

Report to the Industry

January 9, 2020

November Smith Travel Research Summary

Average Occupancy Rate			Average Daily Rate			RevPAR		
2018	2019	% Change	2018	2019	% Change	2018	2019	% Change
66.7%	68.2%	+2.3%	\$121.81	\$127.79	+4.9%	\$81.22	\$87.17	+7.3%

Bed Tax Collection – Record November

The preliminary resort tax collected for November 2019 was \$2,701,208, a 19.1% increase over November 2018 preliminary collections of \$2,267,124. Fiscal year-to-date preliminary tourist tax collections are \$4,978,894 an increase of 18.2% year-over-year.

Airport News

During November 2019, 876,703 passengers traveled through Southwest Florida International Airport (RSW), an increase of 8.2% compared to November 2018. Year-to-date, passenger traffic is up 8.7%.

VCB Departmental Reports

Domestic and International Sales update: Jill Vance, VCB director of sales, reported that although some of the first quarter FY2019-20 sales goals are behind pace for goal attainment, they are still ahead of the same time last year. She shared highlights of first-quarter activities for the group sales, travel agent and consumer sales teams, including hosting a successful military meeting planner FAM. She also presented upcoming sales activities, including The New York Times Travel Show and the Global Pharmaceutical & Medical Meetings Summit.

Stefanie Zinke, VCB international sales manager, recapped the numerous trade shows attended during the first quarter of FY19-20, as well as the six FAMs hosted in-destination featuring professionals from five different countries. Looking ahead, staff will be attending Florida Huddle in Jacksonville, Outdoor Adventure Show in Toronto, and ITB in Berlin.

VCB Public Relations update: Francesca Donlan, VCB director of communications, presented the successful impact of the Hobie 16 World Championships that were held Nov. 1-16 on Captiva and included 25 million media impressions from national and international coverage. The PR team hosted a PR boot camp for partners and completed various media FAMs. Staff will participate in International Media Marketplace and a Beer Marketing & Tourism conference.

Visitor Services update: Judi Durant, VCB director of visitor services, reported that volunteers at RSW assisted 49,433 visitors in the fourth quarter, bringing the yearly total 212,061. Volunteer hours for the fourth quarter were 8,031, a value of \$204,228. Total volunteers hours for 2019 totaled 28,230, a value of \$708,089.

New Business

The TDC voted unanimously to recommend that the BoCC approve all eligible components of an out-of-cycle beach and shoreline request made by the City of Sanibel to renourish a critically eroded section of beach south of Blind Pass.

The Tourist Development Council (TDC) approved adjusting the meeting time to 2:00 p.m. for the March 12, 2020 meeting.

2020 TDC Meeting Dates

Jan. 10	April 9	July – no meeting	Oct. 8
Feb. 13	May 14	Aug. 13	Nov. 12
March 12 at 2 p.m.	June 11	September – no meeting	Dec. 10

Next TDC meeting

The next TDC meeting will be held at 9 a.m. Thursday, Feb. 13, 2020, at the Lee County Administration East building, Room 118, 2201 Second St., Fort Myers. To view a complete tax collections report, go to www.LeeVCB.com. Contact: Tamara Pigott, TPigott@leegov.com, Lee County VCB, 239-338-3500.