



MINUTES OF  
*The Original Florida*  
TOURISM TASK FORCE

Putnam Lodge  
Cross City, Florida  
Dixie County

March 20, 2014  
Thursday, 10:00 a.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Roland Loog, Alachua County  
Russ McCallister, Dixie County  
Donna Creamer, Gilchrist County  
Dick Bailer, Jefferson County  
Nancy Wideman, Jefferson County, Chair  
Susie Page, Lafayette County  
Carol McQueen, Levy County  
Cindy Vees, Madison County  
Sandy Beach, Taylor County

MEMBERS ABSENT

Anna Mikell, Alachua County  
Lois Nevins, Alachua County  
Martin Pierce, Dixie County  
Helen Koehler, Levy County  
Dave Mecusker, Union County  
Dawn Taylor, Taylor County  
Sam Martin, Wakulla County  
Jackie Youngstrand, Wakulla County

OTHERS PRESENT

Mike Cassidy, Dixie County Manager  
Brenna Dacks, Visit Florida  
Debbie Deweese, Pure Water Wilderness  
Ronnie Edmonds, Dixie County Board of  
County Commissioners  
Charlie Fornaciari, Dixie County Tourist  
Development Council  
Kay McCallister, Dixie County Tourist  
Development Council  
Edward A. Pivacek, Dixie County Tourist  
Development Council  
Terri Langford, Dixie County Times

STAFF PRESENT

Steven Dopp  
Scott Koons  
Ting Sun

Chair Wideman called the meeting to order at 10:10 a.m.

I. CALL TO ORDER, INTRODUCTIONS

Chair Wideman opened the meeting and asked for introductions.

II. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Chair Wideman asked for approval of the meeting agenda.

**ACTION:** Donna Creamer moved and Dick Bailer seconded a motion to approve the Agenda. The motion passed unanimously.

III. APPROVAL OF THE FEBRUARY 20, 2014 MINUTES

Chair Wideman asked for approval of the February 20, 2014 meeting minutes.

**ACTION:** Carol McQueen moved and Cindy Vees seconded a motion to approve the February 20, 2014 meeting minutes as circulated. The motion passed unanimously.

#### IV. OLD BUSINESS

##### A. Committee Reports

###### 1. Financial Committee Reports -

Steven Dopp presented the monthly financial report.

**ACTION: Donna Creamer moved and Susie Page seconded a motion to accept the monthly financial report. The motion passed unanimously.**

###### 2. Other Committee Reports:

###### a. Special Committee Report on Legislative Funding Proposal.

Roland Loog stated that the next step was to schedule a meeting with representatives of Visit Florida to discuss enacting a program to use Visit Florida funds for multi-county tourism organizations representing regions and counties designated as Rural Areas of Critical Economic Concern to attend tourism trade shows. He stated that a group of Task Force members may also meet with various state legislators who represent counties designated as Rural Areas of Critical Economic Concern.

Carol McQueen stated that she had met with Will Seccombe, the Chief Executive Officer of Visit Florida, and told him that Task Force representatives will be contacting him to discuss the trade show proposal.

###### b. Alternative Funding

Cindy Veas stated that the Task Force should consider changing its membership dues structure. She noted there was a significant increase in dues for counties where tourism tax revenues increase from the \$40,001 - \$200,000 range to the \$200,001 - \$500,000 range.

Ms. Veas also recommended that the Task Force consider allowing businesses and organizations located in north central Florida counties which are not dues-paying members of the Task Force to be listed on the Task Force website for a fee. She also suggested that the Task Force consider charging a reduced fee for listings of similar businesses and organizations located within north central Florida counties which are dues-paying members of the Task Force. She further stated that revenues collected through this program could be used to upgrade and maintain the website. She suggested that the timing for implementation of the program could coincide with the redesign and upgrade of the Task Force website.

##### B. Staff Items

###### 1. Comparison of Tourist Development Taxes Received and Member Dues Paid, 2004-2013

Mr. Dopp reported on tourist development taxes received and member dues paid.

2. Staff Report on Florida Department of Economic Opportunity Grant

Mr. Dopp discussed the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity grant. He noted that the Task Force had recently received a signed contract from the Department which is effective January 15, 2014.

3. Staff Report on VISIT FLORIDA Grants and Other Projects

a. 2013-14 Image Development Grant (Springs Photographer)

Mr. Dopp stated that the Destination Marketing Committee ranked Tommy Thompson as the highest ranking proposer. He noted that Committee members ranked the proposers using a ranking form. Mr. Dopp further noted that Committee members completed ranking forms which he then compiled to determine the highest-ranking proposer as ranked by the Committee members. He stated that the Task Force will attempt to enter into a contract with Mr. Thompson as soon as possible so that he may begin his photography work.

b. 2013-14 Marketing Grant (Regional Marketing Research)

Mr. Dopp stated that he and Mr. Loog had met with Dr. Lori Pennington-Gray, Director of the Tourism and Crisis Management Institute at the University of Florida, regarding contracting with the Institute to perform a visitor survey. He noted that Dr. Pennington-Gray stated that there was insufficient time for the Institute to complete the survey.

Mr. Loog stated that Task Force members could assist in the study by distributing the survey forms to appropriate locations within their respective counties.

**ACTION: It was moved by Dick Bailer and seconded by Ms. McQueen to have the Task Force contract with Ms. Ting Sun to conduct the study. The motion passed unanimously.**

c. 2013-14 Small Business Partner Grant (Targeted Internet Advertising Campaign)

Mr. Dopp stated that requests for proposals have been mailed to selected Internet marketing companies. He further stated that the request for proposals was also submitted for publication in the Florida Administrative Register. He noted that the proposal submittal deadline was March 21, 2014. He requested the Task Force to authorize the Destination Marketing Committee to rank the proposers so that a contract may be entered into as soon as possible.

**ACTION: Roland Loog moved and Dick Bailer seconded a motion to delegate the ranking and selection of an Internet marketing company to the Destination and Marketing Committee. The motion passed unanimously.**

d. 2014-15 Marketing Grant Application

Mr. Dopp stated that the Marketing Grant application for website enhancement and paid bloggers was submitted to Visit Florida.

4. Other Staff Items

a. Inventory Report

Mr. Dopp presented the results of an inventory of Task Force promotional items. Ms. Veas requested a case of "Springs and More" rack cards. Russ McCallister requested two cases of placemats. Charlie Fornaciari and Edward Pivacek also requested a case of placemats each.

b. Task Force Overview Presentation to Bradford County

Mr. Dopp stated that he made a presentation to the Bradford County Board of County Commissioners on March 3, 2014 regarding the Task Force.

c. Website and Facebook Page Report

Ting Sun presented a report on the Task Force website and Facebook page. She stated that she disabled information on the website for counties which were previously members of the Task Force but have since withdrawn. Ms. Sun also stated that she had updated the festivals and events information featured on the website. Ms. Sun noted that she has added a few Task Force members as Content Creators to the Facebook page and asked that other Task Force members who wish to be Content Creators send her an e-mail to this effect.

Ms. McQueen asked Ms. Sun to send an e-mail to Task Force members explaining how to become a Content Contributor to the Task Force Facebook page and to explain how Content Contributors can add information to the Facebook page.

Ms. Wideman noted that one of the items on the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity contract is to provide an additional page to the Task Force website featuring biking in the region.

Ms. Veas stated that the Task Force should contact Bluewater.inet to correct programming errors in the Task Force website identified by Ms. Sun. Ms. Veas asked for a prioritized list of identified website issues and have staff contact Bluewater.inet to see what can be done to correct the issues.

Mr. Koons stated that staff will contact Bluewater.inet and ask them to correct identified errors where the cost for correcting the identified errors is included in the basic maintenance agreement between the Task Force and Bluewater.inet.

d. Updated Task Force Member Contact Information

Mr. Dopp stated that updated member contact information is included in the meeting packet.

C. Other Old Business

1. Tampa Outdoors Expo and Boat Show

Mr. Loog reported on the Tampa Outdoors Expo and Boat Show where he staffed a booth on behalf of the Task Force.

2. Suwannee River Wilderness Trail Paddling Guide Update

Mr. Dopp stated that he will post a .pdf copy of the guide on the Council Internet download site and asked members to download the guide and forward to him any recommended changes.

D. Visit Florida Report

No report was presented by Visit Florida.

V. New Business

A. Other New Business

Mr. Loog recommended that the Task Force purchase a framed John Moran photograph and plaque as departing gifts for former Task Force member Dean Fowler in recognition of his many years of service to the Task Force.

**ACTION: It was moved by Ms. Vees and seconded by Mr. Loog to authorize staff to purchase a framed John Moran photo and plaque for an amount not to exceed \$300.00 The motion passed unanimously.**

B. Announcements

Task Force members made various announcements of interest to the Task Force.

VI. Leadership Forum: Charlie Fornaciari, Artificial Reef Builder, Dixie County Artificial Reef Program

Mr. Fornaciari made a presentation to the Task Force about the artificial reef construction program off the Dixie, Levy and Taylor County coastline. Mr. Fornaciari highlighted the relationship between artificial reefs and increased fishing, snorkeling and SCUBA diving opportunities.

Date and Location of Next Meeting

The next regular meeting is scheduled for 10:00 a.m., Thursday, April 17, 2014 in Jefferson County at a location to be determined.

**The meeting adjourned at 1:37 p.m.**

  
Nancy Wideman, Chair

4/17/14  
Date

Minutes prepared by Steven Dopp of the North Central Florida Regional Planning Council.