



ACCOMMODATIONS TAX ADVISORY COMMITTEE

10:00am, Wednesday, May 15, 2024

1207 Palm Boulevard, Isle of Palms, SC

MINUTES

1. Call to order

Present: Ray Burns, Margaret Miller, Rebecca Kovalich, Park Williams, Mike Boykin

Absent: Barb Bergwerf, Chrissy Lorenz

Staff Present: Administrator Fragoso, Director Hamilton, PR Officer Yudchenko

2. Election of Vice Chair

Mr. Burns reported that Ms. Lorenz has resigned her position as Vice Chair of the Committee. She will remain on the Committee.

MOTION: Mr. Burns made a motion nominating Ms. Kovalich for Vice Chair of the ATAX Committee. Ms. Miller seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

3. Approval of previous meeting's minutes – April 30, 2024

Mr. Burns made a motion to approve the minutes of the April 30, 2024 meeting, and Ms. Kovalich seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

4. Financial Statements

Director Hamilton said the balance of the ATAX fund is \$5.3 million. There have been no changes in expenditures since the last meeting.

MOTION: Mr. Burns made a motion to approve the budget overages related to insurance and body armor. Mr. Williams seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

5. Old Business

Consideration of FY25 budget for 30% of State Accommodations Tax Fund for tourism promotion

Ms. Lorie Smith from the CVB reviewed the budget categories applicable to the Isle of Palms as set forth by TERC: advertising, marketing support, group sales efforts & tradeshow, media efforts, and visitor/call centers and showed the financial allocation for each category in the proposed FY25 budget.

Ms. Smith explained the allocation method of budgeting which is based on the percentage of lodging inventory on the Isle of Palms. Administrator Fragoso said that percentage needs to be updated. Mr. Chris Campbell of the CVB explained they used an average number of rentals to create the budget.

A brief discussion ensued about the best ways to capture data from visitors to learn why they came to the island and what will bring them back. Ms. Catherine Dority, also of the CVB, said she believes this is something the College of Charleston's Office of Tourism Analysis could work on for the City.

Committee members expressed concern about the large budget allocation to Sinclair, wondering if there are any metrics to show its success. Ms. Smith said there were 10,300,000 impressions during the campaign. Mr. Boykin suggested asking the island's property managers if they are booking reservations from the top markets where the Sinclair campaign is running to help determine if this is money well spent.

Mr. Burns said he would like to see more funds allocated to the VRBO campaign following the success of last year's campaign.

Administrator Fragoso said the walkability study will be re-budgeted to FY25.

MOTION: Ms. Kovalich made a motion to approve the FY25 budget for the 30% of State Accommodations Tax Fund for tourism promotion and provide for a larger allocation to support the VRBO campaign. Mr. Boykin seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

6. **New Business**

Discussion of initiatives for the committee to consider and ways to enhance awareness of tourism promotion programs and sponsorships

Mr. Burns would like to schedule another meeting in the near future to discuss speaking to the island's property managers, work with the Office of Tourism Analysis to craft a questionnaire to give to island visitors, and discuss ways to enhance awareness of the Committee's available sponsorships.

7. **Miscellaneous Business**

The next meeting of the ATAX Committee will be set at a later date.

8. **Adjournment**

Mr. Burns made a motion to adjourn, and Mr. Williams seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 11:07am.

Respectfully submitted,

Nicole DeNeane
City Clerk

