



**Highlands County Tourist Development Council
Highlands County Government Center, Boardroom
600 S. Commerce Ave, Sebring, Florida
March 29, 2018 at 8:15 a.m.**

Regular Meeting

1. The meeting was called to order at 8:21 a.m. by Commissioner Brooks.

Roll Call

Council Members Present:

Commissioner Brooks, Chair	
Bill Brantley	Cynthia Garren
Vicki Pontius	Mark Stewart

Council Members Absent:

Tenille Drury-Smith	Leila Currence
Terry Heston	Diane Rydecki

Also, Present:

Casey Hartt, Lead Tourist Development Council Consultant
Dana Knight, Tourist Development Administrative Assistant
Ben Dunn, Development Services Director
Phil Attinger, Highlands News-Sun
Liz Barber, Greater Sebring Chamber
Fred Leavitt, Heartland Cultural Alliance
Bill Youngman, Citizen
Megan Stepe, Museum of Florida Art & Culture
Matt Griffin, Highlands Pedalers

Commissioner Brooks established that a quorum was present and the meeting was properly noticed.

2. Acceptance of TDC Meeting Minutes of February 22, 2018

Commissioner Brooks inquired if there were any comments or changes to the minutes of February 22, 2018. Ms. Pontius moved to accept the minutes of February 22, 2018. Mr. Stewart seconded the motion. All the Council members voted aye. The motion carried.

3. Financial and Office Reports

Dana Knight presented the Monthly Expenditure and Revenue Reports for the month ending January 31, 2018.

Ms. Garren made a motion and Mr. Stewart seconded the motion, to approve the financial reports as presented. All the Council members voted aye. The motion carried.

4. Marketing Update

A. February Marketing Report

Ms. Hartt presented the February Marketing Report.

5. Items for Voting

A. Highlands Pedalers, Inc. request \$5,000 to advertise the Tour of Sebring 2018.

Mr. Matt Griffin presented the request.

Ms. Garren made a motion and Mr. Brantley seconded the motion to recommend up to \$5,000 to the Highlands Pedalers, Inc. to advertise outside of Highlands County the Tour of Sebring 2018 with room night verifications required. Funds to be disbursed from account 5305 Marketing and Promotions. All the Council members voted aye. The motion carried.

B. South Florida State College request \$1,000 to advertise the Little Slices of Heaven on U.S. 27

Ms. Stepe presented the request.

Ms. Pontius made a motion and Mr. Brantley seconded the motion to recommend up to \$1,000 to advertise outside of Highlands County the Little Slices of Heaven on U.S. 27. With no room verifications required. Funds to be disbursed from account 5304 Arts and Culture. All the Council members voted aye, except Ms. Garren who abstained. The motion carried.

C. Host Sponsorship – ING 2019

Ms. Hartt presented the discussion.

Ms. Garren made a motion and Ms. Pontius seconded the motion to recommend up to \$2,500 for the ING Conference Announcement Luncheon in 2018. Funds to be disbursed from 5305 Marketing and Promotion. All Council members voted aye. The motion carried.

Ms. Pontius asked for clarification on the number of participants. Ms. Hartt addressed her concerns.

6. Old Business/Discussion

A. TDC Tax Increase

Mr. Brooks presented the TDC Tax Increase Update.

Mr. Brooks informed the Council the TDC Tax Increase request is going before the Board of County Commissioners on May 15, 2018.

Ms. Pontius asked for clarification on the amount of the increase. Commissioner Brooks addressed her concerns.

B. New TDC Events Update

Ms. Barber gave an update on the Soda Festival.

Ms. Barber with the Sebring Chamber of Commerce, stated the MoonRay's will be performing Friday night and Saturday. Ms. Brenda Terry, a Celebrity Mixologist will give demonstrations at the VIP After Party. There will also be a coloring contest sponsored by the Childrens Museum.

C. Strategic Planning Update

Ms. Hartt presented the update.

Ms. Garren made a motion and Ms. Pontius seconded the motion to allocate up to \$25, 000 to hire a consulting firm to develop a TDC Strategic Plan. After a discussion, Ms. Garren amended her motion and Ms. Pontius seconded the amended motion to allocate up to \$25,000 to engage a consulting firm to develop a TDC Strategic Plan and budget \$25,000 in 2019 to complete the Strategic Plan. After further discussion, Ms. Garren withdrew her motion and Ms. Pontius seconded the withdraw.

D. Fishers of Men / Paddle for Paradise Update.

Ms. Hartt presented the update.

Ms. Hartt informed the Council the Fishers of Men canceled their tournament due to the lack of time to properly market the event.

Ms. Hart asked the Council if they would like to use the funds that are now available from Fishers of Men for a workshop for Paddle for Paradise in the amount of \$7,500. After a discussion, the Council's consensus was to not participate at this time.

7. Public Input

Mr. Youngman asked why we do not televise the TDC meeting. Mr. Youngman also asked if any of the Council members have reviewed the Tourist Development Statue. Commissioner Brooks addressed his concerns stating that the meeting is filmed and videotaped. Anyone wishing to view the meeting may request a copy. Commissioner Brooks also informed Mr. Youngman that the County Attorney has reviewed the Tourist Development Statue.

8. Board Member Roundtable

Ms. Pontius asked about Tenille Drury-Smith's position on the Council and if she must resign due to her change in jobs. Commissioner Brooks stated it is currently in legal review.

9. Upcoming Meeting(s)

A. TDC Board: April 26, 2018 @ 8:15 a.m., Government Center, Boardroom

10. Adjournment

Commissioner Brooks adjourned the meeting at 9:39 a.m.

For all backup, contact Highlands County Public Information Office 863-402-6500.

2018 TDC Conference Schedule

April 18-20: FADMO Destination Marketing Summit (attend every year)

Type: Educational/Destination Marketing

Location: Palm Coast, FL

Registration: \$295

Hotel: \$199/night

May 20-23: ING Spring Golf Media Conference (attended last year in FL)

Type: Golf Media Appointment Show/Networking w/Golf Media

Location: Biloxi, MS

Registration: \$2,295 by April 20 (includes appointment show display table)

Approx. Flight: \$234

Hotel: \$70/night

**** Would only need to attend if Sebring is selected as 2019 Conference location. Should know by the end of February.**

June 24-27: North America Golf Tourism Convention

Type: Golf Tour Operator Appointment Show/Networking with Golf Tour Operators

Location: Bend, OR

Registration: \$2,800 (includes appointment show display table)

Approx Flight: \$656

Hotel: \$239/night

Sept. 12-14: Florida Governor's Conference on Tourism (attend every year)

Type: Educational/Tourism Marketing

Location: Orlando/Championsgate. FL

Registration: \$499

Hotel: \$189/night

Oct. 1-4: TEAMS Conference (attended last year in FL)

Type: Sporting Event Planner Appointment Show/Networking w/Sports Planners

Location: Lexington, KY

Registration: \$3,295

Approx. Flight: \$250

Hotel: _____

**For each conference, Consultant will pay for: hotel accommodations, airport/hotel parking, ground transportation, necessary meals, baggage fees, mileage, etc.

**Blue text indicates TDC to pay.