



## **TDC MEETING MINUTES**

November 13, 2014

Commissioner Larry Kiker called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. and led the Pledge of Allegiance. Council members in attendance: Fran Myers, Jeff Webb, Colleen DePasquale, Tony Lapi, Pamela Cronin, Councilman Forrest Banks, Rob Wells and René Affourtit. Mayor Kevin Ruane was excused.

René Affourtit made a motion, seconded by Rob Wells to approve the TDC Meeting Minutes of August 14, 2014. The motion passed unanimously.

The TDC recognized the most recent participants that earned the American Hotel & Lodging Educational Institute's Certified Guest Service Professional (CGSP) designation. Please see addendum # 1 for complete list of participants who earned their pin and certificate.

The TDC also recognized the Florida Superior Small Lodging Association White Glove Award winners for 2014. Please see addendum #2 for complete list of recipients.

### **Public to be Heard**

- John Naylor, Executive Director for the City of Palms Classic, announced the basketball tournament kicks off on December 18, 2014 and runs through December 23, 2014. Enterprise Rent-A-Car was announced as a new sponsor of the tournament. He also mentioned that Grassroots Prep rated 14 of the 17 teams top 50 teams. All games will take place at Bishop Verot High School.
- Beth Oliver, Offshore Sailing School, announced the Celebrity Pro-Am Regatta to be held from January 8-10, 2015. This "Party with a Purpose" presented by Merrill Lynch Wealth management will benefit The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society. It will be held at the Pink Shell Beach Resort & Marina.
- Dan Baggot, Southwest Florida Distributing, shared his positive experience and enthusiasm for the first Island Hopper Songwriter Fest held in Lee County. He stated this signature event was extremely well organized, developed, and produced, and it has huge growth potential.
- Tim Parks and Tamara Anderson, Lee County Clerk of Courts, shared that the new statutory amendment to the Tourist Development Tax (F.S. 125.0104) that passed in July 2014 limits the distribution of bed tax collection by area that is reported on behalf of the VCB.

### **Municipalities to be Heard**

- None to be heard.

### **VCB Executive Director's Report**

- Tamara Pigott reported record-breaking tax collections for the fourth year in a row, with \$33.3 million collected in tourist tax on paid accommodations for fiscal year 2013-2014, which ended Sept. 30. The new record is a 16.5 percent increase over last year's record-breaking \$28.6 million in collections.
- In addition to the record-breaking numbers for the VCB's fiscal year, the calendar year-to-date visitor statistics were favorable. From January through September 2014, visitation rose 3.2 percent, and average occupancy climbed 3 percent. Visitor expenditures were up 2.4 percent, with visitors spending \$2.2 billion in Lee County so far this year.

- The preliminary bed tax collections for the month of September 2014 were \$1,267,562, a 15.8% increase over the preliminary collections in September 2013.
- STR Report – Occupancy for September was up 9.5%. ADR increased by 4.3% and RevPAR was up 14.2%. Lee County experienced a 13.8 % increase in Room Revenue while Available Rooms decreased by 0.4% and Rooms Sold were up by 9.1%.
- RSW Report – Total Passenger count of 366,038 for September 2014, an increase of 8.2 % over September 2013.
- Pamela Johnson, VCB, gave the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter sales update. Of the 154 total leads, 80 turned definite, producing 37,874 room nights. The VCB attended many trade shows, including Midwest-IMEX America and SEOPA. The VCB also partnered with our German contractors, GCE, and met with DETOUR & DEPART Tour Operators to provide destination education training. In addition, Jeanette Faria, VCB contractor for the Canadian market, and Andrea Locke with the Westin Cape Coral, attended IncentiveWorks, Canada's largest meeting planner event, in Toronto.
- Judi Durant, VCB, provided the quarterly update for visitor services. The RSW airport volunteers assisted 63,000 visitors and donated 5,000 hours of service in the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter. Judi thanked all the partners who have hosted the VCB volunteers for familiarization tours.
- Marcia Wood, DPA offered the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter research report. During the spring season (April-June) 2014, The Beaches of Fort Myers & Sanibel hosted approximately 1.4 million visitors who spent an estimated \$684 million. Visitors staying in paid accommodations spent an estimated \$440 million (64 percent of the total). Lee County's lodging industry experienced year-over-year increases in average occupancy rate and average daily rate for the spring season, producing significant growth in RevPAR.

### **Special Presentations**

- Tony Lapi, 'Tween Waters Inn Island Resort, reported on the positive impact of the Island Hopper Songwriter Fest on Captiva Island. The Crow's Nest restaurant at 'Tween boasted an 80% increase in business compared to the same time the prior year. The ticketed brunch sold at 'Tween's Old Captiva House was also a huge success, and was sold out in advance of the event. 'Tween Waters Inn sold 24 Island Hopper room night packages, and can attribute 70 room nights as related to the event.
- Steve DeAngelis, Nervous Nellie's restaurant, also reported on the positive impact of the Island Hopper Songwriter Fest on Fort Myers Beach. Nervous Nellie's sales increased 40% over the same time last year, and Steve reported that they continue to receive inquiries from customers as to when the Island Hopper Songwriters Fest will return in 2015.

### **Old Business**

- None to be heard.

### **New Business**

- Reñe Affourtit made a motion, seconded by Fran Myers to approve the final FY 2013-14 Budget Report. The motion passed unanimously.
- Tony Lapi made a motion, seconded by Reñe Affourtit to approve the FY 2015-16 Sales & Marketing Plan. The motion passed unanimously.

### **TDC Member Items**

- Pamela Cronin wished everyone a very happy holiday season.
- Jeff Webb reminded everyone of the next LCHA meeting that will be held on Thursday, November 20 at the Pink Shell Beach Resort, and the LCHA Holiday Social will be held on December 18 at the new

Six Bends, the new Harley Davidson dealership.

The meeting adjourned at 11:15 a.m. The next regular meeting of the TDC is scheduled for **THURSDAY, December 11, 2014 at 2:30 p.m. at 'Tween Waters Inn Island Resort, 15951 Captiva Drive, FL 33901.** *All reports are included with Minutes on file at the VCB and available at [www.leevcb.com](http://www.leevcb.com).*