



## TDC MEETING MINUTES

May 10, 2018

Vice Chairman René Affourtit called the Lee County Tourist Development Council (TDC) meeting to order at 9:03 a.m.

**Council members in attendance:** John Carioscia, Pamela Cronin, Colleen DePasquale, Tony Lapi, Fran Myers, Holly D. Smith and Bill Waichulis.

Commissioner Cecil Pendergrass, Brian Kramer and Rob Wells were excused.

Holly D. Smith made a motion to approve the April 12, 2018, TDC meeting minutes. Pamela Cronin seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

### **Public to be heard**

Dorrie Hipschman, executive director, Bailey-Matthews National Shell Museum, thanked the TDC and the VCB on behalf of her staff and Board of trustees, for all their support. The Shell Museum's budget has grown to \$1.5 million in four years and every dollar stays in Lee County. The museum has launched a social media-marketing platform for the first time and it is doing well.

### **Municipalities to be heard**

Judith Zimomra, Sanibel city manager, read a letter from a visitor who has been returning to Sanibel since 1972. The letter praised the accessibility at Lighthouse Beach Park and the amenities it offers that the TDC has funded. Zimomra thanked the TDC on behalf of the Bondy family for the funding it provides to make these amenities possible.

Roger Hernstadt, town manager of Fort Myers Beach, reported that Fort Myers Beach has been recognized by MSN.com as one of the Top 25 beaches in America. Fort Myers Beach contributed 15.2 % of tourist tax in FY17. Improvements on Fort Myers Beach continue to be made and the town will be making a decision on May 21, 2018 for a new hotel that will add 250 more rooms to the beach. Hernstadt thanked the TDC for its continuous support with beach and shoreline funds to provide a unique experience. Hernstadt said the town looks forward to partnering with the VCB/TDC on future projects for the beach. Construction is proceeding southward on Estero Boulevard.

### **Report of the Sports Development Executive Director**

Jeff Mielke reported that 34,504 room nights sold in the first quarter of 2018 with direct visitor spending of \$15 million.

### **Report of the Executive Director**

Tamara Pigott reported that the preliminary resort tax collected for March 2018 was \$8,766,349, a 10.6 percent increase over March 2017 preliminary collections of \$7,924,789. Fiscal year-to-date preliminary tourist tax collections are \$27,154,211, an increase of 11.7 percent year-over-year.

For March 2018, the STR Report shows occupancy up 3.5 percent and ADR up 8.5 percent for a total RevPAR increase of 12.3 percent.

During March 2018, 1,379,728 passengers traveled through Southwest Florida International Airport (RSW). Figures represent an increase of 10.2 percent compared to March 2017. Year-to-date, passenger traffic is up 10 percent from the same period last year.

### **New Business**

#### **2nd Quarter Budget Report, Tamara Pigott**

*Fran Myers made a motion to accept the report, seconded by Holly D. Smith. The motion passed unanimously.*

#### **Formalize FY 2018-19 Beach & Shoreline Funding, Nancy MacPhee**

Legislative findings were made on the following projects:

- **City of Sanibel, Beach & Shoreline Erosion Survey**  
Make a legislative finding that this project relates to and primarily promotes tourism. *Pamela Cronin made a motion, seconded by Fran Myers.*
- **City of Sanibel, Facility Beach Maintenance**  
Make a legislative finding that the type of signs being upgraded relate to and primarily promotes tourism.  
*Holly D. Smith made a motion, seconded by Pamela Cronin*
- **Town of Fort Myers Beach, Beach & Shoreline Maintenance**  
Make a legislative finding that the following portions of this project are related to and primarily promotes tourism:
  - *replacement of beach access and interpretive signs;*
  - *replacement of and purchase of utility vehicles to service the beach accesses;*
  - *purchase of a new water cart utility vehicle to water native plants at beach accesses**Holly D. Smith made a motion, seconded by Fran Myers*
- **Lee County Facilities & Construction Mgmt., Matanzas Pass Boardwalk Replacement**  
Make a determination that this project satisfies the statutory requirement constituting a remodeling or improvement of a nature center. The Attorney General defines “nature center” as a natural part of the landscape and focal point for activity.  
*Pamela Cronin made a motion, seconded by Fran Myers.*
- **City of Cape Coral, Kayak/Canoe Launch-NW Cape Coral**  
Make a legislative finding that this project primarily promotes tourism.  
*Pamela Cronin made a motion, seconded by Fran Myers*
- **Gasparilla Island State Park, Lighthouse Pavilion-Beach Shade Structure**  
Make a legislative finding that this project is related to tourism and primarily promotes that purpose.  
*Holly D. Smith made a motion, seconded by Fran Myers.*

- **Koreshan State Park, Koreshan State Park Boat Ramp & Kayak Launch**  
Make a legislative finding that this project relates to and primarily promotes tourism.  
*Tony Lapi made a motion, seconded by Holly D. Smith.*
- **LC Parks & Rec, MP Paddlecraft launch dredging and construction**  
Make a legislative finding that this expenditure is primarily related to tourism in the county.  
*Colleen DePasquale made a motion, seconded by Pamela Cronin.*
- **Friends of Lovers Key, Welcome & Discovery Center Exhibit**  
Make a legislative finding that proposed interpretive signs are related to and primarily promote tourism.  
*Holly D. Smith made a motion, seconded by Colleen DePasquale.*

After the necessary legislative findings were approved, the TDC recommended the Lee County Board of County Commissioners approve 20 projects at a cost of \$9,009,913.

*Holly D. Smith made a motion, seconded by Fran Myers. The motion passed unanimously.*

**Nominate FY 2018-19 Attractions Marketing Review Committee,** Nancy MacPhee

Holly D. Smith, the newest TDC member, will fill the vacant spot on the Attractions Marketing Committee. Current members include Pamela Cronin, chair, Colleen DePasquale; Cynthia Welch, property manager, Bocilla Island Seaport; and John Melleky, FIG Solutions. They will attend a committee review training at 4 p.m. June 21 at the VCB.

*Tony Lapi made a motion seconded by Fran Myers, the motion passed unanimously.*

**TDC Member Items**

- Fran Myers reminded everyone of the Hotlist from the airport. “Eurowings is fabulous.”
- Colleen DePasquale thanked everyone for a successful Chrysalis event. 2019 is the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Chrysalis and the chamber will be reaching out to past winners to become committee members. Florida Everblades are No. 1 in the league and in the finals. If they win their division, they will be going to the Kelly Cup. Colleen urged people to come out and support them May 11-12 at home.
- Holly D. Smith thanked everyone for a fantastic Chrysalis event.
- Glen Salyer reported that LeeTran would be at the June 14 TDC meeting to discuss the pilot program of the trolley and present to the TDC for additional funding for next season.

**Adjourn**

The meeting adjourned at 9:47 a.m.

**Next TDC meeting**

The next TDC meeting will be held at 9 a.m. Thursday, June 14, 2018, at the Lee County Admin East building, Room 118, 2201 Second St., Fort Myers. To view a complete tax collections report, go to [www.LeeVCB.com](http://www.LeeVCB.com). Contact: Tamara Pigott, [TPigott@leegov.com](mailto:TPigott@leegov.com), Lee County VCB, 239-338-3500.