MINUTES
TOURIST DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL
PUTNAM COUNTY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
PALATKA, FL
SEPTEMBER 12, 2019

Present: Chairman B. Pickens, Mayor T. Hill, J. Hodge, K. Redford, S. Smith, D. Jones and J. Linton staff.

Others Present: Teju Adkisson, Kate Adornetto, Ruth Benjamin, Glen Cale, Andrea Conover, Lauren Faulkner, Andy Heartz, Pat Maden, John Theobold, Lalita Thomas and Elizabeth van Rensburg.

I. Call to Order. Chairman Pickens called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m. with an invocation and the Pledge of Allegiance. He welcomed TDC members and guests in attendance.

II. Category B (Cultural Arts) Grant Requests. Coordinator Jones introduced Teju Adkisson, County Finance. Jones stated that this is the first of two grant cycles and we have $49,000 available in this category for the year with $30,000 requested in this grant cycle. Jones reminded members they should save funds in each category for the 2nd cycle.

1. African-American Cultural Arts Council. A request for $1,000.00 was made for the MLK, Jr. Festival. Ruth Benjamin and Lalita Thomas spoke about the event covering aspects of culture, recreation and education. Jones stated they did show the required matching funds.

2. Arts Council of Greater Palatka. A request for a total of $15,150.00 was made for the following events: $4,350.00 for High Life Jazz Series, $3,700.00 for Live at the Larimer/Saturday Nite Live, $5,500.00 for Concert Series and $1,600.00 for Gallery Exhibits. Jones said some of the events were throughout the year and they could come back to the 2nd cycle.

3. Purple Plum. A request for $1,000.00 was made for Four Weddings and an Elvis production. Lauren Faulkner said the production had changed to War of the Worlds on October 25-26 and will include dinner and a show. Advertising will be in Putnam, St. Johns and Flagler counties. Jones said they do show required matching funds.

ACTION: Motion Hill, second Redford to accept the Purple Plum event changes from Four Weddings to War of the Worlds.

CARRIED

4. River City Players. A request for $6,420.00 was made for 2019 & 2020 Productions. Elizabeth van Rensburg said funding requested was specific
to this grant cycle and they would come to 2nd cycle for other plays. Rensburg said over half of attendees are from outside of Putnam County.

5. Crescent City Lions Foundation. A request for $2,000.00 was made for the Christmas Festival & Parade. Coordinator Jones said they were previous applicants and looking to grow the event and they did show matching funds. Chair Pickens said the event is Friday & Saturday.

6. GFWC Crescent City Woman’s Club. A request for $3,730.00 was made for the 26th Historical Tour of Homes. Lauren Faulkner and Pat Maden spoke about the Woman’s Club involvement in helping the community. Chair Pickens thanked them.

ACTION: Motion Hill, second S. Smith to award $1,000.00 to the African-American Cultural Arts Council for the MLK Jr. Festival, $7,500.00 to the Arts Council of Greater Palatka with the following breakdown: $2,000.00 for Live at the Larimer/Saturday Nite Live, $2,500.00 for the Concert Series, $1,000.00 for the Gallery Exhibits and $2,000.00 for the High Life Jazz Series, $1,000.00 to the Purple Plum Playhouse for the War of the Worlds dinner & show, $5,000.00 to River City Players for the 2019 & 2020 Productions, $1,000.00 to the Crescent City Lions Foundation for the Christmas Festival & Parade and $1,000.00 to the GFWC Crescent City Woman’s Club for the 26th Historical Tour of Homes from Category B, Cultural Arts, FY 2019-2020 budget.

CARRIED

III. Category A (Events & Activities) Grant/Sponsorship Requests. Coordinator Jones reminded Council members that this is the first of two grant cycles and they have already granted $20,000.00 from this budget year which leaves $58,800.00 for entire year. Jones mentioned that if they desired to award more than half or up to $58,800.00, funds could be brought up from the additional carry-forward funds for 2nd cycle.

1. Heartz Golf. Requests were made for $3,000.00 for the US Kids NF Championship, $4,000.00 for the FSGA Jr. Tour, $4,000.00 for the Police Athletic League, $4,000.00 for the Jr. Azalea, $5,000.00 for the Sr. Azalea, $6,000.00 for the Azalea Amateur and $3,000.00 for the Foundation for Rural Education. Andy Heartz said they needed money to get the PAL started and would bring 30 players from North Carolina. Lalita Thomas said they were trying to make this an annual event. Heartz spoke about the substantial room nights on all the golf tournaments.

2. VMD Promotions, LLC. A request for $6,500.00 was made for the Crappie USA Fishing Tournament. Jones said this event has been funded many times but there was a new coordinator this year and the event will be held on Lake Crescent in South Putnam.
3. FLW. A request for $2,500.00 was made for the T-H Marine BFL Qualifier. Jones said this is a one-day tournament, but anglers and staff will come in days before for practice fishing and a meeting held the day before.

4. St. Johns River State College Baseball. Requests were made for $4,000.00 for the Capital City Bank Classic and $5,000.00 for the John Tindall Classic. John Theobold and Kate Adometto thanked the TDC for their support. Theobold said both tournaments generate significant hotel room nights as there are players, coaches, families and scouts that stay 2-4 nights. Theobold mentioned the TDC would get an ad in the media guide and all games were live broadcast.

5. Florida B.A.S.S. Nation. A request for $6,000.00 was made for the Junior/High School Regional & State Qualifier. Glenn Cale said this event is growing and they were able to give $67,000 in scholarships last year. Cale said the anglers bring a lot of family members and they would fill up the hotels from Feb. 28 – March 1.

6. Rotary Club of Palatka Sunrise. A request for $2,000.00 was made for the 2020 Azalea Pickleball Tournament. Jones said this would be the 2nd year funding them. She added that it was successful last year with 250 people and should be bigger this year.

7. Downtown Palatka Experiences. A request for $5,800.00 was made for the 74th Annual Azalea Festival. Jones presented the application.

ACTION: Motion to discuss Hill, second Hodge to award Heartz Golf $1,500.00 for US Kids NF Championship, 1,500.00 for FSGA Jr. Tour, $1,500.00 for Police Athletic League, $1,500.00 for Jr. Azalea, $3,000.00 for Sr. Azalea, $3,000.00 for Azalea Amateur, $500.00 for Foundation for Rural Education, $4,000.00 to VMD Promotions, LLC. for the Crappie USA Fishing Tournament, $1,000.00 to FLW for the T-H Marine BFL Qualifier, $3,000.00 to SJRSC for the Capital City Bank Classic, $3,000.00 to SJRSC for the John Tindall Classic, $4,000.00 to Florida B.A.S.S. Nation for the Junior/High School Regional & State Qualifier, $2,000.00 to Rotary Club of Palatka Sunrise for the 2020 Azalea Pickleball Tournament and $4,000.00 to Downtown Palatka Experiences for the 74th Annual Azalea Festival, from Category A, Events & Activities, FY 2019-2020 budget.

MOTION WITHDRAWN
SECOND WITHDRAWN

During discussion S. Smith said that B.A.S.S. Nation should be fully funded as they bring considerable heads in beds. Chair Pickens added that the baseball tournaments do as well and should be fully funded. Jones mentioned that Crappie & FLW’s requested amounts may not be negotiable as these were host fees.
ACTION: Motion Hill, second Hodge to amend previous motion to award Hartz Golf $1,500.00 for US Kids NF Championship, 1,500.00 for FSGA Jr. Tour, $1,500.00 for Police Athletic League, $1,500.00 for Jr. Azalea, $3,000.00 for Sr. Azalea, $3,000.00 for Azalea Amateur, $500.00 for Foundation for Rural Education, $4,000.00 to VMD Promotions, LLC. for the Crappie USA Fishing Tournament, $2,500.00 to FLW for the T-H Marine BFL Qualifier, $4,000.00 to SJRSC for the Capital City Bank Classic, $5,000.00 to SJRSC for the John Tindall Classic, $6,000.00 to Florida B.A.S.S. Nation for the Junior/High School Regional & State Qualifier, $2,000.00 to Rotary Club of Palatka Sunrise for the 2020 Azalea Pickleball Tournament and $4,000.00 to Downtown Palatka Experiences for the 74th Annual Azalea Festival, from Category A, Events & Activities, FY 2019-2020 budget.

CARRIED

IV. Action Items.

A. Minutes. The minutes of the June 27, 2019 meeting were presented for approval.

ACTION: Motion Redford, second Hodge to approve the minutes of the June 27, 2019 meeting as presented.

CARRIED

B. Budget. Jones said this budget reflects a small change to the overall total from the tentative budget. The new number is $494,650, which is reflected in the categories by their percentages.

ACTION: Motion Redford, second Hill to approve the 2019-2020 budget as presented.

CARRIED

C. TDC Appointments. A recommendation for the reappointment of John Hodge and Teresa Miller was presented for approval. Both 4-year terms end this month.

ACTION: Motion Redford, second Hill to approve the recommendation for the reappointment of J. Hodge and T. Miller as presented.

CARRIED

D. Revised Sign Rules and Regulations. Coordinator Jones presented the revised rules for the electronic sign. She stated the revisions broadened use for the community but still putting tourism first. Hill suggested the Chairman can make a judgement call if there are any issues.
ACTION: Motion Hill, second Hodge to adopt the revised sign rules and regulations with the change of allowing the TDC Chairman to make judgement calls.  

CARRIED

V. Chairman Comments. Chairman Pickens thanked the members for their committed service and for allowing him to Chair the TDC Council. He stated that there will probably be a new chairman for the next meeting as the BOCC will name a new Chair in November.

VI. Coordinator’s Comments. Coordinator Jones said as requested she contacted MLF about the decision not to bid for a 2020 tournament. Jones said they understood then received a phone call yesterday from their coordinator asking us to rethink that decision as they were dropping some of their deliverables. Discussion followed and members were inclined to wait and perhaps bid in 2021 if staff has an opportunity to attend one to get a first-hand look. Jones reported the bed tax had another large increase and will top $540,000.00 this fiscal year. She also reported that occupancy rates for county are estimated to be at 70% and hospitality annual wages have increase 34% over the past 5 years. Hill said we need to take a proactive stance in hotels coming to Putnam County. Jones concluded by reporting that the Bass Elite announcement would be out later this week.

VII. Adjournment. Chairman Pickens adjourned the meeting at 10:06 am.

Respectfully submitted,

Dana Cameron Jones, Coordinator  
Putnam County Tourist Development Council