



**Minutes of Meeting
Tourist Development Council
St. Johns County, Florida
County Administration Building
500 San Sebastian View
St. Augustine, Florida 32084
August 18, 2025 - 1:30 p.m.**

1. CALL TO ORDER

Blevins called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m.

Present: Troy Blevins, District 5, Vice Chair
Regina G. Phillips, District 2
Krista Joseph, BCC Representative
Nancy Sikes-Kline, Mayor, City of St. Augustine Representative
Dylan Rumrell, Mayor, St. Augustine Beach City Commission, Seat 2
Michael Wicks, District 4
Charles Cox, District 3
Michael Gordon, District 4

Absent: Irving Kass, District 2, Chair

Staff Present: Dena Masters, Senior Tourist Development Council Administrator
Jesse Dunn, Deputy County Administrator
Lex Taylor, Deputy County Attorney
Artricia Allen, Deputy Clerk

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Blevins led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. ROLL CALL

Masters called the roll. Council members Gordon, Phillips, Joseph, Sikes-Kline, Rumrell, Kass, Wicks, Cox, and Blevins were present. Kass was absent.

4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion by Rumrell, seconded by Cox, carried 8/0, with Kass absent, to approve the Agenda, as submitted.

Yea: Rumrell, Cox, Blevins, Joseph, Phillips, Sikes-Kline, Gordon, Wicks

Nay: None

Absent: Kass

5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Masters stated that a revision was made to the minutes regarding the Staff Present list on page one, which was corrected in the Council's agenda books but not the electronic version.

Motion by Rumrell, seconded by Sikes-Kline, carried 8/0, with Kass absent, to approve the minutes for the July 21, 2025, meeting, as submitted.

Yea: Rumrell, Sikes-Kline, Joseph, Blevins, Wicks, Gordon, Phillips, Cox

Nay: None

Absent: Kass

6. PUBLIC COMMENT

Albert Syeles spoke about strategic planning. He stated it was beneficial for the Tourist Development Council to reflect on its mission and recommended organizing its goals around five core tourism development pillars (Exhibit A).

7. FISCAL YEAR 2026 ARTS, CULTURE AND HERITAGE (ACH) TOURISM GRANT FUNDING RECOMMENDATION

Masters presented the details of the ACH tourism grant funding recommendation. Discussion ensued on insufficient backup materials and the need for additional information. There was a recommendation to increase funding for the Gullah Geechee.

Phillips and Sikes-Kline recused themselves from voting on the funding recommendation because they served as Board members for some of the involved organizations.

Public Comment:

Sandra Parks spoke about the history of the bed tax, noting that with established cultural venues such as the Performing Arts Center and the St. Johns County Amphitheater, public support for a bed tax referendum would now be more substantial.

Sherry Providence, Limelight Theatre, announced a partnership with Sunny TV and highlighted an upcoming project collaboration in October 2025 with the Foundation for the Black History Museum. She expressed gratitude for the funding Limelight Theatre had received.

Albert Syeles spoke about the Consumer Generated Media's post-Romanza Festival survey, which found that over half of the respondents had stayed in Ponte Vedra Beach.

Motion by Cox, seconded by Gordon, carried 6/0, via roll call vote, with Kass absent and Phillips and Sikes-Kline recused, to recommend to the Board of County Commissioners to

approve the Arts, Cultural and Heritage Grant budget allocation for Fiscal Year 2026 at \$633,085.

Blevins: Yes

Cox: Yes

Gordon: Yes

Joseph: Yes

Phillips: Recused

Rumrell: Yes

Sikes-Kline: Recused

Wicks: Yes

Kass: Absent

8. MONTHLY REPORTS PROVIDED IN PACKETS

Susan Phillips, President and Chief Executive Officer of the St. Johns County Visitors and Convention Bureau, presented the monthly tourism and bed tax reports. She highlighted HGTV's features of the Vilano Beach and the Sing Out Loud advertising campaigns.

Discussion ensued on increased activity at the St. Augustine Visitors and Information Center, a rise in YouTube engagement, and August's hotel.

Jeff Potts, Executive Director of the St. Johns County Cultural Council, presented the Black Heritage Trail Guide, funded through various government and arts grants, to preserve and promote the County's Black heritage as a tourism asset. He announced that the Culinary Guide would be receiving the prestigious Flagler Award. Discussion ensued on incorporating the history of Jesse Fish, promoting agrotourism, and combining related attractions such as Orange Groves.

9. MEMBER COMMENTS

Joseph spoke about an upcoming movie starring Karen Allen, which would be filmed at several local sites. She introduced Brian Long, Cardinal Flix Producer, who shared details about the film "The Batting Cage," which would feature St. John's County, and begin production in April 2026. He noted that Florida did not offer statewide film tax credits, and the existing incentives were limited to specific counties, which would not include St. Johns County.

Sikes-Kline spoke about the ongoing community discussion surrounding the Nights of Lights event. She noted that a formal funding request had not been submitted.

Wicks spoke about attending a live show at the Ponte Vedra Concert Hall. He praised the venue transformation and encouraged everyone to attend a show.

10. NEXT MEETING DATE

Blevins stated that the next meeting was scheduled for September 15, 2025.

11. ADJOURN

With no further business to come before the Council, the meeting adjourned at 2:17 p.m.

Approved _____, 2025

TOURIST DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL
OF ST. JOHNS COUNTY, FLORIDA

By: _____
Irving Kass, Chair

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

By: _____
Deputy Clerk