannon Egbert, Deputy Clerk, gave the Invocation and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call

Ms. Egbert called the roll. All members were present with Mr. Riehle arriving to the meeting at 9:31 a.m. and Mr. Bishop arriving virtually at 9:42 a.m.

B. OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

There was no public comment.

Ms. Blair explained the virtual meeting procedures.

MR. RIEHLE ARRIVED TO THE MEETING AT 9:31 A.M.

C. APPROVE THE MINUTES OF MEETING (Chairman Moore)

C.1. Approve June 17th TDC Minutes as presented

The Council approved the June 17, 2020 TDC Minutes by a roll call vote with Mr. Bishop absent from the vote.

D. PRESENTATIONS / FUNDING REQUESTS

D-1. PRESENTATIONS

D-1.1. Dade City Bike HUB Presentation Update (Melonie Romagnoli)

Ms. Melanie Romagnoli, Community and Economic Development Director for Dade City, reviewed the item using a PowerPoint presentation. She mentioned the planned Visitor Information Center and the conceptual plan of the adjacent park in relation to the Historic Courthouse and the Hardy Trail. Church Street was the entrance to the Historic

District listed in the National Registry, the surrounding area offered numerous historical sites, and a common element in the area were the columns on most homes. The interior of the Visitor Information Center would include displays and kiosks from local tourism partners and sponsors along with third party vendor space. She showed several construction and elevation options including building materials, the porches, and the columns along with the planned color palette. One option would use street bricks the City already had in storage for the base of the columns and the walkways. The total cost of the project over the next few years including the purchase of the land would be approximately \$3,000,000.00.

Brief discussion followed regarding funding options and the 2017 Strategic Plan approval of funding.

The item was for information only. No action was required.

MR. BISHOP ARRIVED TO THE MEETING VIRTUALLY AT 9:42 A.M.

D-1.2. USA BMX Presentation (Delaney Morrison)

Mr. Thomas stated the US Bike Track Organization, working with Commissioner Starkey, had approached the Tourism Office and the Parks Department as to the possibility of building and operating a large bike track in Pasco County.

Ms. Delaney Morrison, president of Ride Local, along with Mr. Justin Ritter, Treasurer of Ride Local, used a PowerPoint Presentation to review the item. Goals included establishing a world class track, establishing Pasco County as one of the nation's most bicycle friendly communities, bringing new riders to the County, and maintaining a good partnership with Pasco County. New events like drone races would bring Boy Scouts and other groups, food trucks, and further family recreation. She spoke regarding the history of BMX racing, USA BMX tracks operating globally, community inspiration including education, tourism, recreational programs, integration with school programs, the economic impact of BMX over other sports programs, the proposed track location was already owned by Pasco County Utilities, a future planned school site adjacent to the park would provide parking for weekend events with other local businesses supporting the track as well, the site would provide visibility, coordination opportunities with other nearby tracks which would increase overnight visitors and support the local economy, community involvement, and expansion options. She spoke further on the amenities of the planned BMX track including hosting other tourism events. The economic impact of similar events in other states indicated a high return of revenue both in business sales and taxes. She mentioned an event in Ohio held in July during the COVID pandemic which drew in over ten thousand attendees. USA BMX had guaranteed one national race to the proposed track in Pasco County for three years and the track could bid on further races after that.

Discussion between Chairman Moore and Ms. Morrison followed regarding if Ride Local had the capital to build the facility; the option to install solar panels on the roof of the facility; Legoland had a partnership with Tampa Electric which the solar panels generated enough power for 730,000 customers; the proposed facility would be the only covered facility in the area; a possible land deal for the facility; there was not enough money available in the Tourism budget for a capital project such as this because of previous allocations to Wiregrass Sports Camp and the Bike Hub in Dade City; and a portion of Tourism's budget was allocated to events creating heads in beds for the area including the type of events at the proposed BMX track.

Ms. Longman liked the idea of the BMX track and noted it was a great social distancing sport.

The item was for information only. No action was required.

D-2. FUNDING REQUESTS (Consuelo Sanchez)

D-2.1. Marketing Matching Sponsorship Program

Ms. Sanchez spoke regarding the new marketing program which had recently been approved by the TDC that required applicant training to know exactly what was expected of them, particular forms and documents, reimbursable marketing expenditures, and advertising requirements. Any changes to the event's marketing plan had to be approved by Staff. She spoke further on the efforts to attract more visitors to the area. She noted that if an event was cancelled and the advertising had already been paid for, the grant would still be valid.

The item was for information only. No action was required.

D-2.1.1. Chasco Fiesta

Ms. Sanchez summarized the application. Staff recommended a \$5,000.00 grant.

The Council approved Staff's recommendation for D-2.1.1.- Chasco Fiesta, D-2.1.2. - Kumquat Festival, and D-2.1.3. – Pigz in Z/Hills BBQ & Blues Fest by a roll call vote.

D-2.1.2. Kumquat Festival

Ms. Sanchez summarized the application. Staff recommended a \$5,000.00 grant.

Mr. John Moors, Executive Director of the Dade City Chamber, spoke regarding the new application and the new advertising requirements. He was working with other partners to manage the pandemic and social distancing at the Festival. He was excited about the new Bike Center in Dade City.

The Council approved Staff's recommendation for D-2.1.1.- Chasco Fiesta, D-2.1.2. - Kumquat Festival, and D-2.1.3. – Pigz in Z/Hills BBQ & Blues Fest by a roll call vote.

D-2.1.3. Pigz in Z/Hills BBQ & Blues Fest

Ms. Sanchez summarized the application. Staff recommended a \$4,000.00 grant.

The Council approved Staff's recommendation for D-2.1.1.- Chasco Fiesta, D-2.1.2. - Kumquat Festival, and D-2.1.3. – Pigz in Z/Hills BBQ & Blues Fest by a roll call vote.

D-2.2. Sports Event Funding Program (Consuelo Sanchez)

D-2.2.1. 2020 Southern Open Fishing Tournament

Ms. Sanchez spoke regarding the item and she stated the event would be held in St. Petersburg. This year it would be held at The Widow Fletcher's Tavern in New Port Richey. The 3-day event was expected to draw 150 participants plus spectators and would garner 230 room nights. The agreement offered up to \$2,400.00 depending on room nights at \$12.00 per night.

The Council approved Staff's recommendation by a roll call vote.

D-2.2.2. Candice Dupree Invitational - Girls' Basketball

Ms. Sanchez spoke regarding the item and she stated the girls' basketball tournament had always been held in Tampa. The two-day event would be held in late August of 2020, it would be the first traveling team event to be held at the Wiregrass Sports Campus, and it would produce more than 500 room nights at local hotels. Staff recommended \$6,000.00 depending on room nights at \$12.00 per night for the funding agreement.

The Council approved Staff's recommendation by a roll call vote.

D-2.2.3. Blue Star 30 - Girls' Basketball

Ms. Sanchez spoke regarding the item and she stated the four-day basketball event for high school girls' teams was held in Tampa in past years. The event was usually coordinated with NCAA observation periods to allow college recruiters to watch and scout for new players. Back in June, the TDC approved funding for high school athletics tournaments but these were cancelled due to the pandemic. Blue Star received permission from the NCAA to host the event in September 2020, at the Wiregrass Sports Campus. The event would normally be held in New Orleans in April but was cancelled due to the pandemic. The event would draw 280 athletes along with families, recruiters, and national media coverage with 872 projected room nights. Staff recommended funding in the amount of \$10,000.00 with half of it going toward room night allocations and the other half to offset the cost of rent at the venue.

Chairman Moore asked why not allocate the funds based on room nights, and why were the funds going to reimburse rental fees at the Wiregrass Campus which needed to generate revenue to pay the County back for the original funding. He felt the TDC should not be reimbursing rental fees at its own facility when trying to generate revenue.

Ms. Sanchez continued and explained that almost all applicants and events asked for funding. Applicants often asked for free or no charge for venues, advertising, and volunteers. The end result was to keep events coming back to Pasco County.

Discussion followed regarding room night fee generation; the specifics and legal requirements of the contract with Radd Sports regarding the rental fees; standard event financial requirements and criteria; other funding options; capping the amount the TDC allowed for offsetting rental fees; what other counties were doing regarding the fees and "guaranteed incentives;" different types of events requesting different offset costs; and the long-term effects of the pandemic on events of this nature.

Ms. Blair spoke regarding other similar events where the County paid venue rental fees and said this request was not uncommon. Her main concern was compliance with the terms of the agreement the County had with Radd Sports.

Mr. Thomas pointed out Pasco County had a relatively high reimbursement plan for most events in an effort to keep events coming back.

The Council approved sponsoring the event at \$2,500.00 along with full reimbursement based on room night generation at \$12.00 per room night by a roll call vote with Mr. Kidd voting nay.

Ms. Sanchez clarified the rental fees for the Campus and agreed to make that information part of future presentations to the Council.

D-2.2.4. Tampa Bay Beach Bums - Beach Volleyball

Ms. Sanchez spoke regarding the item and she stated TBBB usually hosted their events on public beaches in Florida but that was not possible right now. Staff had visited the SunWest facility last year but the facility was not ready for multiple reasons. TBBB hosted another recent event at The Beach at Bishop, a High School in Springhill. TBBB expected approximately 100 teams and 215 room nights. Staff recommended funding up to \$2,400.00 based on \$12.00 per room night.

Discussion followed regarding the SunWest facilities and recommendations from volleyball promoters/experts regarding future events at SunWest.

The Council approved Staff's recommendation by a roll call vote.

D-2.2.5. AJGA at Saddlebrook Qualifier and Junior Championships

Ms. Sanchez reviewed the item. The event expected 150 new junior players along with spectators and families with a projection of 250 room nights. Staff recommended funding up to \$3,000.00 based on \$12.00 per room night.

The Council approved Staff's recommendation by a roll call vote.

E. SPORTS DEVELOPMENT UPDATE (Consuelo Sanchez)

E-1. Upcoming Events

Ms. Sanchez reviewed the item. The BlueLine Hockey Tournament was the largest tournament Pasco County had ever hosted, the event would be using other local facilities as well due to the number of teams, and that local rooms for the Labor Day event were sold out. Staff and the associated parties were in discussion on keeping the event in Pasco for the next four years. The room night projections were approximately 700 in the area.

The item was for information only. No action was required.

E-2. Site Visits Update

Mr. Thomas and Ms. Gayson toured the new snow park in Dade City and were very impressed. It would be a "game-changer" for Pasco tourism. A recent small media event about it generated millions in earned media value for both Treehoppers and Pasco County.

E-3. New Events

Ms. Sanchez provided a list in the Agenda of upcoming events and mentioned that several had already been secured. Pasco had recently hosted a USA Volleyball Event and the event would be returning next year with two events on an annual basis.

Councilman Davis complimented Staff on their work securing events and he was very pleased with the current lineup of events.

The item was for information only. No action was required.

E-4. TORHS National Championships Update

Ms. Sanchez said the ten-day hockey event in July drew in 113 teams and an estimated 761 room nights. The facility had taken precautions and developed protocols to keep attendees safe.

The item was for information only. No action was required.

F. INDUSTRY RELATIONS REPORT (Consuelo Sanchez)

F-1. Industry Relations Update

Mr. Thomas reviewed the item. A virtual stakeholder meeting was planned for the end of the month. The Office of Economic Growth would present the Global Virus Alliance Council's new Star Accreditation Program. The program was to help local businesses assure customers they were practicing safety measures. The Florida Gulfcoast Film page on the website offered information about the film industry in Pasco County. Staff attended the grand opening of the Main Event in Wesley Chapel. The new outdoor container park and entertainments venue, KRATE, at the Grove, would be hosting a Country Music Festival in the near future.

The item was for information only. No action was required.

G. MEDIA REPORT (Kolby Gayson)

G-1. Marketing / Recovery Campaign Update

Ms. Gayson used a PowerPoint Presentation to review the item. She mentioned the scalloping event in May, marketing efforts for the event, social media and digital related marketing efforts, marketing for other venues and events, in-state and out-of-state travel restrictions, and diversity in marketing.

The item was for information only. No action was required.

G-2. Social Media Update

Ms. Gayson said the campaign for scalloping ran from June 1st through the end of the scallop season, July 26th, with a total spent just under \$2,000.00. She mentioned demographics, audience reach, impressions, and the overall reach of the campaign. She felt the “silver lining” in the COVID period was forced refocusing of the marketing efforts and the target audience.

Ms. Longman mentioned receiving calls from people wanting to go to scalloping and she had never seen so many boats on the river.

Chairman Moore noted that Commissioner Mike Wells was advocating for the State to get the season extended. The State would be using a scientific approach to determine increasing the season.

The item was for information only. No action was required.

G-3. PR / FAM Tour Updates

Ms. Gayson used a PowerPoint Presentation to present an update on the FAM Tour which was cancelled due to COVID-19. She mentioned news outlets, local press, and other live “virtual spots” to get the perspective from a tour operator, a local fishing captain and a local chef. A “payoff” from last year’s FAM which featured Pasco in several articles and websites with a reach of 7.3 million with an estimated earned media value of \$55,000.00. She mentioned a local tea sommelier in Pasco County who was interviewed by Forbes was able to weave Pasco County’s brand into the healthy benefits of tea.

The item was for information only. No action was required.

H. DESTINATION REPORT (Adam Thomas)

H-1. Destination Update: STR / ATR / TDT Revenue

Mr. Thomas gave an update using a PowerPoint Presentation to explain reduced revenue, occupancy, and tax generation. He said the numbers were currently “a roller coaster ride.”

Ms. Sutton, Mr. Riehle, and Mr. Kidd, all in the hospitality industry, noted their bookings were up including corporate and golf tour bookings.

The item was for information only. No action was required.

I. OLD BUSINESS

I-1. Global Biorisk Advisory Council (GBAC) Update (Adam Thomas)

Mr. Thomas used a PowerPoint Presentation to update the TDC on the GBAC which was an infectious disease response and recovery effort for businesses. There were some reimbursable upfront costs based on the size of the business. He felt this was a good way to spark consumer confidence.

The item was for information only. No action was required.

J. NEW BUSINESS

J-1. Wiregrass Ranch Sports Campus of Pasco County – Grand Opening (Adam Thomas)

Mr. Thomas said the Campus would hold the Grand Opening on August 27th with limited attendance to include a media presence. There would be a tour of the facility with interaction for the TDC, Staff, and the media.

The item was for information only. No action was required.

**J-2. CARES Act – Reimbursable Marketing Campaign Funding
(Adam Thomas)**

Mr. Thomas reviewed the item using a PowerPoint Presentation. He spoke regarding the CARES Act funds which could be used to assure the public of a safe experience at various events in order to promote tourism.

The item was for information only. No action was required.

J-3. Draft FY21 Budget (Adam Thomas & Justin Komninos)

Mr. Thomas reviewed the item using a PowerPoint Presentation explaining the revised 2020 revenue projections based on the pandemic, which affected the FY21 budget and was based on conservative estimates. They were already seeing monthly revenue rising above the “low end” budget numbers. The timeline to get back revenue-wise to pre-COVID was projected to be 20 to 24 months.

Discussion followed regarding the category of the budget called “Other Uses;” the reserve amount policy; special projects funding; when revenue would be increased back to pre-COVID amounts; the plan to be very cautious and not overspend during the next 24 months; and how the emergency or reserve funds could be used only after TDC and Board of County Commissioner approval.

Mr. Bob Goehrig, Budget Director, spoke regarding reserves.

The item was for information only. No action was required.

J-4. Annual State Audit (Adam Thomas)

Mr. Thomas explained the legal requirements of the audit had been met and sent to the appropriate agencies. Basically it was an itemized account of all revenue and expenditures for last year.

The item was for information only. No action was required.

J-5. TDC Member Updates

Councilman Burgess noted that Skydive City in Zephyrhills was to host the USPA National Championships in November but it had been cancelled due to COVID. The Tennis Center was moving forward and was expected to open in September. It would offer a variety of fields for other sports.

Ms. Longman thanked Staff for the great job they were doing and felt the “numbers” were not as bad as she had expected. She suggested other initiatives for the snow park.

Both Councilman Davis and Mr. Lenners complimented Staff.

The item was for information only. No action was required.

K. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 11:43 a.m.

TOURIST DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL
HYBRID/VIRTUAL REGULAR MEETING
AUGUST 12, 2020



Office of Nikki Alvarez-Sowles, Esq., Pasco County Clerk & Comptroller

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Board Records Division