



**Highlands County Tourist Development Council  
Highlands County Government Center, Boardroom  
600 S. Commerce Ave, Sebring, Florida  
December 15, 2016 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	Christine Hatfield
Cynthia Garren	Reinhard Haubner
John Ruggiero	Terry Heston
Mark Stewart	Bill Brantley

**Council Members Absent:**

Leila Currence

**Also Present:**

Casey Hartt, Lead Tourist Development Council Consultant  
Dana Knight, Tourist Development Administrative Assistant  
Vicki Pontius, Leisure Services Director  
Fred Leavitt, Heartland Cultural Alliance (HCA)  
Eileen May, Lake Placid Chamber  
Tracy McCoy, Citrus Golf Trail  
Joni Warner, Caladium Arts & Crafts Co-op  
Vanessa Logsdon, Highlands Little Theatre  
Jennifer Swain, Sebring Partnership  
Eileen May, Lake Placid Chamber

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

**2. Acceptance of TDC Meeting Minutes of October 27, 2016.**

Commissioner Elwell inquired if there were any comments or changes to the minutes of October 27, 2016. Ms. Hatfield moved to accept the minutes of October 27, 2016. Mr. Stewart 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 October 31, 2016.

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. October/November Marketing Report**

Ms. Hartt presented the October/November Marketing Update PowerPoint presentation. (Please see the attached PowerPoint presentation)

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

##### **A. Caladium Arts & Crafts Co-Op request \$1,000 for the 1<sup>st</sup> Annual Caladium Fine Art Show.**

Ms. Warner presented the request.

Ms. Garren made a motion and Mr. Ruggiero seconded the motion to advertise outside of Highlands County the 1<sup>st</sup> Annual Caladium Fine Art Show. Room verifications are not required for this grant. Funds to be disbursed from account 5304 Arts and Culture. All Council members voted aye. The motion carried.

##### **B. Heartland Cultural Alliance request \$1,000 for the Waterwood Exhibit.**

Mr. Leavitt presented the request.

Ms. Hatfield made a motion and Mr. Heston seconded the motion to recommend up to \$1,000 to advertise outside of Highlands County the Waterwood Exhibit. No room verifications are required for this grant. Funds to be disbursed from account 5304 Arts and Culture. All the council members voted aye. The motion carried.

##### **C. South Florida State College request \$1,000 for the South Carolina Ballet Beauty and the Beast.**

Ms. Lynch presented the request.

Ms. Hatfield made a motion and Mr. Stewart seconded the motion to recommend up to \$1,000 to advertise the South Carolina Ballet Beauty and the Beast. No room verifications are required for this grant. Funds to be disbursed from account 5304 Arts and Culture. Ms. Hatfield amended her motion to include "to advertise outside of Highlands County the South Carolina Ballet Beauty and the Beast". Mr. Stewart seconded the amended motion. All council members voted aye except for Ms. Garren and Mr. Heston who abstained. The motion carried.

##### **D. Patriot Productions, LLC request \$1,000 for the Sebring Seafood & Music Festival.**

No one was present to present the request. Mr. Strickland had a family emergency.

Mr. Stewart made a motion and Ms. Garren seconded the motion to recommend up to \$1,000 to advertise outside of Highlands County the Sebring Seafood & Music Festival. No room verifications are required for this grant. Funds to be disbursed from account 5304 Arts and Culture. All the council members voted aye. The motion carried.

##### **E. The Sebring Partnership request \$1,000 for the Roaring Twenties Arts and Craft Festival.**

Ms. Swain presented the request.

Mr. Stewart made a motion and Ms. Garren seconded the motion to recommend up to \$1,000 to advertise outside of Highlands County the Roaring Twenties Arts and Craft Festival. No room

verifications are required for this grant. Funds to be disbursed from account 5304 Arts and Culture. All the council members voted aye. The motion carried.

F. Get Fish Slapped LLC request \$7,900 for the Citrus Golf Trail.

Ms. McCoy presented the request.

Ms. Garren made a motion and Mr. Heston seconded the motion to recommend 50% in matching funds up to \$8,000 to advertise outside of Highlands County the Citrus Golf Trail. No room verifications are required for this grant. Funds to be disbursed from account 5305 Marketing and Promotion. All the council members voted aye except Ms. Hatfield who abstained. The motion carried.

## 6. Grant Review Committee Recommendations

A. Brochure creation and printing - 50% Match up to \$500 in matching funds. The Organization applying for the funds must have an operating expense of \$250,000 or under.

Mr. Stewart made a motion and Mr. Brantley seconded the motion to approve grant funding for brochure creation and printing with a 50% match up to \$500 in matching cash funds. The Organization applying for the funds must have an operating expense of \$250,000 or less. Seventy-five percent of the brochures are required to be distributed outside of Highlands County. All council members voted aye except Ms. Garren and Mr. Haubner who voted nay. The motion carried.

B. Remove the 4-year requirement. Instead consider grant based on the event's merit.

Ms. Hatfield made a motion and Mr. Haubner seconded the motion to remove the 4-year requirement and instead consider grants based on the event's merit. All council members voted aye. The motion carried.

C. Require a representative to be present at the TDC Meeting in order for grants to be considered for funding.

Mr. Haubner made a motion and Ms. Hatfield seconded the motion to require a representative to be available (via phone, skype or in attendance) to answer questions at the Tourist Development Council meeting in order for grants to be considered for funding. All council members voted aye. The motion carried.

## 7. Public Input

Public input was received from Mr. Leavitt. Mr. Leavitt read a letter on behalf of the Heartland Cultural Alliance, requesting an investigation into the structure of the Grant Review Panel. The Heartland Cultural Alliance is requesting that there be an arts representative on the panel. Commissioner Elwell addressed his concerns and ask Ms. Pontius to take the issue to Mr. Macbeth.

Ms. Pontius inquired if item 6. A would be based on reimbursement. Commissioner Elwell state that was the intent and requested that the motion be amended to say *based on reimbursement*.

Mr. Stewart amend his motion as requested. Ms. Garren seconded the amendment. All Council members voted aye. The motion carried.

**8. Board Member Roundtable**

Mr. Brantley stated the schools have shortened the Christmas vacation time by two weeks which may affect the Tourism revenue.

**9. Upcoming Meeting(s)**

**A.** TDC Board: January 26, 2016 @ 8:15 a.m., Government Center, Boardroom

**B.** Tourist Tax Lakes Committee: January 18, 2016 @ 2:00 p.m., TDC, Conference Room

**10. Adjournment**

Commissioner Elwell adjourned the meeting at 9:38 a.m.

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

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