

**AT A MEETING OF THE TOURIST DEVELOPMENT
COUNCIL HELD IN AND FOR GADSDEN COUNTY, FL ON
FEBRUARY 3, 2025 AT 10:00 A.M., THE FOLLOWING
PROCEEDING WAS HAD, VIZ:**

Present: Carolyn Ford, Chair
Alonzetta Simpkins, County Commissioner
Jeff Dubree, Tax Collector
Charles Williams, Midway City Councilman
Ronte Harris, Quincy City Commissioner

Staff Present: Leslie D. Steele, Tourist Development Director
Adriana Quijada, Deputy Clerk
Leann Jinks, Clerk Secretary to the Boards

1. Welcome

Chair Ford called the meeting to order at 10:16 a.m. and then recessed.

2. Invocation/Pledge of Allegiance/ Roll Call

Chair Ford resumed the meeting and Deputy Clerk did Roll Call. Chair Ford then led into the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. Regular Meeting

a. Approval of Minutes:

July 29, 2024, Workshop

August 12, 2024, Workshop

November 14, 2024, Workshop

Chair Ford requested approval of the above minutes.

COMMISSIONER HARRIS MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES AND COUNCILMAN WILLIAMS MADE THE SECOND. THE BOARD VOTED 5-0 TO APPROVE.

Ms. Steele stated they need to add an item to the agenda for the 2025 Lake Pro Am Tournament sponsorship and approve \$7,500.

COMMISSIONER HARRIS MADE A MOTION TO ADD LAKE PRO AM TOURNAMENT SPONSORSHIP TO THE AGENDA AND COMMISSIONER SIMPKINS MADE THE SECOND. THE BOARD VOTED 5-0 TO APPROVE.

Ms. Steele stated this funding would come from line 2811. Commissioner Simpkins gave a review of Lake Pro Am Tournament and stated this was the first year that the TDC has been involved.

Ms. Steele stated the \$7,500 would generate into bed tax; this event will also be televised on tv. Sponsor logo will be on skier's bibs, shirts, banners, etc.

Ms. Steele stated it was recommended to approve the pay, and send this to the Board of County Commissioners for their approval; they were working on the TDC ordinance with the attorney.

Mr. Dubree asked how many competitors are in it each year. Commissioner Simpkins stated she was not sure, but maybe 50 or more as there are both men and women competing. The event lasts all weekend.

JEFF DUBREE MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THE LAKE PRO AM TOURNAMENT SPONSORSHIP OF \$7,500 AND COMMISSIONER HARRIS MADE THE SECOND. THE BOARD VOTED 5-0 TO APPROVE.

Discussion and Action Marketing Grant Fund Request:

2024 Kountry Kingz MC Annual Event

Ms. Steele stated all guidelines have been made and this was coming from line item 54811.

JEFF DUBREE MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE TDC TO SPONSOR 2024 KOUNTRY KINGZ MC ANNUAL EVENT AND COUNCILMAN WILLIAMS MADE THE SECOND. THE BOARD VOTED 5-0 TO APPROVE.

2025 Havana Mega Reunion

Ms. Steele presented the above item.

JEFF DUBREE MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THE 2025 HAVANA MEGA REUNION AND COMMISSIONER HARRIS MADE THE SECOND. THE BOARD VOTED 5-0 TO APPROVE.

**b. Discussion and Action for approval of Marketing Strategy
(Leslie D. Steele, Tourist Development Administrator, Dante Filyau and Michael Hall
TDC Marketing Firm MediumFour)**

Ms. Steele presented the above item.

Michael Hall, MediumFour, appeared through Zoom. He stated they are now in Phase 2 and gave an update of the work they have been doing.

Ms. Steele asked for an update on market research. She did go over the documentation provided to all board members and MediumFour representatives in the process of Mr. Hall locating the documentation requested to go over.

Mr. Hall presented the update on market research as requested.

Ms. Steele stated the static website that they approved did not work as there was no public interaction on that site. She stated she asked the marketing firm to charge \$20k instead of \$1 million, and they agreed.

Commissioner Harris asked what CIVICPLUS charge for the average website; Ms. Steele stated \$120k yearly.

Ms. Steele went through the adjusted top 6 months for marketing efforts.

Ms. Steele recommended to start with Gadsden Heartbeats for campaign strategy.

Chair Ford asked what the hotels, and bed & breakfast could do onsite to attract folks. Mr. Hall stated they would need to offer discounts on rooms when they have functions.

Mr. Dubree asked if approving the whole campaign; Tourist Development Council and the community needs more input before jumping into a campaign.

Ms. Steele stated they did not need to approve all the campaigns; They could give directives on what they wanted to approve now and what they want to discuss further.

Mr. Williams stated to recommend approving website and have a meeting to have more time to discuss the other campaigns.

Commissioner Simpkins stated she agreed with Mr. Dubree on not approving entire campaign but did want to vote to approve the website.

Commissioner Simpkins asked if they have a set budget amount for website; Ms. Steele stated \$25k and they have the money, and it was already approved.

MR. DUBREE MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE MARKETING WEBSITE AND BRANDING AND HAVE FURTHER DISCUSSION ON CAMPAIGNS AND COMMISSIONER HARRIS MADE THE SECOND. THE BOARD VOTED 5-0 TO APPROVE.

Mr. Williams recommended to amend the motion on the floor for approving the budget and for Chair Ford to call a special meeting.

MR. DUBREE AMENDED HIS MOTION TO INCLUDE \$40K BUDGET FOR WEEKS 9-24 AND COMMISSIONER HARRIS MADE THE SECOND. THE BOARD VOTED 5-0 TO APPROVE.

Chair Ford stated to set a date for a special meeting.

4. Next Scheduled Meetings

COMMISSIONER SIMPKINS MADE A MOTION FOR CHAIR TO CALL A SPECIAL MEETING AND MR. DUBREE MADE THE SECOND. THE BOARD VOTED 5-0 TO APPROVE.

5. **Adjournment**

THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS TO COME BEFORE THE BOARD, CHAIR FORD DECLARED THE MEETING ADJOURNED AT 11:17 A.M.

GADSDEN COUNTY, FLORIDA

CAROLYN FORD, Chair
Tourist Development Council

ATTEST:

NICHOLAS THOMAS, Clerk