



2401 SE Monterey Rd.

Stuart, FL 34996

Martin County Tourist Development Council Minutes

Doug Smith
Frank Fender
Merritt Matheson
Tammy Calabria
Nimesh Patel
Dan Brady
Jonnie Wall-Flewelling
Ed Griffith
Robert Steele

Wednesday, August 7, 2019

3:00 PM

Commission Chambers

CALL TO ORDER

- Meeting was called to order at 3:05PM
- Roll call was taken
- Nimesh Patel & Jonnie Wall-Flewelling were absent
- All other members were present

WELCOME New and Returning TDC Members

MINU APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- Dan Brady Moved to approve minutes of May 29, 2019 meeting
- Frank Fender 2nd the motion
- (7-0) Motion was approved/denied/modified

UNFI UNFINISHED BUSINESS (Action Items)

A. Sports Commission Contract

Nerissa Okiye & Rick Hatcher

- Merritt Matheson Moved to approve the Sports Commission Contract with addition of fishing & fishing tournaments under the marketing plan
- Ed Griffith 2nd the motion
- (7-0) Motion was approved/denied/modified

B. Sustainable Tourism and next steps

- Merritt Matheson Moved on Tourism's next steps-directing Nerissa Okiye to work on pulling together resources that are already available. Incorporate data on "Protect our Paradise"
- Frank Fender 2nd the motion
- (7-0) Motion was approved/denied/modified

C. Stuart Art & History Tour

- Stuart's Art & History Tour on Aug. 16, 28, 29, 30 or Sept. 18, 20
- Nerissa will send out email dates and each member will let Nerissa know of their availability and interest in attending and which date
- Members need to go individually on the tours not as a group or with another TDC member as that would constitute a public meeting & need to be properly noticed etc.

NEW NEW BUSINESS (Reports)

A. Financial

Shannon McCarthy

- Power Point Presentation
- Collections for June are once again up by 9% over last year's collections for June
- Looking for the upward trend to continue
- FY18 was a BOOM year and collections were strong all over
- FY19 was not as strong coming out of the box as FY18, and it has taken a lot of work to match and surpass last year but the trend is upward

PRES PRESENTATIONS / UPDATES

A. Arts Council of Martin County

Nancy Turrell

- Arts Council of Martin County already heavily involved in "Sustainability" projects
- Developing the "Stuart Arts & Entertainment District" but still looking for a clearer name
- Chairman Smith shared that the Arts District in Delray Beach is named Pineapple Grove
- Rob Steele, new TDC member shared that the reasoning behind the name Pineapple Grove in Delray Beach was because the land that it falls on actually used to be a Pineapple Grove so it fit perfectly
- Nancy Turrell shared that they are in discussions and working through different concepts for the District
- Nancy reported that the Arts Council is reorganizing and combining with its Foundation
- The Arts Council has a season full of events with the upcoming season Carnivale of Martin begins Feb. 1st
- mARTies Awards
- ArtsFest is Feb. 8-9, 2020
- Contemporary Art glass show exhibition to coincide with bringing to town the Corning Museum of Glass mobile hot shop to include exhibitions, and workshops

- 4 Corning Staff members will be in attendance and facilitating exhibitions and workshops
- There will be a "Private Collections of Martin County" exhibit held
- The annual High School juried art show
- In Sept. "Beyond the Classroom" exhibit to include current and former art teachers
- In Oct. the "All Florida" juried exhibit
- Rounding out the year with the Court Room Sessions exhibit which is an extremely contemporary show
- Dan Brady asked the status of the Arts Council moving into the School Board building now that the School board has decided to move out to another location
- Nancy is and has been trying to get on a School Board Agenda to discuss this possibility
- Nancy is researching what renovations would be required to move into the building and how much it would cost to do the necessary renovations
- Plan B is now in place with the possibility of building a new building to be in the Stuart Arts District
- Chairman Smith supports the use of the former high school/school board building to be used and kept as a public building
- Chairman Smith recognized that it will take the Community to rally together to save the building & have it renovated & utilized

B. Treasure Coast Sports Commission

Rick Hatcher

- Rick Hatcher gave Sports Commission update
- Update on the Babe Ruth World Series trials, tribulations (weather issues) and success stories
- Currently in the 3rd week of the series finishing out this year's event with the Cal Ripken World Series
- All 3 weeks of the tournament have shown the number of teams attending as up from last year's event. Hard numbers and hotel night stay numbers will come afterward
- Rob Conner of Babe Ruth, worked for 3 years negotiating with the National Pro Fastpitch to come and do exhibition games during the World Series event
- 2 NPF teams came to this year's tournament to do a 2 game exhibition series however due to the rainy weather, they were only able to hold 1 exhibition game
- The exhibition games were named the Beach Blast Series and it was the

Chicago Bandits vs. the Beijing Shougang Eagles

- The game was broadcast worldwide
- Both NFS teams have former Olympians as members so it was a great opportunity for the Babe Ruth teams to meet and greet the professional players and Olympians
- This is a very important event (The Babe Ruth World Series) and there is a great working relationship with the Parks and Recreation Staff
- Representatives from the Ocala area were here looking to scout out and entice the Cal Ripken portion of this event to move to Ocala from Martin County
- Rob Conner will be back in Stuart in Sept. & here for the next TDC meeting
- Rick is planning a full tour of the fields and possible fields to include the Stuart fields while Rob is here
- It is going to take more fields to keep these events here in Martin County
- This year along with the National Pro Fastpitch teams that were brought in, they had Monica Abbot, Olympian speak at the opening ceremony which was a wonderful opportunity for the Babe Ruth teams to hear and meet another Olympian
- The opening ceremonies for the 3rd week were rescheduled due to the rain on Monday to tonight (Wednesday) at 7:00PM to be held at Indian Riverside Park
- This year, the event organizers incorporated a Treasure Coast Scavenger Hunt for the teams and the Office of Tourism & Marketing has their "stop" in the mall at the "pop-up" location (storefront) located just outside of the JC Penney's store
- Teams are to take their pictures at each stop and the team with the most pictures/points at the end will win prizes
- Tammy Calabria shared that the Children's Museum was one of the "Stops" on the list and it has been a blast having the girls and now the boy's teams come in to the Museum for their pictures and gathering the staff to include in the pictures
- Dan Brady asked if there had been any more conversations in regard to the Stuart baseball fields being used
- Rick Hatcher said that when Rob Conner comes back here in Sept. it is planned to take him on a tour of the fields to look at the possibilities
- Chairman Smith shared that he has seen that the local businesses enjoy engaging in and being a part of the event
- Chairman Smith would like to see a mini stadium developed around the Stuart fields like one that is in Naples and it can be a central point for the event and the community

C. Marine Industry Update

- None

D. OTM Update

Nerissa Okiye

- Nerissa provided the Office of Tourism & marketing update via a PowerPoint presentation
- Nerissa gave a Legislative update
- Jensen Beach Governmental Affairs Meeting
- Meetings with all delegates-Joint St. Lucie, & Martin Counties and provided information on the upcoming Delegation meeting at IRS College on Sept. 12, 2019
- Nerissa has been named as the Visit Florida Industry Relations Chair
- Visit Florida Information Sessions – nearest one to Martin County is in Palm Beach County on Aug. 13 from 2:00-3:00PM at the Cultural Council of Palm Beach County
- Nerissa provided an update on the Red Tide Recovery Grant that was received and the videos and advertising that were generated from the grant dollars
- Live Like a Local Campaign on our webpage has won a “Flagler Award” we just don’t know which level of Flagler award, we will find out at the Governor’s Conference in Sept.
- Nerissa shared the videos created out of the Red Tide Recovery grant and explained the purpose behind the videos to help the businesses that were impacted by our adverse water conditions when we had the Blue Green Algae
- Expedia Campaign results
- Visit Florida’s new training program and mapping system for participants
- Treasure Coast Mall project (pop-up location) promoting Tourism in Martin County
- The Start of the “Selfie-Tour” is a Huge Blue beach chair with our large turtle design advertising Martin County and promoting it as a tourist destination, encouraging locals and visitors alike to sit on the chair and take a “selfie” and share to social media
- For Kids, By Kids video series
- Website Snapshot
- “The Excursion” update with list of airings of show
- Video clip showing a snippet of the episode of “The Excursion”

- Update on the recent Google Workshop held at the Elliott Museum
- Martin County is now a “Google DMO Partner”
- The OTM can assist tourism businesses with their Google listings
- Explained the importance of an accurate Google listing with appropriate pictures associated with the local businesses

COMMENTS

A. PUBLIC

- None

B. TDC MEMBERS

- Chairman Smith thanked Nerissa for all that she does for Martin County and for Tourism in Martin County
- Ed Griffith praised Nerissa’s creativity and the inclusion with the local businesses and her ability to work with the Industry partners so seamlessly
- Ed stated that he loves working with the OTM currently
- Tammy Calabria asked for an update on the Scoreboards that we were to purchase at Sailfish Splash
- Nerissa explained that there have been complications and delays in the purchasing of the Scoreboards
- The Scoreboards pricing came in higher than what the TDC had agreed to
- They are now back on track and ordered and the scoreboards should be up and in place by November for the November competitions
- Tammy Calabria asked for an update on the CIP grants that were given out to the three different Non-Profits previously and if they had been put on a “timeline” to completion and if the money granted could be given back to the TDC if they didn’t meet the timeline
- Nerissa explained that all three entities had leasing discussions with the County, and all are currently still in discussions with the County over leasing agreements.
- Once the leasing agreements are in place then they can begin their work on their CIP and at that point the timeline clock is turned on for them to build and come to completion of their plans
- The grants are all on a “reimbursement” basis
- Rob Steele shared that he has noticed in Martin County, the residents show a dedication to the environment and he shared that in Delray where he lives, you have to pay to park at the beaches. They implemented a program where they keep trash bags available at the beaches and families can pick up the trash and turn it in, to receive a coupon for free parking at the beach, perhaps we could implement something similar here, where we supply trash bags and people can turn it in for tickets to a local attraction or something similar.
- Rob Steele also participated in a world series event in Delray and rather than the opening ceremony being in a specific location as it is here in IRSP, perhaps we could hold a parade with the participants being in a parade and inviting the entire community out to it. In Delray they were able to have over 30,000 people come out for the parade event vs. having a ceremony in a set place. He would like to talk with Rick Hatcher

about this possibility

- Rob Steel asked Nerissa if we have a Tourism Plan in place?
- Nerissa shared that yes we do have a Tourism Plan in place and that we go through it yearly after the County's Budget is voted on for final approval by the BOCC
- Nerissa is planning on speaking with the Chairman to see if he feels we should bring in an outside vendor (professional) to assist with the Strategic Planning or if we continue to do it in house
- Frank Fender shared details of the planning of the 2020 Marathon of the Treasure Coast which is planned for March 1, 2020
- This year they are adding a new event – "The Corporate Challenge" to the lineup of activities included in the weekend of the marathon
- Merritt Matheson has shared that he has been "Captured" by the Children's Museum of the Treasure Coast and it is part of their fundraising event. He will be "stranded" until rescued. The event is August 20, 2019
- Tammy Calabria gave an update on the Coral Reef Restoration and how they have incorporated information into the Boater exhibit at the museum
- There is a time lapsed mural being painted Moving toward working with DEP and making the Children's museum a pilot program
- Dan Brady thanked Rob Steele for having the South wall in the car room at the Elliott Museum painted and that it turned out wonderfully and is stunning and a much need addition
- Chairman Smith shared information about meeting with the Force Blue Group while in Washington, DC.
- Had Coral Reef discussions and the Force Blue Group is looking to figure out how they can help
- Chairman Smith would like them to come here and connect or be based out of Harbor Branch as he feels that would be a perfect place for them to call home while in Florida
- Rob Steele has invited Harbor Branch down in January to have an exhibit at the Elliott Museum
- There were no further comments and the meeting was adjourned

C. STAFF

- None

CHAIR'S CLOSING

Next Meeting Date - September 11, 2019 Commission Chambers

ADJOURN

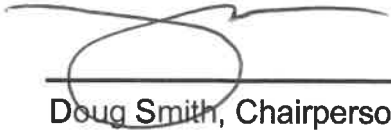
- Meeting was adjourned at 5:00 PM



Sally Beynon, Tourism Project Coordinator

8/8/19

Date



Doug Smith, Chairperson

9/9/19

Date

ADA

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