



TDC MEETING MINUTES

August 13, 2015

Commissioner Brian Hamman called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. and led the Pledge of Allegiance. Council members in attendance: Jeff Webb, René Affourtit, Fran Myers, Colleen DePasquale, Bill Waichulis, Pamela Cronin, Rob Wells and Mike Gibson. Tony Lapi and Anita Cereceda were excused.

Commissioner Brian Hamman welcomed Bonita Springs Councilman Mike Gibson to the TDC board.

René Affourtit made a motion, seconded by Mike Gibson to approve the TDC Meeting Minutes of June 11, 2015. The motion passed unanimously.

Public to be Heard

- Beth Oliver, Director of Marketing, Offshore Sailing School announced that their owner, Steve Colgate will be inducted into the Sailing Hall of Fame on Sunday, October 4th. Offshore Sailing will be holding a Regatta at Pink Shell on October 5-6th to raise money for Wounded Veterans. Beth thanked Ellis and his team at Pink Shell for hosting. Offshore Sailing School will be offering 2 for 1 sailing specials in September which will be held at South Seas. Go to <http://www.offshoresailing.com/offshore-sailing-school-fall-bonanza/> for more details.
- Bud Nocera, Fort Myers Beach Chamber Executive Director gave an overview of the construction on Estero Blvd on Fort Myers Beach. He also asked the TDC to consider issuing a grant to the Town of Fort Myers Beach to create a Social Media position to help get the word out to visitors about the construction in real time.
- Jack Carver, Florida RV Trade Association, announced their annual meeting will be held at the Sanibel Harbour Marriott Resort & Spa in September, and plan to have at least 250 attendees.
- Jim Larkin, General Manager, Crowne Plaza gave an update from the LCHA advocating the \$1.5 million additional marketing dollars be included to the VCB budget. LCHA leaders met with Roger Desjarlais to ask for BP funds be directed to tourism efforts instead of going into general fund. Jeff Webb and Jim Larkin attended the budget workshop with the BOCC and thanked the Commissioners Brian Hamman, John Manning and Cecil Pendergrass for supporting the tourism industry. Jim asked the TDC and BOCC to keep track of the \$5.2 million coming to Lee County from BP and requested that some of that money go towards tourism to make up for what tourism partners lost in revenues during that time. He thanked the TDC for the opportunity to speak.

Municipalities to be Heard

- None to be heard.

VCB Executive Director's Report

- Tamara Pigott reported that the preliminary bed tax collections for the month of May 2015 were \$2,207,043, a 10.6% increase over the preliminary collections in May 2014. The preliminary bed tax collections for the month of June 2015 were \$2,486,932, a 14.3% increase over June 2014.

- STR Report – Occupancy for May was up 2.4%, ADR increased by 8.9% and RevPAR was up 11.5%. Lee County experienced a 12.5 % increase in Room Revenue while Available Rooms increased by 1% and Rooms Sold were up by 3.4%. Occupancy for June was up 10.9%, ADR increased by 6.3% and RevPAR was up 17.8%. Lee County experienced a 19 % increase in Room Revenue while Available Rooms increased by 1% and Rooms Sold were up by 11.9%.
- RSW Report – Total Passenger count of 602,891 for May 2015, an increase of 2% over May 2014 and during June 2015, 481,512 passengers traveled through RSW, a 0.6% change over June 2014.
- Anna Stone gave an update for Sales in the 3rd quarter. In the 3rd quarter months, there were 157 leads and of those leads 30 became definite which created 8,660 room nights for the destination.
- Katie Meckley gave an update on Marketing. Expo Milan delivered over a billion impressions. The Saved by the Shell promotion created over 56 million impressions. She asked attendees to use #IslandHopper to see the tagboard of people in real time talking about the festival. The new Fall campaign is called “Fall Away.” We are encouraging people to use up those last vacation days and visit before the holidays. The VCB partnered with Chicago-based artist José Lerma to create three works inspired by the destination that will be displayed at Expo Chicago and seen throughout the city on wallsapes from August 17- September 20th.
- Judi Durant gave an update on Visitor Services. They have assisted 140,000 visitors to date. They have 124 volunteers and 2 of those have been with us for 25 years. The travel rally had 2,000 in attendance this year at Lakes Park. This year we have 636 nominations for the E Awards which will be held at the Hyatt Regency Coconut Point Resort & Spa on Thursday, August 27th.
- Marcia Wood, DPA gave the 2nd quarter research report for the Spring Season. During the spring of 2015, The Beaches of Fort Myers & Sanibel hosted about 1.3 million visitors who spent an estimated \$705 million while visiting – an increase in spending year-over-year. Visitors staying in paid accommodations spent an estimated \$472.5 million (67 percent of the total). Lee County’s lodging industry experienced year-over-year increases in average occupancy rate and average daily rate for the season, producing significant growth in revenue per available room (RevPAR).

Report of the Lee County Sports Development Executive Director

- Jeff Mielke reported numbers for spring 2015. During April, May and June 2015, Lee County hosted 43 events, bringing in 51,413 sports visitors to Lee County. The total direct and indirect economic impact during the three-month period totaled \$27.5 million.

Special Presentations

- Pamela Johnson gave a status update for the VCB’s 2013-2016 Strategic Plan. Pamela said we are right on track for where we need to be. We will begin to work on the next strategic plan soon.

New Business

- René Affourtit made a motion, seconded by Fran Myers to approve the 3rd Quarter Budget Report. The motion passed unanimously

TDC Member Items

- Bill Waichulis reported that the industry is projecting a good year. He projected that RevPAR will go up 6% and supply will stay low at 1.4%.
- Jeff Webb reminded everyone of the LCHA monthly meeting that will be held Wednesday, August 26th at 12 noon at The Hyatt Regency Coconut Point Resort & Spa. The speaker will be a panel discussion with Peggy Berg (Highland Group), Clayton Reid (MMGY) and Tom Story. County Manager, Roger Desjarlais will also be there to give an update on the budget. Tickets are available on the LCHA website. He also invited everyone to attend the E Awards on Thursday at the Hyatt

Regency Coconut Point Resort & Spa.

- Fran Myers said their meeting with the Port Authority was cancelled.
- Commissioner Brian Hamman thanked the TDC for their feedback, and asked that they keep up the good work and keep bringing people to visit and creating jobs.

The meeting adjourned at 10:49 a.m. The next regular meeting of the TDC is scheduled for **Thursday, November 12, 2015 at 9 a.m. in break-out room #A-1 at Harborside Event Center, 1375 Monroe Street, Fort Myers, FL 33901.**