

Tourist Development Council
Meeting Minutes
January 10, 2008 – Heathrow SCC Economic Development Center

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Dennis Hale - Embassy Suites
Colleen Hufford - City of Casselberry Commissioner
Penny Leffel – Springhill Suites
Steve Wolfram – Council of Local Governments
Bruce Skwarlo – Orlando Marriott Lake Mary
Sandra Furlong - AAA
Greg Dull - Orlando-Sanford Airport
Commissioner Carlton Henley - Seminole County Commissioner
Jamie Ross - Hyatt Place
Kathryn Townsend - Seminole County Sheriff's Office
Mayor Linda Kuhn – City of Sanford

STAFF PRESENT:

Ann Colby - County Attorney
Brian Hunicke – Seminole County CVB
Danny Trosset – Central Florida Sports Commission
Sharon Sears – Seminole County CVB
Bill McDermott – Seminole County Economic Development
Patrick Harrison – Paradise Advertising

Call of Order: Meeting was called to order at 10:05am.

The passing of the gavel went to Linda Kuhn, the 2008 chair. The meeting started with the passing of the gavel to Mayor Linda Kuhn and the introductions of all in attendance at the meeting.

Election of 2008 Vice Chair

Chairman Kuhn opened the floor to nominations for the 2008 vice Chairman of the board. Bruce Skwarlo asked if the position needed to be filled with a hotelier. Discussion followed and Kathryn Townsend nominated Jamie Ross for Vice Chair. Penny Leffel seconded the nomination and Jamie Ross accepted with a unanimous vote of the members.

Linda Kuhn then introduced and welcomed the three new TDC members. Colleen Hufford, City Commissioner from the City of Casselberry. Greg Dull, from the Sanford-Orlando Airport and Dennis Hale from the Embassy Suites. She also thanked the exiting members for service and support on the board, Steve Wolfram, Bruce Skwarlo, Diane Crews, and Penny Leffel. Bill McDermott started to present gifts to the exiting members.

Approval of the November Minutes

The Committee agreed to approve the minutes as proposed. The motion was made by Kathryn Townsend and seconded by Penny Leffel.

Sponsorship Application – 2008 Central Florida Scottish Highland Games

Bill McDermott opened discussion of the sponsorship application to the members of the board. He explained that in previous years, the event surveys were conducted by a company called Buckalew. The TDC would like to continue using this outside company to survey for all other events in Seminole County. He described that in the past, organizations did not accurately measure the economic impact of their events and by using a third party to conduct these surveys, the TDC can better monitor the accuracy of the surveys.

Commissioner Carlton Henley referenced last year's proposed economic impact of the Highland Games event from their application and how those standards were not met. He expressed concern about the Games' impact for this year, including the number of visitors to the area and in which would be staying in Seminole County hotels. He thus supports using the third party to conduct accurate surveys and measures of economic impact to the area in order to better gauge the grant money given to other organizations in the future.

Kathryn Townsend brought up her support for the Highland Games and that the surveys conducted last year did not portray the games in a positive light. She believed that the Highland Games used the grant money given to them accordingly by promoting Seminole County and the cultural and historic aspects of the event.

Bruce Skwarlo commented on the Games' application in previous years and how they promised to bring more spectators to the events following, but that he did not think the organizers lived up to their promises. Jamie Ross agreed saying that the hotel that hosted the event, the Hilton in Altamonte Springs, felt the most impact from the event.

Chip Crawford, President of the Scottish American Society of Central Florida, gave an introduction and some background of the Highland Games and their expectations for the upcoming Games. Carlton Henley asked about the intention for improved research data for the economic impact of the event since last years' results were unfavorable. Crawford responded that last years' samples were taken at a poor time in the event as most of the attendees and participants were already present and were not included in the sampling of event arrivals. Bill McDermott assured the board that this year's surveying would more accurate.

Linda Kuhn asked for the motion to be made to approve the grant of \$25,000 to be given to the Scottish Highland Games. Kathryn Townsend made the movement and Carol Furlong seconded and the motion was carried with no opposition.

Old Business

No old business topics were discussed.

New Business

Research Presentation – Dave DiMaggio presented the results from the most recent focus group study of leisure groups and meeting planners. The study reaffirmed that visitors linked natural based and family activities to Seminole County. Also, the need for

better meeting space catering to medium and smaller groups was concluded. Brian Hunicke asked about the responses given in regards to the promotional CD shown. Dave responded by saying that there was not much a response either way regarding the CD. Sandra Furlong then asked about the baby boomer market. Fran Vaccaro answered that there were no real needs to have a boomer program in the marketing efforts. Sharon Sears added that there were no real negatives regarding Seminole County's image and reputation.

Board Member Retreat – Bill McDermott suggested to the Board that the retreat be held sometime in March. He also indicated that a facilitator would be a helpful addition to the retreat and asked for suggestions. Linda Kuhn proposed that Marilyn Crotty to be the facilitator. Bill mentioned that he would email Marilyn about the proposal.

Adjustments – Bill McDermott asked the Board if it was necessary to hold meetings monthly. Linda Kuhn suggested bi-monthly meetings starting in March. There was a concern that the Grant Application deadlines would not coincide with TDC meetings. Colleen Hufford answered that the application deadlines could be adjusted to align with meeting dates.

The motion to move the TDC meetings from monthly meetings to bi-monthly was made by Carlton Henley and seconded by Sandra Furlong. The Board approved the motion and adjustment to the meeting dates for 2008.

Staff Reports

Fran Vaccaro stated that the in-flight video was moving forward and launching in March. She mentioned that the focus was to be more toward reaching international travel agents. She also added that the video shoot would be conducted sometime in February and finished by mid-March. It will include both a generic video and also one towards international travelers. The video shots will be available for staff review and approval shortly after production concludes in February.

Kathryn Townsend asked about some differences in the budget. Fran Sullivan said that she'd send Kathryn the most up-to-date budget report again.

Dennis Hale suggested an agenda item for the Board retreat. He expressed concern with the way economic impact was measured and that the STR report be expanded to include other reports.

Greg Dull announced that the Seminole County tourism booth will start construction this week and slated to open soon.

Kathryn Townsend announced that the Cultural Arts Gala will be held at the Hilton in Altamonte Springs.

Linda Kuhn announced the Alive After Five event in Sanford that evening.

Adjourn: The meeting was adjourned at 11:05pm.