

**OFFICE OF THE CITY COUNCIL**

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 **Meeting Minutes-Preliminary**

**TOURIST DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

**Pegine Echevarria, Chair**

**Tuesday, January 30, 2018**

**2:30 P.M.**

**117 West Duval Street**

**City Hall, Fourth Floor**

**Conference Room A**

**Meeting Convened: 2:31 pm Meeting Adjourned: 4:00 pm**

**I. Call to Order**

Pegine Echevarria, Chair

Nicole Chapman

Barbara Halverstadt

Maria Hane

Dave Herrell

Bill McConnell

Maria Mark-Excused

Sean Satya-Excused

Monica Smith

Alan Verlander-Excused

Annette Hastings, TDC Executive Director

Colleen Hampsey, Research Assistant

Phillip Peterson, Principal Council Auditor

Jim McCain, Deputy General Counsel

Attendance- Council President and TDC Chair Anna Lopez Brosche

For all other attendees please see sign in sheet.

**II. Introductions**

Chairwoman Echevarria convened the meeting at 2:01 pm. As some committee members were not present at the first meeting, Ms. Echevarria requested that the attendees introduce themselves for the record and also included a brief biographical summary as to what experience they have had with grant application evaluations.

**III. Sunshine Law Briefing**

Kirby Oberdorfer, Ethics, Compliance and Oversight Office, presented an overview of the Sunshine and Public Records Laws to the committee. According to the Florida Sunshine Law, board and commission members must make meetings open to the public, provide advanced notice of the meetings (24 hour minimum) and provide meeting minutes to the public. Additionally, board and commission members may not discuss related business outside of a noticed meeting and they must maintain and preserve all related documents/correspondences as public records. Board and commission members are required to attend one ethics training session annually.

**IV. Approval Minutes TDC Advisory Committee –January 17, 2018**

One amendment was added to the minutes from the January 17, 2018 meeting: the addition of thanks to Council President Brosche for her role in convening the committee. With that amendment, the minutes were approved.

**V. Establishment of Special Events and Convention Grant Guidelines under 2016-599-E**

There was a brief review of the committee’s charge, specifically to develop guidelines for special event grant evaluations to be submitted to the TDC.

***Charge:*** In accordance with Ordinance Code Section 666.108, the Tourist Development Plan, and specifically stated in Ordinance Code Section 666.108(b)(5) related to special event grants, please prepare guidelines and procedures for awarding special event grants that the Tourist Development Council may use as a framework for providing for the advancement, generation, growth and promotion of tourism, enhancement of the tourist industry, attraction of conventioneers and tourists from within and without the State of Florida to the City of Jacksonville. These guidelines are intended to serve as criteria for considering and awarding special events grants and should be developed with the intention of facilitating the highest and best use of taxpayer dollars to increase tourism.

***Special Event grants****.* This component shall authorize the Tourist Council to award special event grants to organizations or persons hosting an event in the City or surrounding areas. Any event funded under this component shall have as one of its primary purposes the attraction of tourists to the City as evidenced by the promotion of such event to tourists. This component shall be limited to the following grants:

(i) ***Grant awards for attendance of 25,000 tourists or 10,000 room nights or greater****.* The Tourist Council may award grants for special events designed to attract a minimum of 25,000 tourists to the City, which grant award may not exceed $250,000 for any such event unless currently obligated by contract until such obligation expires; and

(ii) ***Grant awards for attendance of 5,000 tourists or greater for events held at publicly owned******venues.*** The Tourist Council may award grants for special events designed to attract a minimum of 5,000 tourists to the City using publicly owned tourist venues such as the arena, performing arts center, or stadium or at the zoo or eligible museums. Such grant awards may not exceed $100,000 per event.

**VI.** **Discussion Items**

Point System Analyze Grant Application- There was a lengthy discussion about how to formulate a point system to analyze special event grant applications. Using points would make the process objective and consistent. One sample that was considered uses a five point impact scale (1=no impact and 5=high impact) for three broad categories (increase in tourism, return on investment and marketing). Marketing would be segmented into four groups: traditional, social media, grassroots/collaboration and influence.

Dave Herrell, Sports and Entertainment Officer, provided another sample for the committee to consider which uses five criteria for grant application assessment, with each criteria being worth ten points: total tourism impact, brand opportunity, marketing, stewardship and quality of life impact. The committee decided that this sample rubric may be better suited for special grant applications, with some adjustments. It was agreed that the points per criteria should be prioritized by importance to the TDC. The consensus was that tourism impact should be worth the most points, 25, brand opportunity and marketing should be worth ten points each, and stewardship and quality of life impact would be worth five points each.

It was proposed that events which fall off-season might receive bonus points for holding events during that time. However, Jacksonville lacks a distinct on or off season. Council President Brosche suggested that detailed guidelines should be provided for applicants, wherein each evaluation criteria would be accompanied by specific questions that should be answered by applicants. Ms. Brosche also noted that if the committee needs more time to finalize grant guidelines, the deadline of February 9th could be extended.

What does the Competitive Grant Application Proposals process need to stipulate? Applicants need to provide evidence of marketing reach to intended audiences and specific plans for tracking out of town visitors. Placing the responsibility of visitor tracking on hoteliers is difficult and not always accurate. The onus will be on grant applicants to show evidence on the application as to how visitors will be tracked (possibly through event intercept surveys) and then provide evidence after the event.

Evaluation guidelines to receive payment from the grant- The committee agreed to wait until all of the application guidelines are completed before finalizing payment guidelines for post-event evaluation.

Application Processing Fee-In the previous meeting, it was suggested that grant applicants might be charged an application fee to offset the costs of processing. Ms. Hastings was asked to provide a quantification of her time which is dedicated to the grant process. Ms. Hastings said on average she spends 2-10 hours per application, but that real costs are difficult to assess since multiple departments take part in the process (Office of General Counsel, Council Auditor’s Office, and Council Research). After discussion, the committee decided the fee would be prohibitive to applicants and would not bring enough funds to cover the costs for various staff participation in the processing/evaluation of grants. The committee voted to not impose fees on grant applicants.

**VII. Public Comments**

John Nooney spoke about the need for more public restroom facilities downtown and adjacent to kayaking paths.

**VIII. Closing Comments**

Topics for further discussion: grant management specific to events held at the Equestrian Center (at next full TDC meeting), the post-award evaluation process, differing rubrics for special event grants and convention grants, and the five dollar/room night requirement. Additionally, each committee member was assigned one criteria to develop probing questions for grant applications.

Total Tourism Impact/Reconfiguration of point system table- Dave Herrell

Brand opportunity- Maria Hane

Marketing- Monica Smith

Marketing overview- Nicole Chapman

Stewardship- Bill McConnell

Quality of life impact- Barbara Halverstadt

Reconfiguration of point system table- Dave Herrell

The next meeting will be on February 5, 2018 at 2:30 pm.

**IX. Adjourn**

\*\*\***Other Items may be added or deferred at discretion of the Chair. \*\*\***