

## DUVAL COUNTY TOURIST DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA

Thursday, October 20, 2022, 10:00 a.m.

City Hall - Lynwood Roberts Room

### Attendance

TDC Members: City Council President Terrance Freeman (Chair) (excused 10:55 a.m.), City Council Vice President Ron Salem (Vice Chair) (became Acting Chair 10:55 a.m.), City Council Member Aaron Bowman (excused 10:55 a.m.), Jeff Truhlar, Angela Phillips (arrived at 10:08 a.m.), Dennis Chan, Dennis Thompson, Joe Hindsley, Mark VanLoh

TDC Staff: Carol Brock (Executive Director), Brett Nolan (Administrator), Phillip Peterson (Council Auditor's Office), Reece Wilson (Office of General Counsel)

### I. Welcome and Call to Order

Chair Freeman

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Freeman at 10:00 a.m. and the attendees introduced themselves for the record. The Chair announced that due to conflicts with the Special Committee on Redistricting meeting scheduled for 11:00 a.m. in Council Chamber, Council Members may need to excuse themselves for early departure.

### II. Public Comments Including Action Items

Chair Freeman

Public Comments: None

### III. Approval of Minutes

Chair Freeman

The minutes of the September 14, 2022 TDC meeting were **approved unanimously as distributed**.

### IV. TDC Grant Requests

Carol Brock

#### A. 2023 Spartan US Championship

Alan Verlander

Carol Brock introduced Alan Verlander with Airstream Ventures, LLC, who attended by the phone. Ms. Brock gave a summary for the event, detailing that the TDC made this a signature event in 2022. The event has received funding from the TDC since 2018. Ms. Brock explained that signature events are precluded from reduced grant scores for receiving multiple year funding and expectation of funding request reduction. The 2023 Spartan US Championship is a two-day event; one of only five in the country and the only one on the east coast.

Mr. Verlander explained that Spartan events have been a good partner with Jacksonville. Now in a time post COVID-19, the Spartan brand has become very popular and has had great deliverables. Spartan is receiving numerous requests from different cities to host in their area, so Mr. Verlander emphasized that it is important to consider the increase to keep this growing event in Jacksonville. Mr. Verlander made himself available for any questions. Council Member Bowman asked about the status of a signature event and the dynamics of how long an event can stay as such. Mr. Bowman was hesitant on giving this event so much money, however still expressed support for it.

**Motion** (Truhlar / 2<sup>nd</sup> Salem): Approve the 2023 Spartan US Championship for a marketing grant for \$75,000 from FY 22-23 TDC Special Event Grants account and for a special event grant for \$100,000 from FY 22-23 TDC Special Event Grants account. – **approved unanimously**

#### B. 2023 UNF Stadium Infrastructure Upgrades

Nick Morrow

Nick Morrow, Director of Athletics at the University of North Florida, and Ervin Lewis, Deputy Athletic Director at the University of North Florida, and Chairman of the NCAA Track & Field Championship Committee, presented their request for a grant totaling \$1,450,000 to improve the University's track and field. These

improvements include: (1) installation of a state-of-the-art LED video display board; (2) upgrading the throwing field cage to meet existing certification standards; (3) creating a clerking station and equipment storage facility; and (4) upgrading the lighting system at Hodges Stadium necessary for competitions to be broadcasted on a regional and national level.

Mr. Morrow explained that The City of Jacksonville and the University of North Florida began hosting significant track and field meets in spring of 2012. The first investment committed by the Tourist Development Council over 11 years ago has led to a total economic impact upwards of 160,000 room nights and \$130,000,000 over an 11-year period.

In FY 2020-2021, UNF received \$950,000 from the TDC for track and field improvements. In 2021-2022, the TDC gave an additional \$216,940 for the same project.

Council Vice President Salem made a comment about his time on the City's Sports and Entertainment board where they first invested in UNF T&F and is very supportive of this grant request.

Council Member Bowman recommended to table this item, wanting to wait for the TDC Strategic Plan to be completed before making this large financial commitment. Mr. Bowman explained that many possibilities could be presented on what to spend money on and he is hesitant to give this unprecedented amount to UNF at this time. Because of this, Council Member Bowman expressed that he will not be supportive of this grant request.

Board Member Joe Hindsley agreed with Mr. Bowman and expressed that the timing of this request is something to consider. Mr. Hindsley detailed that until the TDC gets clear vision of how best to use funds, UNF should not receive this funding as it is equal to approximately 15% of the TDC's total budget and was more than the budgeted amount the TDC approved for the Convention and Group Sales. He explained that he visited the facility and was impressed and sees great potential and opportunity over time, but he cannot support this request at this time. The TDC Budget, which Mr. Hindsley detailed is a third of the bed tax collection, should be used for sales and marketing not to fund capital projects. Mr. Hindsley supports funding the scoreboard but on the condition of having a marketing partnership with Visit Jacksonville established.

Board Member Dennis Thompson supports the requests, but also supports tabling it to finalize strategic plan to ensure it matches up with the vision and goals of the TDC. Mr. Thompson believes it is a good investment but is still concerned about the lack of strategic plan to guide the TDC.

Board Member Angela Phillips explained she visited the UNF Track and Field facility and was very impressed. Ms. Phillips talked about the importance of acting on parts of this request, if not all, today and not delay so our City and UNF could have this asset be presented as a state-of-the-art facility that meets certification standards to athletes and participants in the upcoming athletic season.

Board Member Jeff Truhlar asked about the throwing cage and was given a detailed account of the issues, which include not having it meet certification standards in its current condition. Mr. Truhlar asked about the price to rent the facility for smaller high schools and was told that pricing has changed to be fairer to smaller schools to participate at UNF's track and field.

Council President Freeman shared his thoughts on the value sports brings to a community. Every year when the TDC is given projections, numbers are conservative, and it takes time to capture real numbers. Council President believes that there will be a surplus of funds to spend money and wants to fund the UNF Track and Field request. Mr. Freeman talked about the growing potential of UNF's track and field expansion. He expressed many benefits and is confident that the TDC will still have money for the strategic plan while funding UNF's request. Council President asked Phillip Peterson to explain the various options for funding this request without going before City Council for approval. Carol Brock gave a timeline on the strategic plan,

detailing that she is working with Procurement to have RFPs for strategic plan firms in November, and in January, a firm will be selected. She also stated that if UNF installs a new scoreboard and lighting system that each remaining year of the NCAA grant will be reduced by \$25,000.

Council Vice President Salem asked Carol Brock if a motion fails, when can it come back up to the board. Mr. Wilson with OGC explained that there aren't any restrictions, so failed motions could come back up at the next meeting.

**Motion** (Salem / 2<sup>nd</sup> Phillips): Approve funding for all four components of UNF's grant request at \$1,450,000, with \$150,000 coming from FY 22-23 Remaining to Spend – TDC Operations Account to fund the clerking station and equipment storage facility and the rest being funded out of the FY 22-23 Contingency Account.

Aye: Freeman, Salem, Truhlar, Phillips, Chan, Thompson (6)

Nay: Bowman, VanLoh, Hindsley (3)

*Motion carries*

Council Member Bowman believes this is the wrong project to fund because of the timing and absent of a strategic plan. Mr. Bowman continued by saying that the bed tax from hotels that funds the TDC should not be used to fund college campus improvements. Mr. VanLoh agreed with Mr. Bowman, that this is a large amount and that it is too much right now for the TDC to fund. Mr. Hindsley opposed fully funding at this time. Mr. Thompson believes the TDC should fully support this and sees it as elevating a signature asset to the City, detailing that if the TDC doesn't fund now, the TDC will miss an opportunity, especially with Mr. Lewis's chairmanship on the NCAA Track & Field Championship Committee ending later this year. Ms. Phillips brought up the importance on upcoming events. Council President says these events and the success of this will help with marketing the city.

Mr. Hindsley would like to have Visit Jacksonville involved with the marketing component of this grant request, he expressed he would like a commitment from UNF to partner with VJ and City on marketing its athletics program. Mr. Corrigan expressed support of this.

Council Member Bowman asked for Visit Jacksonville's thoughts on using \$1.45 million for UNF's Track and Field. Mr. Corrigan suggested a more favorable option would be to use the Fund Balance rather than spending down the TDC's Contingency Account. Phillip Peterson says the contingency account would go down to \$6,000 if this is approved. Council President assured the board that by this action, it would not be leaving the TDC with no money, given the sizeable fund balance account.

Board Member Dennis Chan raised the question that if UNF did not get this money from the TDC, what is their back up plan. Director Morrow explained that UNF would continue to look for other revenue sources to fund the plan.

Chair Freeman and Council Member Bowman excused themselves to attend Special Committee on Redistricting; Vice Chair Salem became Acting Chair at 10:55 a.m.

## **V. TDC Fund Balance**

### **Acting Chair Salem**

Vice Chair Salem asked that the TDC consider the following with the dollars in the Fund Balance: (1) appropriate \$2 million to be spent this fiscal year in accordance with allowable TDC expenses; (2) appropriate another \$2 million to the Contingency plan component for unforeseeable opportunities; and (3) the remaining amount will stay in the TDC fund balance account to ensure we have dollars available to align with the strategic plan which will hopefully be completed late spring.

Mr. Peterson explained the process for achieving this would require legislation which must go before the City Council. OGC agreed to assist with the legislation which would be filed by CP Freeman on behalf of the TDC.

**Motion** (Truhlar / 2<sup>nd</sup> Phillips): Submit a request to City Council to appropriate \$4 million from fund balance with \$2 million to be added to the Remaining to Spend account to be available for use in the current fiscal year and \$2 million to be added to the Contingency plan component for unforeseeable opportunities. – **approved unanimously** **Note: Council Members Freeman and Bowman did not vote on this action item as they were excused prior to the motion.**

## **VI. Financial Report**

**Phillip Peterson**

Assistant Council Auditor Phillip Peterson gave the financial report. TDC tax revenues for the 12 months ending September 2022 were \$10,091,317.17, a 33.65% increase over the 12 months ending September 2021. Revenue for September 2022 was \$817,772.71, up 9.16% from the same month in 2021. Actual collections for the fiscal year to date exceed the average monthly budgeted amount by \$2,866,317.17.

Mr. Peterson reviewed the budgetary balances as of August remaining in the TDC's contractual and operating accounts. Destination Services - \$578; Marketing - \$37,283; Convention/Group Sales - \$2,087; Planning and Research - \$21,500; Event Grants - \$5,106.11; Remaining to be Spent in Accordance with the TDC Plan – TDC Operations - \$52,309; TDC Administration - \$57,787.99; Convention Grants - \$258,030.59; Equestrian Center Promotion - \$14,441.05; Special Revenue Fund - \$118,912.50; Contingency Account - \$1,056,060; Development Account - \$1,621,075.63.

## **VII. Equestrian Center Update**

**Tim Jones**

Acting Chair Salem announced that due to the meeting conflict with the Special Meeting on Redistricting that the Equestrian Center update will be tabled for the December 8, 2022 TDC Board Meeting.

## **VIII. Visit Jacksonville Update**

**Michael Corrigan**

Mr. Corrigan gave an update on Visit Jacksonville. He introduced Jeanne Goldschmidt as the new Director of Convention Sales and explained her background in the tourism industry. Mr. Corrigan also reported that Visit Jacksonville has sent out marketing RFPs and awaiting returns.

## **IX. Closing Comments and Adjournment**

**Acting Chair Salem**

In closing, CVP Salem reminded the members that the next regular meeting will be on December 8, 2022.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:04 a.m.

*Meeting Minutes respectfully submitted by Brett Nolan, TDC Administrator.*

*These minutes were approved at the TDC Regular Board meeting on December 8, 2022*

















# TOURIST DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL MEETING

Thursday, October 20, 2022



## Attendance Record Sign-In Sheet

PRINT NAME	SIGNATURE
CP Terrance Freeman, TDC Chair	
CVP Ron Salem, TDC Vice Chair	
CM Aaron Bowman	
Mark VanLoh, TDC Member	
Jeffrey Truhlar, TDC Member	
Angela Phillips, TDC Member	
Dennis Chan, TDC Member	
Joe Hindsley, TDC Member	
Dennis Thompson, TDC Member	
Carol Brock, TDC Executive Director	
Brett Nolan, TDC Administrator	
Phillip Peterson, Asst. Council Auditor	
Reece Wilson, OGC	