

DUVAL COUNTY TOURIST DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, June 8, 2023, 10:00 a.m.
City Hall - Lynwood Roberts Room

TDC Members: City Council President Terrance Freeman (Chair) (*Excused Absence*), City Council Vice President Ron Salem (Vice Chair), City Council Member Aaron Bowman, Jitan Kuverji, Angela Phillips, Dennis Chan, Dennis Thompson, Joe Hindsley, and Mark VanLoh

TDC Staff: Carol Brock (Executive Director), Brett Nolan (Administrator), Phillip Peterson (Auditor), and Reece Wilson (Office of General Counsel)

I. Welcome and Call to Order

Chair Salem

The meeting was called to order by Vice Chairman Salem at 10:00 a.m. and the attendees introduced themselves for the record. The Vice Chair announced that Chairman Freeman was unable to join us due to a work conflict so he will be the presiding chair of this meeting.

II. Public Comments Including Action Items

Chair Salem

Public Comments: John Nooney

Mr. Nooney spoke on advocating for a Pottsburg Creek Public Park, thus improving the City of Jacksonville's waterways and providing additional public access to Pottsburg Creek.

III. Approval of Minutes

Chair Salem

The minutes of the April 27, 2023 Regular TDC Meeting and the May 11, 2023 TDC Strategic Plan Subcommittee Meeting were **approved unanimously as distributed.**

IV. TDC Grant Requests

Carol Brock

A. 2023 Beaches Oktoberfest

Phillip Vogelsang

Ms. Brock introduced Phillip Vogelsang with Beaches Oktoberfest, Inc. and gave an overview of the event. The 2023 Beaches Oktoberfest is promoted as Florida's largest Oktoberfest and among the biggest in the United States. The event is a two-day outdoor music festival which utilizes the publicly owned venue, the SeaWalk Pavilion, at Jacksonville Beach. She reminded the board that in 2022, the event drew in a crowd of more than 50,000 over the two days with at least 5,000 of those attendees coming from greater than 150 miles outside Duval County. Beaches Oktoberfest, Inc. received a \$25,000 in TDC funding in 2022. It is typical to ask applicants to reduce the amount of their request and increase their tourist guarantee amount. While this is not a requirement, rather an aspiration, Mr. Vogelsang worked with Ms. Brock to increase their 2023 request to a \$50,000 special event grant and a \$10,000 marketing grant to make their grant application more comparable to other similar events, such as Florida Fin Fest and Springing the Blues, that the TDC has supported. Their application scored a 46 out of 60 for both special event and marketing with score reduced by 5 points due to this application being a second-year request.

Mr. Vogelsang thanked the members of the committee and shared data and demographics from last year's event to help support the ask for additional funding. The 2022 event brought in a significant number of tourists due to the talent acquisition. For the 2023 event, the budget for talent acquisition has increased by triple the amount to accommodate two national acts now in the event's line up. Mr. Vogelsang accredited these two national acts as a catalyst to bring even more tourists into Jacksonville and the reason for needing the additional support from the TDC.

Angela Phillips asked how the beaches area does regarding tourist travel during the month of October. Katie Mitura, Chief Marketing Officer with Visit Jacksonville, explained that while it is not as busy as the Summer, it is still a very busy month, and that the area will start tapering off in tourist travel around November. Ms. Phillips shared concern about the Beaches Oktoberfest attracting only locals that are not staying in Duval County hotels but was pleased with the addition of the new national acts and that it is during a time when the Jacksonville Jaguars are at an away game in London.

Motion (Bowman/ 2nd VanLoh): Approve Beaches Oktoberfest, Inc. to receive a marketing grant for \$10,000 and a special event grant for \$50,000 from the Tourist Development Council FY 22-23 TDC Operations – Remaining to Spend account for the 2023 Beaches Oktoberfest. - **approved unanimously.**

B. 2023 Constellation FURYK & FRIENDS

Adam Renfroe

Ms. Brock introduced Adam Renfroe with the Jim & Tabitha Furyk Foundation and she gave an overview of the application. The 2023 Constellation Furyk & Friends is a returning event to Timuquana Country Club in the fall and is a PGA TOUR Champions event which offers a multifaceted golf tournament with well-known participants, a focus on music utilizing a downtown venue, food and fun, and activities for the entire family. Ms. Brock continued by explaining in 2022 the event brought in 9,253 tourists and received \$100,000 in TDC funding. The applicant is asking for a \$20,000 marketing grant and a \$60,000 special event grant this year. They received a 45 out of 60 for marketing and 46 out of 60 for special event, noting that the scores were reduced by 10 points due to this being a third year request.

Mr. Renfroe thanked the TDC for their prior year investments and shared that they have seen a steady increase in tourists attending this event over the years with the help of this grant, and expect this trend to continue this year. Mr. Renfroe shared that this event was voted as the best event on the PGA Tour Championship schedule, solidifying Jacksonville as a market these halls of fame golfers want to play in.

Motion (VanLoh/ 2nd Bowman): Approve Jim & Tabitha Furyk Foundation to receive a marketing grant for \$20,000 and a special event grant for \$60,000 from the Tourist Development Council FY 22-23 Event Grants account for the 2023 Constellation Furyk & Friends. - **approved unanimously.**

C. 2024 Spartan U.S. Championship

Cherie Bortnick

Ms. Brock introduced Cherie Bortnick with Spartan Race, Inc. and she gave an overview of the 2024 Spartan U.S. Championship event. This event was deemed a signature event in 2022. In the past, the grant presentations for the Spartan events were administered by Airstream Ventures, LLC. This year, Spartan Race, Inc. determined that, with the guidance from Airstream Ventures, they would do their own events applications. The 2024 Spartan U.S. Championship is a two-day event; one of only five in the country and the only one on the east coast. Attracting racers of all ages, including kids, from around the country, it takes advantage of Jacksonville's outdoors and affinity for sporting events. The event has met and/or exceeded the 5000+ tourists guarantee each year.

The applicant is asking for a marketing grant of \$55,000 and a special event grant of \$75,000. The funding would be used for event rentals and equipment, marketing to tourists outside the 150-mile radius of Duval County, and talent acquisition. Ms. Brock scored the marketing grant application at 52 out of 60 and 51 out of 60 for the special event grant. The scores were not reduced for receiving multiple year funding due to its signature event status.

Ms. Bortnick gave a presentation on the 2023 Spartan U.S. Championship event and shared the data and demographics with the board to support the funding request for the 2024 event. She updated the board that the venue will change from the WW Ranch Motorcross Park to Diamond D Ranch. The reason for this change helps strategically place Spartan in a stronger financial position and provides racers new courses and obstacles to overcome.

Dennis Thompson asked whether any city own properties could support an event like this. Ms. Bortnick answered in the negative, explaining that while they tried, they would need 400-600 acres of land, to which the city just does not have. With extended amount of time needed for set-up and security, it would also be difficult to have an event like this at a publicly-owned facility.

Motion (Chan/ 2nd Thompson): Approve Spartan Race, Inc. to receive a marketing grant for \$55,000 and a special event grant for \$75,000 from the Tourist Development Council FY 22-23 Event Grants account for the 2024 Spartan U.S. Championship. - **approved unanimously.**

D. Jacksonville Offshore Diving and Fishing Reefs

Joe Kistel

Ms. Brock introduced Joe Kistel with Kistel Media, LLC. and gave an overview of the project. She reminded the board that the TDC gave \$35,000 in 2021 for marketing promotion of two artificial reefs Mr. Kistel's team created and that he fulfilled those commitments. Mr. Kistel presented at the previous April board meeting where he shared his desire to gain TDC support to fund a multi-year project to produce a Jax Fishing and Scuba Diving Outreach Platform via creation of a web platform featuring interactive seafloor navigational maps of ten reefs including web page, sonar mapping, video production, underwater imagery, and offshore preparations. Ms. Brock highlighted that this non-traditional ask would total \$400,000 over the course of three years (2023 - \$175,000; 2024 - \$125,000; 2025 - \$100,000) and, if approved, the board would need to decide where to fund this as much of the 2023 special event grants account has been spent. Additionally, the board would need to determine future accounts to support this project.

Mr. Kistel thanked the TDC for the opportunity to speak at this meeting and shared data to support his grant request. This included economic statistics from the saltwater fishing and scuba diving industries that happen around the state of Florida. He quoted studies done in Palm Beach, Broward, Miami-Dade, and Monroe counties and how these areas have been proactive in utilizing the economic impact on the fishing and scuba diving

industries from the creation of artificial reefs. Mr. Kistel then went on to explain how the online platform would work and how fishermen and scuba divers would benefit from this resource, overall aiding in this industry's tourist development in Duval County.

Dennis Thompson shared that he is still just as critical of this funding since Mr. Kistel's April presentation. Mr. Thompson wanted to know how this platform would be different from resources already available, such as tools Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) has published. Mr. Kistel shared that while they provide some level of information regarding offshore reefs, it would not be to the level that this new web platform would provide.

Mr. Thompson asked Captain Jim Suber, Marinas & Waterways Coordinator for the City of Jacksonville and Dock Master, to get his opinions on this platform. Captain Suber expressed the challenges he has for this initiative as it is hard to judge the numbers on what this could produce but did explain there was momentum for this in the fishing and diving industry. He noted that there is a market for this but compared to the industry in South Florida, those are where the bigger numbers are.

Councilmember Aaron Bowman asked if this project is aligned with what Tourist Development Tax dollars could be used for. Reece Wilson confirmed that this is an authorized use of the tax dollars under the Florida Statutes. Councilmember Bowman shared that this is an exciting endeavor and wondered if all the money was staying inside of his organization or will parts be contracted out. Mr. Kistel explained that there will be a lot of moving components and the money would be going to outside sources helping build this platform. Mr. Bowman was concerned this would be funding Mr. Kistel's revenue.

Mark VanLoh is concerned on the lack of numbers and return on investment. Mr. Kistel said while he does not have a tool to provide numbers to support this, however, he can share that other counties are very motivated to expand their artificial reefs.

Council Vice President read the proposed motion:

Motion: Approve Kistel Media LLC to receive a 2023-2025 multiyear marketing grant for \$175,000 from the Tourist Development Council FY 22-23 TDC Operations – Remaining to Spend account plus \$125,000 for FY 23-24 and \$100,000 for FY 24-25 from future FY Event Grants accounts for the Jax Fishing & Scuba Diving Outreach Platform. – the grant request was **denied due to lack of a motion.**

V. Zartico

Steven Clenney

Council Vice President Salem introduced Steven Clenney with Zartico to give a presentation on the data collection which aides in the decision making for funding and marketing for Jacksonville's tourist industry. Recently, Visit Jacksonville contracted with Zartico, a geolocation service that uses data and analytics to support tourists' movements within a city. Mr. Clenney demonstrated how Zartico functions and gave examples of its operation services within Jacksonville at certain points of interest like the PGA Tour, St. Johns Town Center, or the Sports District.

VI. Visit Jacksonville FY 2023 - 2024 Budget

Michael Corrigan

Ms. Brock reminded the board that at the June 2023 TDC meeting, the TDC approved the total TDC FY 22-23 budget, which included \$6,720,000 for Visit Jacksonville. The approved Visit Jacksonville amount was the same as the FY 22-23.

Michael Corrigan, CEO of Visit Jacksonville, presented a detailed budget for Visit Jacksonville and explained that having the same budget amount as FY 22-23 put the organization at a disadvantage. Mr. Corrigan requested a 7% increase to the amount which the TDC approved in June to account for cost of living, lease, and benefits increases as well as general business inflation increases. Ms. Brock explained that if approved, this 7% deviation, will be covered with dollars from the TDC Fund Balance, which has a sufficient amount for this request. The TDC is still waiting for a final revenue projection from the Budget Office and the auditors will make the adjustment as needed prior to sending the budget to City Council.

Motion: (Bowman/ 2nd Phillips): Approve the Visit Jacksonville Fiscal Year 2023-2024 Budget as presented, using funds from the TDC Fund Balance to cover any deviation as a result of the requested increase. - **approved unanimously.**

VII. Financial Report

Phillip Peterson

Assistant Council Auditor Phillip Peterson gave the financial report. TDC tax revenues for the 12 months ending April 2023 were \$ 10,779,153.83, a 12.98% increase over the 12 months ending April 2022. Revenue for April 2023 was \$6,146,530.71, up 12.60% from the same month in 2022. Actual collections for the fiscal year to date exceed the average monthly budgeted amount by \$793,570.71.

Mr. Peterson reviewed the budgetary balances as of December remaining in the TDC's contractual and operating accounts, they are: Destination Services - \$4; Marketing - \$0; Convention/Group Sales - \$0; Convention Grants, Sponsorships, and Promotions - \$249,117.85; Planning and Research - \$0; Event Grants - \$243,000; Development Account - \$1,871,075.63; Contingency Account - \$1,006,060; Equestrian Center Promotion - \$26,084.05; Remaining to be Spent in Accordance with the TDC Plan – TDC Operations - \$2,438,140.89; TDC Administration - \$125,617.15; and the Special Revenue Fund - \$131,267.50.

VIII. Visit Jacksonville Update

Michael Corrigan

Council Vice President asked Mr. Corrigan to give a Visit Jacksonville update. Mr. Corrigan thanked Councilmember Bowman for his service on the TDC as he will be rolling off the council in July. He continued to provide an industry update utilizing data by the STR Report to share information on hotel occupancy rate in Duval County and throughout the state of Florida. There have been losses in ADR throughout Florida, however, Jacksonville is forecasted to only drop less than one percent. Jacksonville should still see revenues at or above the 2019 level.

Mr. Corrigan provided an update from Visit Jacksonville's trip to the Destinations Florida Destination Marketing Summit. He expressed gratitude for the TDC Executive Director being able to attend this conference. Visit Jacksonville was able to share the new "Flip Side of Florida" campaign with the DMOs representing Florida cities and it was well received. Visit Jacksonville was also able to participate in a scholarship fund raising event which elevated the presence of Duval County's DMO among the others in Florida.

IX. Grant Restructuring

Carol Brock

Council Vice President Salem informed the board that the TDC has been using the same guidelines and applications for the grants for years and that the process could use some improvements and possible restructuring. He let the board know that Mrs. Brock would like the board to give Mr. Nolan, Mr. Corrigan, and her permission to begin working on refining the process and that they will report back in August with some recommendations.

X. Closing Comments and Adjournment

Chair Salem

In closing, Ms. Brock shared with the board that this was Councilmember Aaron Bowman's last meeting on the Tourist Development Council as he will end his term on City Council June 30th. She presented him a gift on behalf of the Tourist Development Council board in gratitude to his many years of service on the TDC.

Chair Salem reminded the board about the Investiture Ceremony of the Jacksonville City Council Officers and Members. It will be on Thursday, June 22 at 6:00 p.m. at the Jacksonville Center for the Performing Arts.

In closing, Chair Salem reminded the members that the next regular TDC meeting will be on August 24, 2023. The meeting adjourned at 11:38 a.m.

Meeting minutes respectfully submitted by Brett Nolan, TDC Administrator.

These minutes were approved at the TDC Regular Board meeting on August 24, 2023.

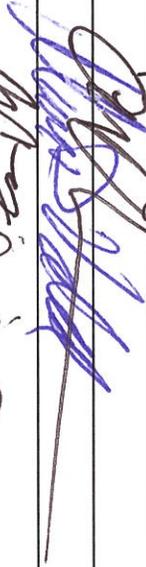
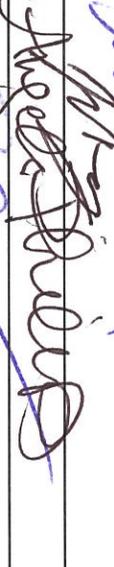
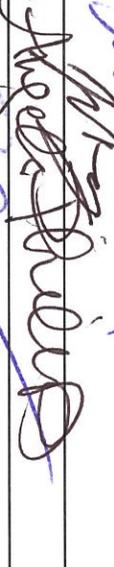


TOURIST DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL MEETING

Thursday, June 8, 2023, 10:00 a.m.

Attendance Record Sign-In Sheet



PRINT NAME	SIGNATURE
CP Terrance Freeman, TDC Chair	
CVP Ron Salem, TDC Vice Chair	
CM Aaron Bowman	
Mark VanLoh, TDC Member	
Jitan Kuverji, TDC Member	
Angela Phillips, TDC Member	
Dennis Chan, TDC Member	
Joe Hindstey, TDC Member	
Dennis Thompson, TDC Member	
Carol Brock, TDC Executive Director	
Brett Nolan, TDC Administrator	
Phillip Peterson, Asst. Council Auditor	
Reece Wilson, OGC	