



TDC MEETING MINUTES

February 8, 2018

Commissioner Cecil Pendergrass called the Lee County Tourist Development Council (TDC) meeting to order at 9:03 a.m.

Council members in attendance: Commissioner Cecil Pendergrass, Vice Chairman Rob Wells, René Affourtit, John Carioscia, Pamela Cronin, Colleen DePasquale, Brian Kramer, Tony Lapi, Fran Myers and Bill Waichulis.

Kevin Ruane made a motion to approve the Jan. 14, 2018, TDC meeting minutes. René Affourtit seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Public to be heard

Jack Carver, Florida RV Trade Association, reported to the council about the very successful 33rd Annual Fort Myers RV Show. There were approximately 11,000 in attendance. The next event will be held April 20-22, at the Lee County Sports Complex.

Beth Oliver, director of marketing, Offshore Sailing School, brought a 2018 Marist College calendar that, for August, included a photo of two of Offshore's sailboats in New York Harbor. To commemorate the sailing school's 50th anniversary in 2014, the sails included logos of The Beaches of Fort Myers & Sanibel and the sailing school. The calendar, promoting the Poughkeepsie, N.Y. college, reaches 50,000+ people and Oliver called it the gift that keeps on giving.

Municipalities to be heard

Judie Zimomra, Sanibel city manager, gave an update on the Boat Ramp Rehabilitation & Heritage Trail Installation Project. The project started on July 5, 2017. The total project cost was \$285,532.00. Zimomra announced that the project was completed as of January 2018.

Sports Development Update

Jeff Mielke, Sports Development director, reported 2017 year-end highlights including an increased number of annual events to 144 that resulted in more than 150,000 room nights sold and direct visitor spending of \$65,891,470.

Report of the Executive Director

Tamara Pigott reported that the preliminary resort tax collected for December 2017 was \$3,518,946, a 12.3 percent increase over December 2016 preliminary collections of \$3,134,913. Fiscal year-to-date preliminary tourist tax collections are \$8,529,091, an increase of 15.5 percent year-over-year.

New Business

4th Quarter Budget Report: Lucy Maldonado, VCB fiscal manager presented the budget report. René Affourtit made a motion to accept the report, seconded by Rob Wells. The motion passed unanimously.

RSW Report: During December 2017, 873,494 passengers traveled through Southwest Florida International Airport (RSW). Figures represent an increase of 3.9 percent compared to December 2016. Year-end passenger traffic was up 2.8 percent compared to last year.

STR Report: Jennifer Foster, STR, presented an overview of the hotel industry. In 2017, Florida saw record-setting highs for occupancy, ADR, and RevPar. For 2018, STR projects Lee County's average occupancy will decrease 2.5% to 69.9%, ADR will increase 2.6% to \$155 and RevPar will be flat at \$108.

Lee County Visitation Update

Nicole Devine, DPA, reported on the fall season 2017 highlights. Visitation among visitors staying in paid accommodations increased by more than 5 percent, while total expenditures increased 7.9 percent, exceeding \$700 million. About one-quarter of fall season guests were from international markets with Canada representing the largest share at 9 percent.

TDC Member Items

- Pam Cronin announced she was excited about the Budweiser Clydesdales coming to the Shell Factory on Feb. 23
- Brian Kramer wanted to remind everyone that the Lee County Chapter of the Florida Restaurant and Lodging Association (FRLA) will be hosting its monthly luncheon at the Embassy Suites in Estero at noon Thursday, Feb. 22. Also, the FRLA will be having its first inaugural golf classic fundraiser on May 18.
- Kevin Ruane informed the TDC that councilman Jim Jennings has retired from the City of Sanibel council after 14 years of service. The new council member will be Holly D. Smith, and she will be stepping into Ruane's seat on the TDC.

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 10:15 a.m.

Next TDC meeting

There will be no TDC meeting in March. The next TDC meeting will be held at 9 a.m. Thursday, April 12, 2018 at the Lee County Admin East building, Room 118, 2201 Second St. Fort Myers. To view a complete tax collections report, go to www.LeeVCB.com. Contact: Tamara Pigott, TPigott@leegov.com, Lee County VCB, 239-338-3500.