

**MINUTES OF MEETING
TOURIST DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL
ST. JOHNS COUNTY, FLORIDA
JANURARY 31, 2022
1:30 P.M.**

Proceedings of a regular meeting of the Tourist Development Council (TDC) of St. Johns County, Florida, held in the auditorium at the County Administration Building, 500 San Sebastian View, St. Augustine, Florida.

Present: Michael Gordon, Chair
Joe Finnegan, Vice Chair
Paul Waldron, BCC Representative
Nancy Sikes-Kline, Vice Mayor, City of St. Augustine Representative
Don Samora, Vice Mayor, City of St. Augustine Beach Representative
Danny Berenberg, District 4
Michael Wicks, District 4
Troy Blevins, District 5
Sindy Wiseman, Deputy Clerk

Also present: Tera Meeks, Tourism and Cultural Development Director; Dena Masters, TDC Administrative Coordinator; David Migut, County Attorney; and Jalisa Ferguson, Assistant County Attorney

Absent: Kathy Fleming, District 5

(01/31/22 - 1 - 1:30 p.m.)

1. CALL TO ORDER

Gordon called the meeting to order.

(01/31/22 - 1 - 1:31 p.m.)

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Berenberg led the Pledge of Allegiance.

(01/31/22 - 1 - 1:31 p.m.)

3. ROLL CALL

Masters called the roll. Council members Berenberg, Waldron, Sikes-Kline, Samora, Gordon, Wicks, Finnegan, and Blevins were present. Fleming was absent.

(01/31/22 - 2 - 1:32 p.m.)

4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Gordon noted that there would be a video presentation for the Militia Reenactors that would be shown after public comment.

Motion by Berenberg, seconded by Sikes-Kline, carried 8/0, with Fleming absent, to approve the Agenda, as amended.

(01/31/22 - 2 - 1:32 p.m.)

5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion by Berenberg, seconded by Waldron, carried 8/0, with Fleming absent, to approve the minutes for the October 18, 2021, meeting, as submitted.

(01/31/22 - 2 - 1:32 p.m.)

6. PUBLIC COMMENT

There was none.

(1:33 p.m.) Berenberg introduced Chad Light, with the Historic Florida Militia Reenactors. Light narrated the Militia Reenactors video and spoke on the history of the reenactors, including the cost of the outfits, the time periods reenacted, the number of reenactor participants, and events held throughout the County.

(01/31/22 - 2 - 1:39 p.m.)

7. SELECTION OF NEW CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR

Meeks presented the process for electing the chair and vice chair. Berenberg nominated Finnegan as chair which was seconded by Wicks. Berenberg nominated Gordon as vice-chair which was seconded by Wicks.

(1:41 p.m.) Gordon called for TDC chair and vice chair nominations.

(1:42 p.m.) Motion by Berenberg, seconded by Wicks, carried 8/0, with Fleming absent, nominating Finnegan as Chair and Gordon as Vice-Chair.

(01/31/22 - 2 - 1:43 p.m.)

8. TDC MEMBER APPLICATION RECOMMENDATIONS

Meeks presented the details of the requirements for appointment to the TDC council.

Sikes-Kline nominated Gordon for the TDC accommodation seat, which was seconded by Waldron.

(1:46 p.m.) Motion by Sikes-Kline, seconded by Waldron, carried 8/0, with Fleming absent, to make a recommendation to the BCC to reappoint Michael Gordon, for the TDC accommodation seat, for a four-year term.

Sikes-Kline nominated Michael Diaz for the TDC non-accommodation seat, which was seconded by Blevins.

(1:49 p.m.) Motion by Sikes-Kline, seconded by Blevins, failed for lack of a vote, to make a recommendation to the BCC to appoint Michael Diaz, for the TDC non-accommodation seat.

(1:49 p.m.) Phil McDaniel, 7 Milton Street, spoke in support of appointing Michael Diaz as the TDC non-accommodation seat.

(1:50 p.m.) Waldron noted that Diaz was not eligible to sit on the Board, according to the County ordinance, as he was not a registered voter in and did not live in St. Johns County. Discussion ensued on the need to change the ordinance should Diaz be chosen and reopening the applications for the non-accommodation seat. Meeks said that there could be a caveat to the motion that the BCC would need to take additional steps in order to allow Diaz to serve and provided possible motions that the Council could consider. She noted that Berenberg could continue to serve until the vacancy was filled.

(1:54 p.m.) Amended motion by Sikes-Kline, seconded by Berenberg, recommending to the BCC to appoint Michael Diaz, for the TDC non-accommodation seat, with the caveat that should the BCC find the applicant ineligible, that the advertisement be reopened.

(1:57 p.m.) Discussion ensued on language to be sent to the BCC along with the recommendation.

(2:01 p.m.) Virginia Whetstone, 297 St. George Street, spoke in opposition of the nomination for Diaz and revising the ordinance. She requested reopening the advertisement for additional applications.

(2:03 p.m.) Motion by Sikes-Kline, seconded by Berenberg, carried 8/0, with Fleming absent, to accept the amendment to the motion.

(2:03 p.m.) **The amended motion carried 8/0, with Fleming absent.**

(01/31/22 - 4 - 2:05 p.m.)

9. SPORT TOURISM GRANT APPROVALS

- Update on grant award for AJGA Junior Championship - \$10,000 requested
- Perfect Game Baseball (2) Events
 - 2022 North Florida Kickoff Classic - \$7,500 recommended
 - 2022 9U-14U North Fl Super Regional NIT - \$7,500 recommended
- Veritas Ancient City Pickleball Tournament - \$10,000 recommended
- St. Augustine Race Week Sailing Regatta - \$7,500 recommended
- Professional Redfish League Tournament - \$5,000 recommended

Teddy Meyer, Parks and Recreation Facilities Manager, presented an update on the funds spent for the AJGA Junior Championship. Additionally, he presented the details of the requested funds for the two Perfect Game Baseball events, Veritas Ancient City Pickleball tournament, St. Augustine Race Week Sailing Regatta, and the Professional Redfish League Tournament. Discussion ensued on scheduling events during off peak times.

(2:15 p.m.) Motion by Blevins, seconded by Finnegan, carried 8/0, with Fleming absent, accepting the funding recommendations from the Recreation Advisory Board and Parks and Recreation.

(01/31/22 - 4 - 2:16 p.m.)

10. FISCAL YEAR (FY) 23 ARTS, CULTURE & HERITAGE (ACH) GRANT GUIDELINES RECOMMENDATION

Meeks presented the details of the grant guidelines, via PowerPoint. She provided the recommended changes to the guidelines: 1) to remove the requirement for submitting a letter of intent; 2) included a requirement that a musical performance must either be multi-day events or be incorporated as part of a larger arts and cultural event; 3) updated event/program budget requirements; 4) modified the requirement for proof of payment of reimbursement requests, requiring proof of payment for expenses of over \$5,000; 5) modified award structure to provide applicants receiving 79 to 75 points with up to 50 percent or the requested funding amount; and 6) added some limiting language clarifying that there must be a demonstrated need for grant funding.

(2:23 p.m.) Motion by Berenberg, seconded by Sikes-Kline, carried 8/0, with Fleming absent, to approve the recommended changes.

(01/31/22 - 4 - 2:23 p.m.)

11. COUNTY TOURISM PROMOTIONAL STRUCTURE/CONTRACT DISCUSSION

Meeks presented the details of the item, via PowerPoint. She stated that she would meet with each Council member individually for thoughts and recommendations on the contracts and would present a recommendation for consideration at a future meeting. Discussion ensued.

(2:37 p.m.) Berenberg spoke on the sources of revenue and supplemental revenues. Blevins spoke on sports tourism. Meeks spoke on growing sports tourism.

(01/31/22 - 5 - 2:43 p.m.)

12. MONTHLY REPORTS PROVIDED IN PACKETS

Meeks noted that the monthly reports were provided in the packets.

(2:44 p.m.) Christina Parrish-Stone, Executive Director of the St. Johns County Cultural Council, provided a summary of the reports for the Cultural Council. Additionally, she spoke on the Samantha Brown "Places to Love" show, the partnership with the National Trust for Historic Preservation guide, the film "Freedom on our Minds" shown at the film festival, restoration of the Old St. Augustine Beach Hotel building, and the use of the Water Works building.

(2:55 p.m.) Richard Goldman, CEO of the Visitors and Convention Bureau, spoke on growth in occupancy; air service with Elite Airways, JIA, and Daytona; expanded use of the bed tax; affordable housing; scheduled tourism advisory workshops; and collaboration on economic impact to the County. Finnegan asked whether there was any feedback from Elite Airlines. Goldman responded. Blevins commented on the number of visitors to the Ponte Vedra Visitors Center and the number of Facebook fans. Gordon asked Goldman to speak on the restrictions to the bed tax. Goldman responded.

(01/31/22 - 5 - 3:07 p.m.)

13. MEMBER COMMENTS

Wicks requested an update on Commissioner Blockers request to research expansion of the Ponte Vedra Concert Hall. He also asked about bed tax collection increases. Meeks responded.

(3:14 p.m.) Finnegan asked for an update on the branding project. Meeks provided an update.

(01/31/22 - 5 - 3:19 p.m.)

14. NEXT MEETING DATE

- March 21, 2022

(01/31/22 - 6 - 3:19 p.m.)

15. ADJOURN

With there being no further business to come before the Council, Finnegan adjourned the meeting at 3:19 p.m.

Approved _____, 2022

TOURIST DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL
OF ST. JOHNS COUNTY, FLORIDA

By: _____
Joe Finnegan, Chair

ATTEST: BRANDON J. PATTY,
CLERK OF THE CIRCUIT COURT & COMPTROLLER

By: _____
Deputy Clerk