

TDC MEETING MINUTES

January 9, 2014

Commissioner Larry Kiker called the meeting to order at 9:02 a.m. and led the Pledge of Allegiance. Council members in attendance: Commissioner Larry Kiker, Tony Lapi, René Affourtit, Joe Murgalo, Colleen DePasquale, Rob Wells, Kevin Ruane and Pamela Cronin. Fran Myers, Jeff Webb and Councilman Forrest Banks were excused.

Kevin Ruane made a motion, seconded by René Affourtit to approve the TDC Meeting Minutes of December 13, 2013. The motion passed unanimously.

Public to be Heard

- Bruce Sterling, Gasparilla Island State Park, gave an update of the status of the Belcher Seawall and asked the TDC for emergency funding for this project.
- Chris Pendleton, President & CEO, Edison & Ford Winter Estates, thanked the TDC and VCB for assisting them and helping make the Edison & Ford Winter Estates Holiday Lights event one of the top in the country. She also announced the Marina at Edison Ford (Pinchers Crab Shack) will be opening soon and it will be great for events. She introduced Ashley Gibbons who is their new Marketing and Events Coordinator.

Municipalities to be Heard

- Michelle Dean, City of Cape Coral, announced upcoming events going on in the Cape Coral area. The 29th Annual Festival of the Arts this weekend and the 23rd Tour of the Cape in February.

Special Presentations

- Mayor Randy Henderson thanked the VCB and TDC for everything they do for the City of Fort Myers and introduced Executive Director, Sharon McAllister of ArtFest Fort Myers. Sharon gave an overview of what an ArtFest is and thanked the TDC for the Events Marketing grant that helps make ArtFest possible.

VCB Executive Director's Report

- Tamara Pigott reported the preliminary bed tax collections for the month of November 2013 at \$1,591,848 a 15.1 % increase over November 2012 collections. The fiscal YTD preliminary collections totaled \$3,128,624, a significant increase of 12.4 percent over the fiscal YTD preliminary collections for the same time period in 2012.
- STR Report – Occupancy was up 8.6% in November 2013. ADR increased by 2.2%, and RevPAR was up 10.9%. Lee County experienced a 11.0 % increase in Room Revenue with Available Rooms down 0.1 % and Rooms Sold up 8.6 %.
- RSW Report – Total Passenger count of 639,047 for November 2013, a decrease of 3.0% over November 2012.
- Key indicators were up including page views, accommodations services and visitor guide books.
- Pamela Johnson, Director of Sales, gave an update on the sales activities. In the first quarter of the fiscal year there was 24 leads and of those 24, 11 went definite with an average of 134 attendees and 1,632 room nights that were generated. The meeting trend we are seeing are dramatic growth in the leisure market and more 3rd parties. Pamela thanked the Offshore Sailing

School for taking the meeting planners from National Stone, Sand and Gravel Association, HelmsBriscoe and Direct Marketing Association out. She also thanked Pink Shell and Outrigger for hosting an International FAM, as well as Rob Wells, with Tarpon Lodge. The VCB hosted annual receptive luncheons with our hotel partners in Orlando this year.

- Judi Durant, Director of Visitor Services, VCB gave an update of all the visitor services activities for the first quarter of the fiscal year. 56,000 travel guides and 20,000 consumer rack brochures were distributed at the visitor booths at the airport and at the welcome centers. 457 volunteers attended 79 conference meetings and special events. The volunteers assisted 75,164 visitors in the first quarter of the fiscal year. The top information requests were for Attractions: the beaches and Edison-Ford Winter Estates, Hotel: Pink Shell Beach Resort & Marina; and the top activity was shopping. Christine Davlin gave 27 Guest First training classes at 9 host sites with 432 attendees, 11 CGSP graduates and 2 certified CGSP properties.

Report of the Sports Development Executive Director, Jeff Mielke

- Following an impressive summer of sports activities, the Lee County Sports Development Office has logged numbers in fourth quarter, resulting in a record-breaking 11 months for the destination. October and November activities were driven by the Perfect Game, Roy Hobbs World Series event and the Senior Softball Winter Nationals. For October, 14, 382 room nights were sold in Lee County, with a direct and indirect economic impact totaling \$9,991,950. For November, 20,275 room nights were sold, with a direct and indirect economic impact of \$16,516,660. The overall results for January thru November 2013 were record breaking with the destination hosting 96 separate events, which generated 129,621 room nights sold and \$89.5 million in direct and indirect economic impact.

Special Presentations

- Justin McBride, Lee County Natural Resources, gave an update on the beach nourishment projects at Captiva Island and Gasparilla Island.

Old Business

- Tony Lapi thanked the VCB for last month's meeting at DiamondHead Beach Resort & Spa on the road. It was well received by the public.

New Business

- Kevin Ruane made a motion, seconded by René Affourtit to approve as the Events Marketing Funding Subcommittee. The motion passed unanimously. The Committee consists of Event Chair, Pamela Cronin, Kevin Ruane, Joe Murgalo, Colleen DePasquale and René Affourtit.
- Chad Lach, Gasparilla Island State Park spoke to the TDC to request funding for the seawall at Gasparilla Island State Park. René Affourtit made a motion, seconded by Rob Wells to approve an emergency funding request of \$250,000 for a critical erosion control measure needed at Gasparilla Island State Park. The motion passed unanimously. The funds will be provided from Beach & Shoreline reserves and matched by an additional \$250,000 from the State.

TDC Member Items

- Pamela Cronin thanked the VCB for all their hard work and she is looking forward to a great 2014. The Gumbo Festival will be held at the Shell Factory on January 26th.
- Joe Murgalo is looking forward to a great 2014. 2013 was a great year. He also expects it to be a great sports year.
- Colleen DePasquale announced that the Chrysalis nominations are now open and will need to be in by January 24th. The 5th Annual Chrysalis Awards, recognizes business and individuals who have impacted the local community. Winners will be announced at the Celebration of Business & Tourism Awards Luncheon and Trade Show on May 15 at Harborside Event Center. She wished everyone Happy New Year.

- Tony Lapi reminded everyone about the tax program through United Way of Lee County that helps with tax preparations. Their annual campaign closes in 6 weeks. He commented that Thursdays are working out great for the TDC meetings.
- Rob Wells wished everyone Happy New Year and said this year is starting out great!
- René Affourtit wished everyone a wonderful New Year and hopes that 2014 is kind to everyone.
- Kevin Ruane wished everyone Happy New Year and thanked the VCB for all they do.
- Commissioner Larry Kiker thanked the TDC and he is looking forward to working with Roger Desjarlais, County Manager and the TDC again as chair. He appreciates everything everyone does to help make the VCB successful.

The meeting adjourned at 10:37 a.m. The next regular meeting of the TDC is scheduled for **THURSDAY, February 13, 2014, 9 a.m. at the VCB's office, 2201 Second Street, First Floor, Fort Myers, FL 33901.** *All reports are included with Minutes on file at the VCB and available at www.leevcb.com.*