



Tourist Development Council

January 22, 2025, at 2:00 PM

Brevard County Government Center, Viera

The Tourist Development Council met on January 22, 2025, at 2:00 PM, at the Brevard County Government Center, Viera. Members present were Chair Rob Feltner, Vice Chair Tom Hermansen, Julie Braga, Wayne Soard, Alex Litras, Mayor Andrew Connors, Larry Jarnes, and Mayor Rob Medina. Members absent were Keith Winsten. Staff present were Alexander Essee, County Attorney's Office and Peter Cranis, John Giantonio, Laura Beebe, Angela Essing, Juawana Brooks from the Tourism Development Office, and Mike McGarry, Beaches, Boating, and Waterways Programs Manager. Guests present were Dave Berman, Florida Today.

Roll Call

Approval of Minutes

Action: The Board approved the November 18, 2025, Tourist Development Council Minutes.

Result: Approved

Mover: Mayor Medina

Second: Hermansen

Ayes: Mayor Connors, Braga, Hermansen, Jarnes, Mayor Medina, Litras, Soard and Feltner

Absent: Winsten

Selection of Vice Chair

Action: Mayor Connors nominated Larry Jarnes for Vice Chair of the TDC Committee. The committee held a roll call to verify the nomination.

Result: Denied

Mover: Mayor Connors

Second: Jarnes

Ayes: Mayor Connors, Jarnes

Nays: Mayor Medina, Braga, Litras, Soard, Hermansen and Feltner

Absent: Winsten

Action: Mayor Medina nominated Tom Hermansen for Vice Chair. The committee had a roll call to verify the nomination.

Result: Approved

Mover: Mayor Rob Medina

Second: Hermansen

Ayes: Mayor Connors, Braga, Litras, Soard, Mayor Medina, Hermansen and Feltner

Nays: Mayor Connors and Jarnes

Absent: Winsten

STR Report/ Tourist Tax Revenue Report

Cranis highlighted the FY 2024-25 TDT Report, showing four consecutive months of increased income. Noted that October was up 10.6%, November TDT was up by 9.4%, and December is tracking to be ahead of previous years.

Budget Report

Cranis updated the committee on the new fiscal year, we are seeing the Fall Campaign coming to an end. Getting ready to start the Spring Campaigns.

Sub-Committees

Cranis explained that typically, in February the TDC selects its members for sub-committees, but prior to that, he would like to have a discussion about which sub-committees the TDC would like to convene. Last year, we had the Marketing Support Program, which took the place of both Culture & Sport Grants. It is staff's recommendation we suspend the Culture & Sport Committees for this fiscal year since there would be no grant programs for them to review.

Braga asked if the committees are disbanded, who will be responsible for looking through the grant applications submitted in each category.

Cranis stated the way it worked the previous year: the MSP was focused on the out-of-county attendees and room nights as a part of the application process. Based on those numbers staff brought that information to the TDC to review and vote on. Until otherwise instructed we would follow that same procedure again.

Braga subsequently questioned based on what the BOCC reviewed at the workshop were there any potential changes in the grant process.

Cranis explained that there were some suggestions/changes at the workshop. There were some suggested changes to the criteria potentially, some conversation about whether the program is exclusively just marketing support or would there be an opportunity for events to get reimbursement for other expenses. There could be other changes like lowering the number of out-of-county attendees. There was also some discussion about some portion of the budget being allocated to commissioners to support events that are in their district. There was a lot of discussion about changing criteria, but not necessarily changing the process of the program.

Hermansen asked if the sub-committees are not required to do the work of grading applications and if there is not any available funding recommend that we defer committees until needed.

Action: Hermansen motioned that the Culture & Sports Committees be postpone until further notice.

Mayor Medina wanted to briefly discuss questions before voting on the motion. The Culture Grants are for reimbursement of events that have already proceeded.

Cranis answered we still have nine-months remaining in this fiscal year. We still have events that would be able to receive Marketing Support Program funds should the board approve those events. There are approximately a dozen events that already occurred, and they would potentially be receiving reimbursements.

Mayor Medina asked about each commissioner having a portion of the funds will that be part of the plans moving forward.

Chair Feltner explained that there was approximately \$100,000 available to distribute for these different events, we have five commissioners, and he thought they could each identify up to \$20,000 for these events and bring to the BOCC on January 28, 2025, to vote. That doesn't mean \$20,000 in their district, that just means each commissioner. He stated publicly as an example: Melbourne Art Show is a very nice event in Wickham Park that fell through the cracks with the new changes to the Marketing Support Program that he would support.

Result: Approved

Mover: Hermansen

Seconder: Mayor Rob Medina

Ayes: Mayor Connors, Braga, Litras, Soard, Mayor Medina, Hermansen, Mayor Connors, Jarnes and Feltner

Nays: none

Absent: Winsten

Capital Facilities Budget

Cranis highlighted net revenue of \$12 million and the committed projected expenditures, and the amount they will receive.

- 1) Viera Park Debt Payment – made payment of \$563,000 – 5 more years of payments.
- 2) Aquarium- \$15 million total over the course of ten years. \$1.5 million per year.
- 3) US Law Enforcement Foundation – received their first \$1 million of allocated \$5 million, will have another \$1 million this fiscal year and for 3 additional years.
- 4) Brightline Station- \$5 million, 2 more years to break ground to receive funding.
- 5) Cape Canaveral Lighthouse- \$775,000 awarded
- 6) Veterans Memorial Park Amphitheater- \$2.5 million awarded.
- 7) Lifeguards- \$710,000 allocated

The Capital Facilities balance is near zero. If we continue to see growth in TDT we will potentially have some funds in that account, but still with all the payouts that the Capital Facilities have it's not enough for a Capital Facilities Grant Program. Next year the minimum

for a Capital Facilities Grant starts at \$250,000. Looking at the projected TDT, funds will grow in the next few years, but we do not have enough money to award a grant program.

Action: Hermansen motion Capital Facilities GCommittee postpone until further notice.

Result: Approved

Mover: Hermansen

Second: Mayor Rob Medina

Ayes: Mayor Connors, Braga, Litras, Soard, Mayor Medina, Hermansen, Mayor Connors, Jarnes and Feltner

Nays: none

Absent: Winsten

Beach Improvement Committee

Cranis explained the Indian River Lagoon Grant Program has been suspended for the last two years, mostly due to storm damage from 2022. Using all the Beach funds the budget was allocated and spent. The Beach Improvement Budget has recovered and has approximately \$8.5 million in reserves. In his opinion, he thinks we will have positive cash flow in the cash portion of that budget.

Cranis offered sincere appreciation to Mike McGarry, the Beaches, Boating and Waterways Program Manager for working with the Army Corps, FEMA and Feds. Most of the projects going on right now are either covered by Federal funds or we will get reimbursements over the next few years from FEMA. The TDC can decide if a Beach Improvement Committee needs to meet and make recommendations about what to do with the IRL Grants. Last year the committee did meet and made recommendations, but it was decided by the BOCC not to move forward with recommendations.

Braga was speaking as the previous Chair of the Beach Improvement Committee on how important it is to have funds allocated for the beach. Working with McGarry to continue reimbursement with FEMA and Army Corps. Braga stated she was in support of having Beach Improvement Committee meetings to make recommendations. Money did go to Derelict Vessel Removal Program, but it went off cycle from the IRL Grant Program.

Mayor Medina asked will the Beach Improvement Committee meeting would enhance a better communication with McGarry?

Braga explained that Beach Improvement Committee has a great group of people that are smart, thoughtful and can look at the whole picture to elevate the process and make recommendations to the TDC.

Cranis explained that the Chair of the TDC selects the Chair of the sub-committees. The other eight members of the TDC selects a member to serve as sub-committee members.

Chair Feltner asked separate from themselves can they pick a community member.

Hermansen asked can TDC Members pick themselves.

Cranis answered yes TDC Members can pick themselves.

The Chair acknowledged there was a need for the Beach Improvement Committee to meet this year.

Action: Chair Feltner selected Julie Braga as Chair of Beach Improvement Committee.

Note: action does not require a vote as the Operating Procedures for the TDC states that the Chair of the TDC selects the Chairs of the sub-committees.

There was a question about when the committee would meet and Cranis stated that staff could work with Chair to set a meeting date.

Chair Feltner stated that by next meeting the remainder of TDC members should have their community member for the Beach Improvement Committee.

Marketing Committee

Cranis express how much he appreciated the members of the Marketing Committee. They provide insight and feedback for the Marketing Plan we are required to bring to the TDC and the BOCC every year.

Chair Feltner agreed that we should keep the Marketing Committee.

Cranis explained that you would need to select a Chair for the Marketing Committee.

Action: Chair Feltner nominated Tom Hermansen as Chair of Marketing Committee. The meeting dates will be determined.

Public Comment

Mayor Rob Medina wanted to update the TDC that there will be a ribbon cutting at Palm Bay Sacrifice Park. TDC did provide \$250,000 grant towards Palm Bay Sacrifice Park so keep it on your calendar. The amphitheater is almost finished, process is really going well and thanked everyone for their help.

Chair Feltner asked how many people the amphitheater can accommodate.

Mayor Medina stated approximately 200 people. I wouldn't say a show, but it holds enough space for that many people.

Cranis welcomed Mayor Connors TDC newest member and provided The TDC Handbook. He also welcomed back Larry Jarnes to TDC. The next TDC meeting will on February 26, 2025, at 2:00 PM.

The Meeting adjourned at 2:40 PM.