

MINUTES
TOURIST DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL
PUTNAM COUNTY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
PALATKA, FL
SEPTEMBER 14, 2023

Present: Chairman T. Turner, G. Bacon, R. Correa, J. Hodge, D. Kelly, M. Myers, K. Valentine, D. Jones, and J. Linton staff.

Absent: B. DiCarlo and T. Smith.

Others Present: Cindy Bear, Billy Ennis, Terry French, Kathy Griffin, Jerry Hafner, Andy Hartz, Blake Jackson, Ashlie Jones, Ross Jones, Vito Russo, Jeanetta Salyer, Brian Stahl, John Theobald and Lalita Thomas.

I. **Call to Order.** Chairman Turner called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m.

II. **Category B (Cultural Arts) Grant Requests.** Coordinator Jones reminded everyone that this is the first of two grant cycles, and some money should be left for the second cycle. Jones stated that they would be approving the budget later this morning and carry forward funds could be shifted if need be for 2nd cycle events. She stated that most of the reimbursement paperwork submitted by applicants has been incomplete. She reminded applicants they needed copies of what they paid for, proof of payment and what the item was.

1. River City Players. A request for \$7,000.00 was made for the 2023/24 productions.
2. Southside Historical Neighborhood Association. A request for \$10,000.00 was made for the Palatka Porchfest Music Festival. Vito Russo announced this was their 5th year and they have many people attending from out of town. Russo also reported that this event was gaining popularity.
3. GFWC Crescent City Woman's Club. A request for \$2,500.00 was made for the Annual Native American Pow Wow. M. Myers said this event was in its 2nd year and it was well attended last year.
4. Bartram Trail Society of Florida. A request for \$10,600.00 was submitted for the 2024 St. Johns River Bartram Frolic.
5. RQ Music LLC. A request for \$45,000.00 was made for the Big Blue Crab Jam. Jeanetta Salyer said the City of Palatka would be the title sponsor this year and was putting in \$50,000.00. Salyer said they had a large attendance last year and they expected a bigger crowd this year. She said she wanted to maintain the high caliber of the event and expected to book Sawyer Brown, Aaron Tipon or Sammy Kershaw along with regional rock.

Discussion followed on Category B Events.

ACTION: Motion G. Bacon, second J. Hodge to award \$3,500 to River City Players for the 2023/24 productions, \$5,000 to Southside Historical Neighborhood Assn. for the Palatka Porchfest Music Festival, \$1,000 to the Crescent City Woman's Club for the Annual Native American Pow Wow, \$5,000 to the Bartram Trail Society of Florida for the 2024 St. Johns River Bartram Frolic and \$20,000 to RQ Music LLC for the Big Blue Crab Jam from Category B, Cultural Arts, FY 2023-2024 budget.

CARRIED

III. Category A (Events & Activities) Grant/Sponsorship Requests.

2023/2024 Budget Year

1. North Florida Folk Network. A request for \$3,000.00 was made for the Becktober Fall Folk Fest 2023. Cindy Bear and Billy Ennis spoke about their partnership with Beck Auto and RQ Music to enhance the event. Bear said they already had 20 vendors with a fee of \$25.
2. Ten-24 Foundation. A request for \$3,700.00 was made for the Pitmaster Classic. Ashlie Jones said they would have 35-50 teams as well as 35-50 judges and families staying in local hotels. Jones stated that we had not hosted a Florida sanctioned barbeque in many years and people will be excited.
3. Revitalize Historic Palatka Inc. A request for \$5,126.00 was made for the 75th Annual Florida Azalea Festival. Jerry Hafner said they were trying to get the festival back to how used to be. Kathy Griffin added that they expect to have 100-125 vendors with a fee of \$125.
4. Rotary Club of Crescent City. A request for \$16,500.00 was submitted for the St. Johns River Catfish Festival. Coordinator Jones said they were trying to resurrect the festival and were starting with zero funds.
5. RQ Music LLC. A request for \$15,000.00 was made for the Blue Crab Festival. Jeanetta Salyer said the festival has grown and she was looking to donate back to the community.
6. PHS Basketball & Booster Club. A request for \$5,000.00 was made for the Annual Jarvis Williams Holiday Basketball Tournament. Lalita Thomas said 16 teams would participate and all would be staying in local hotels.
7. Palatka Police Athletic League & City of Palatka Recreation Department. A request for \$1,500.00 was made for the Annual Golf Tournament. Lalita Thomas said they had mostly out of county teams.

8. American Fishing Tournaments Inc. A request for \$15,000.00 was made for the Crappie USA Winter Series Classic. Blake Jackson gave an overview of the two-day tournament and said they would have over 100 anglers from 8 states staying an average of 7 nights. Jackson said this event would have a large economic impact.
9. Hertz Golf. A request for a total of \$47,500.00 was made for the following golf tournaments: \$5,000.00 for North Florida Jr., \$5,000.00 for February US Kids, \$7,500.00 for Jr. Azalea, \$10,00.00 for Sr. Azalea, \$10,000.00 for Azalea, \$5,000.00 for Foundation for Rural Education and \$5,000.00 for April US Kids. Andy Hertz spoke briefly about each tournament and the significant hotel stays generated by these golf tournaments.
10. St. Johns River State College. A request for a total of \$12,500.00 for the following baseball tournaments: \$7,500.00 for the Capital City Bank Classic and \$5,000.00 for the NJCAA South District Championship. John Theobald and Ross Jones said the Capital City Bank was the most popular in the State of Florida and would have 5 teams in a 4-day tournament. They announced the winner of the NJCAA game would go to the World Series. Theobald said they live-streamed every game and played the TDC video several times during each game.
11. Palatka Skeet Club Inc. A request for \$10,000.00 was made for the Azalea Open Skeet Shooting. Terry French said this was the largest shoot of the year and wanted to advertise to get more people.
12. Southern Outlaw Dragboat Association. A request for \$7,500.00 was submitted for the Crescent City Memorial Day Shootout. Coordinator Jones said this was a new event that would have 50 teams of 4 and would be live-streamed. M. Myers suggested all event coordinators doing live-streamed events be asked to air the TDC video.

Discussion followed on Category A Events.

ACTION: Motion G. Bacon, second R. Correa to vote on the Ten-24 Pitmaster Classic and the Skeet Club Azalea Shoot separate from the group as TDC members G. Bacon and M. Myers are involved with these groups.

CARRIED

ACTION: Motion J. Hodge, second R. Correa to award \$1,000.00 to North Florida Folk Network for the Becktober Fall Folk Fest 2023, \$2,600.00 to Revitalize Historic Palatka for the 75th Annual Azalea Festival, \$7,500.00 to Rotary Club of Crescent City for the St. Johns River Catfish Festival, \$6,500.00 to RQ Music LLC for the Blue Crab Festival, \$3,500.00 to PHS Basketball & Booster Club for the Annual Jarvis Williams Holiday Basketball Tournament, \$500.00 to Palatka Police Athletic League & City of Palatka Recreation

Department for the Annual Golf Tournament, \$6,000.00 to American Fishing Tournaments for the Crappie USA Winter Series Classic, \$2,500.00 to Southern Outlaw Dragboat Association for the Crescent City Memorial Day Shootout, \$10,000.00 to SJRSC with the following breakdown: \$7,500.00 for the Capital City Bank Classic and \$2,500.00 for the NJCAA South District Championship, \$25,000.00 to Hertz Golf with the following breakdown: \$3,000.00 for North Florida Jr, \$3,000.00 for February US Kids, \$4,000.00 for Jr. Azalea, \$5,000.00 for Sr. Azalea, \$4,000.00 for Azalea, \$3,000.00 for Foundation for Rural Education and \$3,000.00 for April US Kids from Category A, Activities & Events, FY 2023-2024 budget.

CARRIED

ACTION: Motion R. Correa, second J. Hodge to award \$2,200.00 to Ten-24 Foundation for the Pitmaster Classic from Category A, Activities & Events, FY 2023-2024 budget.

CARRIED

M. Myers Recused

ACTION: Motion J. Hodge, second R. Correa to award \$3,000.00 to Palatka Skeet Club for the Azalea Open from Category A, Activities & Events, FY 2023-2024 budget.

CARRIED

G. Bacon Recused

2024/2025 Budget Year

1. Xtreme Bass Series Inc. A request for \$10,000.00 plus deliverables was made for the 2024 Xtreme Bass Series Championship. Brian Stahl said there would be 400 anglers in town for 5 nights as the event is 3 days and they allow 2 days for practice. Stahl also said there would be a post event video highlighting the local community.

ACTION: Motion R. Correa, second M. Myers to award \$10,000.00 to Xtreme Bass Series Inc. for the 2024 Xtreme Bass Series Championship from Category A, Activities & Events, FY 2024-2025 budget.

CARRIED

ACTION: Motion J. Hodge, second G. Bacon to move discussion of Xtreme Bass Series deliverables to the March 2024 meeting.

CARRIED

IV. Action Items.

A. Minutes. The minutes of the May 4, 2023 meeting were presented for approval.

ACTION: Motion J. Hodge, second R. Correa to approve the minutes of the May 4, 2023 meeting as presented.

CARRIED

B. Budget. The budget for FY 2023-2024 was presented for approval.

ACTION: Motion J. Hodge, second R. Correa to approve the FY 2023-2024 Budget as presented.

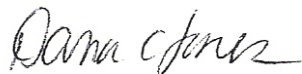
CARRIED

V. **Chairman's Comments.** Chair Turner mentioned that the funds in Category C Large Events could be used for larger events. Coordinator Jones said events that qualified should be put into this category for funding.

VI. **Coordinator's Comments.** Coordinator Jones reported that bed tax revenues for FY 2022-23 should be well over \$700,000. Jones reported that we just ended a digital marketing campaign in South Florida and will be running an ad in Ohio State College football program. She announced that the Bassmaster Elite Series will be back in April 2024. Jones concluded by reporting that 2 new commercials were in production and should be completed soon.

VII. **Adjournment.** Chairman Turner adjourned the meeting at 10:09 am.

Respectfully submitted,



Dana Cameron Jones, Coordinator
Putnam County Tourist Development Council