



**Highlands County Tourist Development Council  
Highlands County Government Center, Boardroom  
600 S. Commerce Ave, Sebring, Florida  
September 21, 2017 at 8:15 a.m.**

**Regular Meeting**

**1. The meeting was called to order at 8:15 a.m. by Commissioner Elwell. Public notice was read.**

**Roll Call**

**Council Members Present:**

Commissioner Elwell, Chair	Tenille Drury-Smith
Diane Rydecki	Leila Currence
Bill Brantley	

**Council Members Absent:**

Cynthia Garren	John Ruggiero
Mark Stewart	Terry Heston

**Also, Present:**

Casey Hartt, Lead Tourist Development Council Consultant  
Dana Knight, Tourist Development Administrative Assistant  
Vicki Pontius, Leisure Services Director  
Eileen May, Lake Placid Chamber  
Melissa Finger, US Sport Aviation Expo  
Jamie Galla, Greater Sebring Chamber  
Gary Pinnell, New Sun  
Eileen May, Lake Placid Chamber  
Liz Barber, Greater Sebring Chamber  
Beatriz Ramirez, City Avon Park  
Gaylin Thomas, CRA Main- City of Avon Park

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

**2. Acceptance of TDC Meeting Minutes of July 20, 2017**

Commissioner Elwell inquired if there were any comments or changes to the minutes of July 20, 2017. Mr. Brantley moved to accept the minutes of July 20, 2017. Ms. Currence seconded the motion. All the Council members voted aye. The motion carried.

**3. Financial and Office Reports**

Commissioner Elwell presented the Monthly Expenditure and Revenue Reports for the month ending June 30, 2017 and July 31, 2017.

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

Ms. Knight gave a brief office update.

#### **4. Marketing Update**

Ms. Hartt presented the August Marketing Update.

#### **5. Items for Voting/Discussion**

- A. U.S. Sport Aviation Institute, Inc. request \$5,000 to advertise the US Sport Aviation Expo

Ms. Finger presented the request.

Ms. Rydecki made a motion and Mr. Brantley seconded the motion to recommend up to \$5,000 to the U.S. Aviation Institute, Inc. for advertising the US Sport Aviation Expo. Room verifications are required for this grant. Funds to be disbursed from account 5305/53400 Marketing and Promotions. All the Council members voted aye, except Ms. Currence who abstained. The motion carried.

- B New Event/Event Enhancement Grant Incentive Program Update

Ms. Pontius and Ms. Hartt presented the Grant Incentive Program update.

Ms. Currence made a motion to approve up to \$30,000 to create the Sebring Soda Festival. Pending a detailed budget to be presented at the next TDC meeting. Funds to be disbursed from 5304 Arts and Culture. Motion failed due the lack of a second.

Mr. Brantley made a motion and Ms. Currence seconded the motion to recommend up to \$20,000 to create the Sebring Soda Festival. Pending a detailed budget to be presented at the next TDC meeting. All the Council members voted aye, except Ms. Drury-Smith who abstained. The motion carried.

Ms. Rydecki made a motion and Mr. Brantley seconded the motion to approve \$20,000 to enhance the Fine Arts Festival. Pending a detailed budget to be presented at the next TDC meeting. All the council members voted aye. The motion carried.

Public input was received from Ms. May, Ms. Thomas and Ms. Barber.

- C. Postcard Mural Discussion

Ms. Hartt presented the Postcard Mural for Discussion.

Commissioner Elwell stated that not all locations have been finalized. The item was tabled until the next TDC meeting.

## **6. Public Input**

None was presented.

## **7. Board Member Roundtable**

Ms. Rydecki thanked Commissioner Elwell for all his Facebook posts giving information on the hurricane recovery. She then enquired if the lakes are now safe for boating. Ms. Pontius address her concerns explaining her crews have been busy with giving out food and water and will begin lakes clean up over the next few days. Commissioner Elwell informed the council of the trash pickup efforts.

Mr. Brantley, suggest we reach out to Anna Maria Island area to cross advertise. Ms. Hartt addressed his concerns stating we are currently cross advertising in several areas.

Ms. Pontius, suggest we have a seminar informing the public of the information Ms. Hartt received from the Florida Governor's Conference.

## **8. Upcoming Meeting(s)**

**A.** TDC Board: October 26, 2017 @ 8:15 a.m., Government Center, Boardroom

## **9. Adjournment**

Commissioner Elwell adjourned the meeting at 10:18 a.m.

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