



2401 SE Monterey Rd.
Stuart, FL 34996

Martin County Tourist Development Council Minutes

Stacey Hetherington
Frank Fender
Campbell Rich
Tammy Calabria
Nimesh Patel
Patty O'Connell
Ed Griffith
Robert Steele
Christopher Vitale

Wednesday, Jan. 15, 2025, **3:00 PM** **Commission Chambers**

CALL TO ORDER

- Meeting was called to order at 3:00 PM
- Roll call was taken- Patty O'Connell & Chris Vitale were absent.
- Commissioner Hetherington introduced & welcomed the new TDC Member, Stuart Mayor, Campbell Rich.
- Mayor Campbell Rich appreciated the welcome and commented on being a member of the TDC.

WELCOME

MINU APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- Frank Fender Moved to approve minutes of Dec. 11, 2024.
- Tammy Calabria 2nd the motion
- (6 – 0) Motion was **approved**/denied/modified

ONGO Ongoing Business

A. Financials

- PowerPoint Presentation provided.
- Handout provided.

Nerissa Okiye

PRES PRESENTATIONS / UPDATE

A. Treasure Coast Sports Commission

- Update on recent events
 - There were eight (8) events from Oct. 2024-Feb. 2025
 - 3 Sailing events
 - 1 Lacrosse event
 - 1 Aquatics training @ Sailfish Splash Waterpark

Rick Hatcher, TCSP

- 1 Florida Half-Century softball (over 50)
- 1 Florida Senior games – Pickleball qualifier
- 1 Ultra-Run/Race at Jonathan Dickinson State Park
- Three (3) events were cancelled due to weather
- Update on upcoming events
 - Feb. 2025-April, 2025 there will be 12 events
 - Florida Half Century – (3) three events
 - Marathon of the Treasure Coast
 - 4 Sailing events
 - 1 USSSA Softball-Over 75 teams of youth girls
 - May 2025-September 2025 – 6 events
 - 1 USSSA Softball – over 75 teams of youth girls
 - 2 Triathlons
 - 2 Florida Half Century
 - 1 Water Polo
 - Potential host of a large youth soccer event in September and October

B. Martin Arts Council

Nancy Turrell

- ArtsFest coming up on Sat. Feb. 8th from 10:00AM-6:00PM and Sun. Feb. 9th from 10:00AM-4:00PM
- Ending an hour early on Sunday for the SuperBowl
- A Canvas of Creators
- Exciting Music & Entertainment
- New Chopped jr. Competition
- Live Mural experience
- Turtle scavenger hunt continued
- Courthouse Cultural Center Gallery 34th Annual All Florida Juried Art Show – Jan. 10-Feb. 26, 2025.
- A 34-year legacy exhibition showcasing recent art by all Florida artists in all media.
- Artist Talk: “Creating without Limits: Discovering Your Artistic Freedom” with Ted Matz.
- This lecture will guide you in developing a creative strategy to reframe your mindset about the art-making journey.
- Sunset Concerts at the Gallery: “Valentine’s Day Songs of Love” with Soprano Lorrianna Collozo and pianist Marie Jureit-Beamish – Tuesday, Feb. 11 at 5:30PM at the Court House Cultural Center.
- Rhapsody in Blue Gala – Featuring performances from some of the area’s finest artists, the Rhapsody in Blue Gala will celebrate both MartinArts’ 45th anniversary and the county’s centennial year at St. Mary’s Pittenger Center on March 28, 2025.

C. Florida Oceanographic Society

Anthony Brunet, FOS

- Recent events

- 2025 Coastal Lecture Series
- Jan. 21st – March 11th @ 6:30 pm
- Events are free and held at the Blake Library or via Zoom
- Topics include:
- Research on leatherback sea turtles.
- Steps to restore Lake Okeechobee and its associated wetlands.
- Frequently asked weird and wacky questions about the environment.
- Landscape Conservation to save the ailing Indian River Lagoon.
- Alligators: Dragons in Paradise
- January 25th – May 4th
- Uncover the myths and realities of one of Florida’s most iconic creatures- the alligator.
- From ancient folklore and fascinating legends to modern conservation efforts, this exhibit explores the alligator’s pivotal role in the Sunshine State’s natural and cultural history.
- Presented by the Museum of Florida History.
- Lake Okeechobee & Waterway Health
- Latest: Lake O and the water conservation areas continue to recede at a rate higher than usual.
- Lake O is at 14.74 ft from about 15.53 ft a month ago.
- C-44 reservoir is currently at 6 ft (Max. current operation is 10 ft out of 15ft).
- BGA bloom detected in the St. Lucie on Jan. 2nd.
- Lake O tests for BGA on Jan. 6th came back negative.

OTM Office of Tourism & Marketing Update

- **Ecotourism Program Update** **Emily Dark & Anna Grace Agnini**
- PowerPoint presentation provided.
- Example of past tours -
 - Explore Natural Martin Participant Total to date: 1554
 - Morning Beach Walk
 - Florida Wildlife Walk
 - Small Mammals Nature Walk
 - Holly-Day Nature Walk
 - Coral Reef Beach Walk
 - General Nature Walk
- Upcoming events-
 - Looking Forward
 - Explore Natural Martin Nature Walk – Monday 9:00AM @ Hobe Sound Scrub Preserve
 - Birding Series – Florida’s Hardwood Forest – Thursday @ 9:00AM 6525 SW Fox Brown Rd.
 - Nature After Dark: A guided Night Hike – Tuesday, Jan. 21, 2025 @ 8:00PM – Sea branch Preserve State Park
 - Feel the Burn: Prescribed Fire Nature Walk – Sat. Feb. 1, 2025 @ 9:00AM
 - Magnificent Mangroves Nature Walk – Monday Feb. 10, 2025 @ 9:00 AM – Peck Lake Park
 - Southeast Florida Action Network (SEAFAN), Bleach watch Observer Training- Wed. Feb. 19, 2025 @ 6:30PM – Jensen Beach Community Center.
 - Birds & Butterflies – Sat. Feb. 22, 2025 @ 2:00PM – Possum Long Nature Center.

- Dark Sky Night with the Treasure Coast Astronomical Society – Sat. Feb. 22, 2025 @ 8:00PM – John G and Susan H. Dupuis Jr. Wildlife & Environment.
- Promotional materials
- Monthly flyers sent to the hotels to update visitors about our upcoming programs and how they can sign up.
- Programs will be scheduled every –
- 1st Saturday, 2nd Monday and 3rd Thursday
- Upcoming events:
- Jan. 13 – Explore Natural Martin Nature Walk
- Jan. 16 – Hardwood Forest Birding Walk
- Jan. 21 – Nature After Dark, A guided night hike
- Feb. 1 – Prescribed Fire nature Walk
- Feb. 10 - Magnificent Mangroves Nature Walk
- Leave No Trace Gold Standard
- ENM was awarded Leave No Trace's Gold Standard Program designation, the first in Florida to do so.
- This exemplifies ENM's role as a leader in Leave No Trace education and responsible outdoor recreation.

- **Public Relations Update**

Ian Centrone

- PowerPoint presentation provided.
- Recent PR results:
 - 35 Print & digital placements
 - 4.8 Billion impressions
 - \$45 million+ est. media value
 - Travel & Leisure; Golf Magazine: Matador network; Southern Boating; Southern Living; Forbes; The Telegraph; msn; Mommy Poppins
- PR Coverage:
 - Southern Living – 11 Uniquely Beautiful Places You'd Never Guess Are In Florida
 - Newsbreak – Tiny FL Fishing Village Spans 4 miles, Is FL's Most Haunted & is one of the Best Kept Secrets
 - Travel Awaits – Hidden Treasure: 8 of Florida's Most Secluded Beaches & Preserves
 - Secluded Beaches in Florida – St. Lucie Inlet Preserve State Park
 - msn- 10 Florida Nature Preserves to Escape the Ordinary
 - The Telegraph – Start the New Year with a bang and plan your next unforgettable getaway.
- FAM TRIPS:
 - Andreas & Annett Conrad – Germany -Based; Jan. 23-25, 2025, Freelance writers (Front Row Society); Ecotourism & Luxury
 - Francesca Montalbiano – NY Based. Feb. 204, 2025, Influencer & Blogger; Quick weekend trips
 - UK Group, Post Huddle FAM – Early February, Tour Operators & Wholesalers
- New Campaigns:
 - "AI Means More Here Campaign"
- New Web Pages & Web Page Audit:
 - Travel Professional Page
- **OTM Update**

Nerissa Okiye

- Thoughts Leadership and Development: -
- 40 under 40 -Celebrating Florida's Rising Stars, Tallahassee, FL.
- Ian Centrone, Deputy Tourism Director

- Strategic Plan Process update
- Planning will take place on the 4th floor workshop room.
- DestinationNext Futures Study/Martin County DestinationNext results
- Review potential strategic priorities based on DestinationNext, Focus Groups and Stakeholder interviews.
- TDC Members to provide review and provide input.
- This feedback will be added to the list of priorities.
- TDC will vote on updated list, establishing a ranking that reflects the relative importance of each item.
- This information will be compiled into a draft plan that will be presented at the March TDC meeting for review and approval.
- Strategic Planning Agenda provided.

- **Legislative Update:** -
 - None given at this time.

COMMENTS

- A. TDC MEMBERS –**
 - None
- B. Staff Comments**
 - None
- C. Public Comments**
 - None

CHAIR'S CLOSING

Next Meeting Date – Mar. 12, 2025,

BOCC Chambers

ADJOURN

- Meeting was adjourned at 4:30 PM

	2/21/2025
_____ Sally Beynon, Tourism Project Coordinator	Date

Name & Title of preparer	
	
_____ Stacey Hetherington, Chair	Date
Name & Title	

ADA This document may be reproduced upon request in an alternative format by contacting the County ADA Coordinator (772) 320-3131, the County Administration Office (772) 288-5400, Florida Relay 711, or by completing our accessibility feedback form at: www.martin.fl.us/accessibility-feedback