

**PASCO COUNTY TOURIST DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL  
WORKSHOP**

**MINUTES**

**JULY 30, 2015**

**PREPARED IN THE OFFICE OF  
PAULA S. O'NEIL, CLERK & COMPTROLLER**

**THE MINUTES WERE PREPARED  
IN AGENDA ORDER AS  
PUBLISHED AND NOT IN THE  
ORDER THE ITEMS WERE HEARD**

**9:00 A.M.**

**SADDLEBROOK RESORT  
5700 SADDLEBROOK WAY  
WESLEY CHAPEL, FL 33543**

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**Tourist Development Council Members**

**The Honorable Kathryn Starkey**  
Board of County Commissioners

**The Honorable Camille Hernandez**  
Vice-Chairman, Mayor, City of Dade City

**The Honorable Chopper Davis**  
City of New Port Richey

Open Position

**Gail Cushman – ABSENT**  
Days Inn & Suites

**Toby Caroline**  
Paradise Lakes Resort

**Jack Phethean**  
Little Everglades Ranch

**Pat Ciaccio**  
Saddle Brook Resort

**Piyush Mulji – ABSENT**  
Hampton Inn

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- 1. Arrival**
  - 2. Breakfast**

Members of the Tourist Development Council, Staff, and others gathered for an informal breakfast at 8:30 a.m.

### **3. Welcome – Commissioner Kathryn Starkey**

Chairman Starkey called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

Ms. Connie Schroeder, Deputy Clerk, called the roll. Ms. Gail Cushman and Mr. Piyush Mulji were absent.

### **4. Tourism Manager’s Overview - Ed Caum**

Mr. Ed Caum, Tourism Manager, thanked Mr. Ciaccio and Mr. Dempsey for hosting the workshop. The Tourist Development Plan aligned with the County’s Strategic Plan and with the County’s Economic Plan. He spoke regarding the *Visit Florida* effort which included matching funds for grant money, combined campaigns with nearby counties, and conversations with counties to the south. He complimented Ms. Roni Lloyd on her efforts regarding collaboration in the sports tourism arena.

Mr. Richard Gehring, Planning and Development Administrator, noted there was other work in progress related to the tourism efforts such as work in the Parks Department, the Metropolitan Planning Organization trails initiatives, and the Natural Resources Department.

Discussion followed regarding:

- The combined efforts of Staff and the TDC to improve the County’s tourism outlook
- Funds for parks and parks programs, both pocket parks and district parks
- Public/private partnerships ideas
- Florida Sports Foundation efforts
- Joint management and joint use facilities with other entities or systems
- Social media programs, technology, and mobile apps
- Wayfinding along with *Visit Pasco*

Commissioner Starkey spoke regarding the facilities and offerings at the future Starkey Ranch Park, some of which would be shared with the School Board and the community.

### **5. Branding / Marketing – Lauren St. Martin**

Ms. Lauren St. Martin, Tourism Marketing Coordinator, showed several video clips which promoted various aspects of Pasco County.

Discussion between the TDC and Staff followed regarding:

TDC Workshop 07/30/2015

- Target audiences including international options
- Partnering and promoting Pasco County and its many venues
- Calendaring events in Pasco and surrounding areas
- Event funding, sponsorship agreements, responsibilities, and advertising
- Logo issues
- Fund allocation, leveraging, and accountability/reporting
- Surveying the public regarding branding
- Research based marketing program

## **6. Sports Tourism – Roni Lloyd**

Ms. Roni Lloyd, Sports Marketing Coordinator, gave a brief overview of the Sports Tourism core mission which was to generate positive, direct economic impact by attracting visitors to the area through sports and travel. That would include not only traditional sports but other things like trails, cycling, cheerleading, et cetera. to make Pasco County a Premiere Sports Marketing destination. Sporting events that were “good for Pasco County” would bring significant economic impact through hotel stays. Amateur sports brought over 18 million visitors to Florida every year. She spoke regarding public/private partnerships, buy-in from the community and how Pasco County could align with future efforts. She gave a brief history of the very successful Oldsmar Sporting Facility.

Discussion followed regarding:

- Opportunities and commitments
- Adjacent/nearby counties sporting efforts
- Competition in the sports arena in the State of Florida
- Support and sponsorship in the area

## **7. Coast to Coast Connector – Allen Howell**

Mr. Allen Howell, Planner with the Metropolitan Planning Organization, gave an overview of the Coast to Coast (C2C) Trail. The Trail ran from the Space Coast, approximately 250 miles, to Pasco County and further south. He spoke regarding the path of the Trail, expected tourism opportunities, amenities, partnerships, and other trails and connections in the area.

Discussion followed between the TDC and Staff regarding:

- Time lines to completions for certain routes
- Tourism and funding
- Future plans for the Dade City Train Station

## **8. Pasco County Sports Complex Feasibility Study**

Mr. Ed Caum, Tourism Manager, said Staff and Johnson Consulting had begun exploring ideas to bring before the Board of County Commissioners for directive.

Councilman Davis asked about funding. He felt there was no directive from the consultant regarding the central or western portions of Pasco County.

Mr. Caum clarified that what was asked of Johnson was with regard to the 120 acres, Florida Hospital, Shops of Wiregrass, and the Porter Campus in a confined, specific area of the County.

Discussion followed between the TDC and Staff regarding various aspects of the proposed sports complex, sponsorships and further opportunities.

Mr. Caum pointed out the TDC could recommend Tourist Development money be used in particular ways. The plan should spell out specifically how the money would be spent, possibly on a year-by-year basis. The BCC had set aside \$8.5 million for a sports facility in the Wiregrass area. He explained the expense of turf fields where applicable, “buy-back” money, and the idea of “construction reserve.”

Discussion followed regarding:

- Expenditures
- Fund balances
- Penny for Pasco funds
- Trails, signage, and maintenance
- Sponsorships
- Youth leagues and public parks
- Public private partnerships such as WCAA
- Skydiving and Nudist Resorts in Pasco
- Medical tourism

Mr. Thomas Bruno, Budget Analyst with the Office of Management and Budget, explained encumbrances, the general fund, and the current construction fund.

Ms. Elizabeth Blair, Senior Assistant County Attorney, explained the provision in the Florida Statute that set out what the Tourism Plan was and stated there had to be a plan for the money. She read the pertinent section from the Statute regarding priorities by specific project or special use. She suggested the TDC identify what they wanted to fund per year, what the priorities would be, while keeping funds available for promotions/branding efforts. She reminded the TDC there would only be discussion at today’s workshop; any formal motions would need to be made at a publicly held TDC meeting.

Further discussion followed regarding ways to prioritize, funding issues, spending options, and partnering.

Mr. Phethean initiated discussion regarding the original DRI for Wiregrass, the park requirements along with phasing, and how this issue related to the possibility of Raymond James moving into the area.

Mr. Caum summarized by saying Pasco County had to tell their story. Let everyone know “who we are and what makes us unique; who we are, not what we want to be.” Staff will bring back to the TDC the “welcome sign” for Pasco County.

## **9. Capital Expenditure**

Mr. Ed Caum, Tourism Manager, gave a Powerpoint presentation explaining and comparing Penny for Pasco funds and expenditures.

Discussion followed between the TDC and Staff regarding:

- Bed tax and new hotel rooms planned
- Advertising funds
- Comparisons of adjacent counties’ marketing budgets and bed tax rate
- The issues of hotel licensing and collecting/paying bed tax
- A plan to use a data base to track/promote hotel rooms/beds
- Future growth in the hospitality resources in the area.

Ms. Elizabeth Blair, Senior Assistant County Attorney, gave information on proper expenditures of the Penny for Pasco incremental funds.

Discussion followed regarding common practices, such as rate-setting and reporting in the hotel industry which may need to be addressed. Several new hotels were expected in the very near future and any hotels looking to expand into the Wesley Chapel/Wiregrass area may actually end up in Hillsborough County. Population growth and associated facilities were also expected in that area.

## **10. Questions & Answers**

There were no further questions.

## **11. Break**

There was no break.

## **12. Tourist Development Plan- Discussion and Recommendations**

Commissioner Starkey suggested reviewing the Johnson Consulting feasibility study plan regarding incorporating other areas of the County.

### **13. Next Steps**

Mr. Ed Caum, Tourism Manager, said the 2016-2020 Tourist Development Plan (TDP) would be presented at the September TDC meeting after today's suggestions were incorporated into the Plan. After the TDC accepted the Plan, it would be submitted to the Board of County Commissioners by the end of the year. He reminded the TDC that while the current TDP was valid through 2016, the new plan could be implemented at any time and that all TDPs were eligible for review or changes annually.

### **14. Dismissal**

Mr. Ed Caum, Tourism Manager, thanked Saddlebrook Resort again for hosting the meeting and thanked all the attendees.

The meeting adjourned at 12:23 p.m.

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*Office of Paula S. O'Neil, Clerk & Comptroller*

Prepared by: \_\_\_\_\_  
Katie McCormick, Records Clerk  
Board Records Department