



**Highlands County Tourist Development Council
Highlands County Government Center Boardroom
Regular Meeting
October 28, 2021 @ 8:15 a.m.**

Draft Regular Meeting

1. The meeting was called to order at 8:15 a.m. by Christine Hatfield.

Roll Call

Council Members Present:

Mark Stewart
Christine Hatfield
Cindy Garren
Bill Brantley
Diane Rydecki

Council Members Absent:

John Story
Vicki Pontius
Maria Sutherland
Commissioner Chris Campbell

Also, Present:

Uli & Lidia Fluhme, GFNY Florida Sebring
Leah Sauls, Development Services Director
Casey Hartt, Lead Marketing Consultant
Karen Disalvo, TDC Administrative Secretary
Alan Verlander, Airstream Ventures, LLC
Barry Milligan, Airstream Ventures, LLC
Tenille Drury-Smith, Sebring Chamber of Commerce
Paige Lavelle, Sebring Chamber of Commerce
Gaylin Thomas, Heartland Cultural Alliance

Christine Hatfield and Karen Disalvo established that a quorum was present, and the meeting was properly noticed.

2. Acceptance of TDC Meeting Minutes of August 19, 2021.

Ms. Hatfield inquired if there were any comments or changes to the minutes of August 19, 2021. Mr. Stewart made a motion, seconded by Ms. Garren to approve the meeting minutes. Upon roll call the Council voted aye. The motion passed.

3. Financial and Office Reports

Ms. Hartt presented the Monthly Expenditure and Revenue Reports year to date ending August 2021, which makes a total up to date of \$734,000.

There was no Office Report.

Ms. Garren made a motion, seconded by Ms. Rydecki, to approve the financial reports as presented. Upon roll call the Council voted aye. The motion passed.

4. Tourism Award Presentation

Ms. Hartt awarded 2021 Tourism Award For Sports Champions category to Lidia and Uli Fluhme from GFNY Florida Sebring . Mr. Fluhme thanked the Council for the recognition.

5. Marketing & Event Updates

A. Marketing Update

Ms. Hartt presented her quarterly marketing presentation to go over several past, present and future events. Ms Hartt has received Grant income from the FL Sports Foundation to total \$47,598. Ms. Hartt noted that collections for August and September are still not in yet, so she will present final budget recommendations at the January 2022 TDC meeting. Ms. Garren asked where future marketing funds should be targeted, and Ms. Hartt replied in the Advertising budget since it was significantly reduced for this year to allow for more event funding.

B. Sports Events Update

Mr. Verlander from Airstream Ventures provided an update on Sports Tourism Events for the remainder to 2021 and into 2022. He spoke about Spartan/Tough Mudder event in December and how noticeably impactful the event will be to everyone in Highlands County.

6. Items for Voting

A. Sebring Soda Festival Grant

Ms. Drury-Smith from the Greater Sebring Chamber of Commerce requested \$12,500 for entertainment and out-of-county marketing for the Sebring Soda Festival. The 2022 event will have an additional/third day to bring in more participants.

Ms. Garren made a motion, seconded by Ms. Rydecki, to approve the grant for \$12,500 for entertainment and out-of-county marketing. Upon roll call, all Council members voted aye. The motion passed.

B. Citrus Golf Trail Ladies Invitational Grant for December 2021

Mr. Verlander from Airstream Ventures requested \$7,500 for rental fees, promotional items, and digital marketing outside Highlands County for the 2021 Citrus Golf Trail Ladies Invitational.

Mr. Stewart made a motion, seconded by Mr. Brantley, to approve the grant for \$7,500 for entertainment and out-of-county marketing. Upon roll call, all Council members voted aye. The motion passed.

C. Multisport Festival Grant Change Request

Ms. Hartt presented the proposed changes to the Sebring Multisport Festival Applications. Mr. Childers requested the date to be changed to October 2 or 9 of 2022. He also requested that his MOT fees be eligible for grant reimbursement. TDC staff recommended funds will only be reimbursed if an MOT plan is submitted no later than 60 days before the event.

Mr. Stewart made a motion, seconded by Ms. Garren to approve the Grant Application changes. Upon roll call, all Council members voted aye. The motion passed

7. Old Business/Discussion

A. RFP Update

Ms. Sauls reported that three proposals were submitted for the TDC's Lead Marketing Consultant. The Selection Committee chose Gray Dog Publishing. After negotiations with the County Administrator, an agreement was drafted to contract with Gray Dog for up to six years with an annual review and renewal each year + 3% annual pay increase. The contract renewal will be decided upon by the County Administrator and County Commission each year. The TDC will provide input at their July/August meeting each year to the County Administrator and County Commission. The County Commission approved the current one-year contract on October 5, 2021.

C. TDT Letter

Ms. Sauls informed the TDC that the TDT is awaiting approval for the letter from the County Commission.

B. Stakeholder Meetings

Ms. Hartt informed the TDC she has attended several Stakeholder meetings and provided a list.

8. Public Input

9. Board Member Roundtable

10. Upcoming Meeting

A. Adventure EDU Program November 4-5, 2021, Inn on the Lakes. Registration required.

B. Agritourism Forum, TBD

C. TDC Board Meeting January 27, 2021 @ 8:15 a.m., Government Center, Boardroom

11. Adjournment

Ms. Hatfield adjourned the meeting at 9:26 a.m.

For all backup documents, please contact Highlands County Public Information Office 863-402-6500.