



PUNTA GORDA ENGLEWOOD BEACH

SM

The Charlotte Harbor Gulf Island Coast

Charlotte County Tourist Development Council Meeting Minutes Friday, December 9, 2022

A meeting of the Charlotte County Tourist Development Council was held Friday, December 9, 2022, at Murdock Administration Building, Conference Room B-106, 18500 Murdock Circle, Port Charlotte, FL.

Members Present

Councilmember Mark Kuharski
Kathy Burnam
David Haynes
Robin Madden
Kelly Williamson
Gary Butler
Councilmember Donna Peterman

Staff Present

Sean Doherty, Tourism Development Director
Jeff Berg, Meetings Market Sales Manager
Maureen Morgenthien, Marketing Manager
Jerry Jones, Film Commissioner
Brynja Phipps, Project Coordinator
Amy Sharpe, Administrative Services Coordinator
Dan Roe, Tax Collector's Office
Elie Fischhof, Fiscal Services (via Teams)
Glinda Pruitt, Assistant County Attorney
Claire Jubb, Assistant County Administrator

Members Absent

Commissioner Christopher Constance
Keith Farlow

Guests

Jim Finch, Charlotte Harbor Events & Conference Center
Lois Croft, Florida Restaurant & Lodging Association
Joseph St. Germain, Downs & St. Germain
Isiah Lewis, Downs & St. Germain
Craig Holt, Four Points by Sheraton Punta Gorda Harborside

I. Call to Order & Pledge of allegiance

Councilmember Mark Kuharski called the Charlotte County Tourist Development Council (TDC) meeting to order at 9:04 a.m.

II. Roll Call

A quorum was established. Councilmember Mark Kuharski welcomed the new Tourist Development Council Member Councilmember Donna Peterman.

III. Citizens' Input

Jim Finch, Charlotte Harbor Events & Conference Center reported that bookings through fiscal year 2022 at the event center were up year over year in most categories except government. Finch also reported

state and regional conferences are starting to get back to pre-Covid levels. Finch advised multiple events are already booked for next year.

Lois Croft, Florida Restaurant & Lodging Association advised that the FRLA is planning to put on the Craft Beer Fest fundraiser and is tentatively scheduled for April 22, 2023.

IV. Approval of TDC Meeting Minutes

A motion was made by Kathy Burnam, and seconded by Gary Butler, to approve the August 12, 2022 minutes. Motion carried unanimously.

V. Tourist Tax Report – Dan Roe

The tax collector report was presented by Dan Roe. Roe reported July through September collections were \$1,305,610.47. Roe continued to report that there were 12 additional suspect accounts bringing the total to 550. Roe advised that total collections for fiscal year 2021-2022 were \$7,762,508.45, which is up 27.8% over last year. Roe continued to advise that 26 rental properties dropped off due to Hurricane Ian. There are currently 3,018 rental properties. Roe continued that October collections are \$440,189.00 which is up 22.8%.

VI. Budget Report – Elie Fischhof, Fiscal Services

The fiscal report was presented by Elie Fischhof. Fischhof reported the fiscal year 2022 budget of \$3.2M ended with 3.1M of expenditures. Fischhof continued to report that the fiscal year 2022 budget was expended 97%. Fischhof also reported the tourist department ended the year with a balance of over \$5 million. Fischhof advised that almost three months into the fiscal year with a \$4.2 million budget. Fischhof continued to advise that current operating expenditures for the first 3 cents were \$27,000 and \$726,000 in encumbrances. Fischhof also reported most of the interfund transfers are complete. Fischhof advised that 40% of the budget has been expended. Fischhof continued to advise actual expenditures for the 4th and 5th cents are approximately \$10,000 for Promo Activities General and approximately \$14,000 in encumbrances. Promo Activities Advertising showed over \$24,000 in actual expenditure and \$824,00 in encumbrances.

VII. Robin Madden – Budget Review

Robin Madden confirmed that the budget appeared to be in order.

VIII. Presentations

Jerry Jones, Tourist Development Film Commissioner and Brynja Phipps, Tourist Development Project Coordinator presented an overview of the new Tourism Hospitality Program.

Joseph St. Germain and Isiah Lewis, Downs & St. Germain presented the Annual Visitor Tracking & Research Report.

IX. Director/Staff Report – Sean Doherty

Sean Doherty, Tourism Director, provided a recap of the Tourism Department Board Report. Doherty highlighted post hurricane 85% of our restaurants and 80% of our attractions are now open.

X. Citizen's Comments

There were no Citizen Comments.

XI. Council Comments

David Haynes advised that Little Gasparilla Island properties lost about 50% of the housing on the island. Haynes also advised that some owners are rebuilding, and some owners are selling their vacant lots. Haynes continued to report that some vacation rental inventory is being converted to long term rentals.

Councilmember Mark Kuharski encouraged everyone that has a concern to attend a city council meeting and report on the concern.

Councilmember Donna Peterman advised that the City of Punta Gorda has some important public hearings regarding tourism coming up.

Kelly Williamson reported that the hotel is busy and the additional tiki structure for groups is now open.

Robin Madden reported 71% of rental properties are back up. Madden also reported \$300,000 in gross revenue cancellations. Madden continued to report that houses are still selling.

Gary Butler reported admissions at the Military Heritage Museum have been doubling since the museum moved to its current location in 2019. Butler continued to report that the Gulf Theater is up 86% in ticket sales and season ticket sales are up.

Kathy Burnam advised Fishermen's Village still had one merchant down and the suites are open.

XII. Next Scheduled Meeting

The next scheduled TDC meeting is at 9:00 a.m. Friday, February 10, 2022. The meeting will be held in the B-106 Conference Room, Administration Building, 18500 Murdock Circle, Port Charlotte.

XIII. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 10.49 a.m.