



TDC Meeting Minutes

June 9, 2022

Tony Lapi, vice chair, called the Lee County Tourist Development Council meeting to order at 9 a.m.

Council members in attendance

Darla Bonk, Pamela Cronin, Larry Fiesel, Jay Johnson, Tony Lapi, Holly Smith and Bill Waichulis

Commissioner Cecil Pendergrass, Jim Atterholt, Mike Gibson, Gloria Tate, Brian Kramer, Fran Myers and Robert Wells III were excused.

Smith made a motion to approve the April 14, 2022, meeting minutes. Johnson seconded the motion, with amendment that Jay Johnson was in attendance.

Public to be heard

None to be heard.

Municipalities to be heard

Smith reported that SB 2508 was vetoed. Lighthouse Beach and the Blind Pass parking lot have had some major erosion due to recent storms and the City of Sanibel may bring forward a request for Beach and Shoreline funding in the future.

Report of the executive director

Tamara Pigott, Lee County Visitor & Convention Bureau executive director, reported the preliminary resort tax collected for April 2022 was \$6,922,083, a 22.0% increase over April 2021 preliminary collections of \$5,671,871. Fiscal year-to-date preliminary tourist tax collections are \$46,883,241, an increase of 40.3% year-over-year.

Pigott also reported that the average hotel occupancy rate for April 2022 was 76.2%, which is down 4.5% from April 2021 (79.8%). The average daily rate for April 2022 was \$245.38, up 27.8% from April 2021 (\$192.06) and RevPAR for April 2022 was \$186.91, up 22% from April 2021 (\$153.22).

For vacation rentals, the average occupancy rate for April 2022 was 66%, which is down 2.3% from April 2021 (67%). The average daily rate for April 2022 was \$348, up 26.0% from April 2021 (\$276) and RevPAR for April 2022 was \$229, up 23.2% from April 2021 (\$186).

During April 2022, 1,221,628 passengers traveled through Southwest Florida International Airport, an increase of 10.4% compared to April 2021. Year-to-date, passenger traffic is up 33.9% from the same period last year.

Marketing update

Brian Ososky, marketing director, showcased a range of integrated digital media placements with the purpose of driving summer visitation through our "Good Day" campaign. Publishers included Smithsonian, New York Times, USA Today, Shermans Travel, Outside Magazine, Conde Nast, Matador Network, and VRBO.

Clayton Reid, MMGY Global CEO, gave a market overview as it affects travel and tourism. Consumer spending in the hotel industry is back to pre-pandemic levels, but the airline industry is not. Business travel is rebounding, while leisure is tapering off, however working from home is allowing Americans to travel more.

New business

Matthew Grambow, City of Cape Coral special projects coordinator, presented a request for additional funds for the Sirenia Vista Park restroom project. The TDC unanimously recommended approval in the amount of \$59,500 after much discussion.

TDC member items

Johnson said the Lee chapter of the Florida Restaurant and Lodging Association (FRLA) will host a culinary cook-off for the best tapas at Shangri-La Springs on Oct. 13. FRLA's July luncheon will include speaker Catherine Curtis, FGCU's resort and hospitality director, in partnership with the Sanibel-Captiva Chamber of Commerce.

Cronin announced that June 28 will be the Shell Factory's 25-year anniversary and will be implementing a "spend your change" campaign for the celebration.

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 10:22 a.m.

Next TDC meeting

The next TDC meeting is at **9 a.m. Thursday, August 11, 2022** at the Lee County Admin 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.