

TOURIST DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL (TDC)

The Indian River County (IRC) Tourist Development Council (TDC) met at **2:00 p.m. on Wednesday, March 13, 2019**, in the County Administration Building, Building A, Commission Chambers, 1801 27th Street, Vero Beach, Florida. You may hear an audio of the meeting; review the agenda and the Minutes on the IRC website – <http://www.ircgov.com/Boards/TDC/2019.htm>.

Present were: **Chairperson Susan Adams**, **Linda Kinchen**, City of Sebastian Representative; **Harry Howle**, City of Vero Beach Representative; **Jennifer Bates**, Owner/Operator Tourist Accommodations Representative; **Keith Kite**, Owner/Operator Tourist Accommodations Representative; **Steve Hayes**, Interested in Tourist Accommodations (not Operator) Representative; **Karen Mechling**, Interested in Tourist Accommodations (not Operator) Representative; and **Amanda Smalley**, Interested in Tourist Accommodations (not Operator) Representative.

Others Present were: **Jason Brown**, County Administrator; **Mike Zito**, Assistant County Administrator; **Amber Batchelor**, **Nicole Capp Holbrook** and **Britney Melchiori**, Sebastian River Chamber of Commerce; **Dori Stone**, Indian River Chamber of Commerce; **Laura Moss**, City of Vero Beach; **Ruth Stanbridge**, Indian River County Historical Society; **Kristin Daniels**, Management & Budget Director; **Heather Stapleton**, Heritage Center; **Barbara Hoffman**, Cultural Council; **Kevin Greene**, Treasure Coast Sports Commission; and **Kimberly Moirano**, Recording Secretary.

Absent from meeting: **Will Collins**, Owner/Operator Tourist Accommodations.

Call to Order and Welcome

Chairman Adams called the meeting to order at 2:03 p.m., at which time it was determined there was a quorum present, and led the pledge of allegiance.

Additions and Deletions to the Agenda

There were none.

ON MOTION BY Mr. Howle, seconded by Mr. Hayes, the Council unanimously (8-0) approved the Agenda as presented.

Approval of the Minutes of December 5, 2018

ON MOTION BY Mr. Howle, seconded by Mr. Hayes, the Council unanimously (8-0) approved the December 5, 2018 Minutes.

Tourist Tax Revenues Update – Kristin Daniels, Director, Management & Budget

Mrs. Kristin Daniels, Director, Management & Budget presented a PowerPoint presentation of the Tourist Tax Revenue Update for January of 2019, a copy is on file in the Commission Office. She explained Indian River County ("the County") is levying four cents of Tourist Tax: the first 1.5 cents was allocated for tourism development agency; the second 1.5 cents was allocated for beaches and the fourth cents has historically been for the debt service allocated to the Dodgertown bond. She mentioned that the portion of these bonds that was funded by the Tourist Tax proceeds was paid off this past month. So, going forward the Board did approve to allocate those Tourist Tax proceeds towards the Historic Dodgertown Facility Lease Agreement with Major League Baseball and that four cents will go to fund towards the Capitol Reserve Account.

Mrs. Daniel explained January's Tourist Tax collections revenues are down 7.8 percent, or \$24,961 when compared to January of 2018. Year to date collections are also down 3.5 percent or \$33,716 from last fiscal year. Revenues are also under budget this month by 5.8 percent.

Mrs. Daniels explained revenue comparison by month and we are down each month this fiscal year so far with the exception of December. October and November's revenues were impacted by the Red Tide. January collections are down as well. Actual collections have exceeded budgeted figures each month with the exception of January which was up and the overall year-to-date collections are \$98,272 or 11.7 percent above budgeted figures. She provided revenue comparison by month for the three-year history, showing 2016-2017 collections were up 5.7 percent when compared to the prior year. The 2017-2018 collections were up 11 percent. Their year-to-date collections through January for the current fiscal year are down 3.48 percent or \$33,716. Mrs. Daniels showed a chart showing the last ten years of collections. They have been increasing their collections every year for the last nine years. Their collections have more than doubled since 2009-2010. It is too soon to tell where they will end up for 2018-2019 but obviously they hope that this trend continues.

Mr. Howle, City of Vero Beach asked if Mrs. Daniels thought we had more people in town that just are not spending money on tourism. Mrs. Daniels responded that she cannot tell from the numbers that she gets because they're not broken down in a way that really tells her anything. She gets the numbers in total. She indicated that December was up but January was down.

Commissioner Adams indicated that building permits are up across the board so it may be seasonable residents. She indicated that her restaurant business is seeing an increase. January always takes a little bit of a dip from December but February and now moving into March has been crazy. Hopefully, that's a sign of what's coming.

Mrs. Daniels presented a history of our December and our January numbers. So we are higher than our January 2016-2017 numbers but lower than last year due to the Red Tide in the beginning.

Mr. Hayes, Interested in Tourist Development, indicated that all of these people that we're bringing down some of them are dropping anchor and they don't become tourists anymore. He believes that the Census is going up drastically.

Mr. Howell, City of Vero Beach, feels that we have so many people here during the winter now that we should focus our concentration more on summer and not winter.

Ms. Bates, Owner/Operator Tourist Accommodations feels that is what we have been doing. We don't need help in season. All the help is off season and we're seeing those numbers in off season. Season takes care of its own. There is no money spent there. Ms. Bates questioned Ms. Daniels regarding issues with delayed payments.

Mrs. Daniels responded that the Clerk does audit anyone who is not making the payments that they should be making so when Mrs. Daniels gets those numbers, those numbers are put back into the month that they should have been into. So, sometimes those penalty paybacks go back even into 2014. They ran the statements running all the way back for purposes of this monthly report. So, there is some of that as well, yes, but once he tunes into those people who have not been paying, they make the list to where it's insured that they are paying going forward so they'll pay their back pay and then they will continue to pay going forward.

Commissioner Adams indicated that Jeff Smith, the Clerk of the Court indicated at our Commission Meeting that he has been going through and auditing and catching short-term rentals.

Mr. Kite, Owner/Operator Tourist Accommodations, questioned Mrs. Daniels regarding the bond on Dodgertown whether it was paid off in full? Mrs. Daniels indicated that the portion that's funded by the Tourist Tax is paid off. We still have the \$500,000 portion that's funded annually by the State. That's the only portion of those bonds. Mrs. Daniels indicated we paid the portion off that's funded by the Tourist. Ms. Daniels indicated that the one cent that was going towards paying that bond payment is not being used to refund or build back up your purchase of the Dodgertown Golf Course. It was approved by the Board as part of the Capital Reserve Account that is part of our Lease Agreement with Major League Baseball. It is our match for their capital improvements that they make and they'll submit it to us and we'll match those. The entire 1 cent is going towards the repairs. Mr. Kite believes that January was so bad and so cold up north that people literally could not get out. Mr. Kite's prediction is that we're going to see February, March and April being stronger than last year.

Mr. Kite, Owner/Operator Tourist Accommodations indicated that MLB is already paying nice dividends on tourism. There's two or three major MLB events this summer that are already contracted with large numbers of people. Secondly, he thinks Cleveland

Clinic is going to be rapidly expanding by the end of 2019 on people coming in and out of here and their future growth plans and infrastructure. It is his prediction looking forward in 2019 and early 2020 the summer will improve.

Sebastian River Area Chamber of Commerce Marketing Update – Nicole Holbrook, Tourism Director, Sebastian River Area Chamber of Commerce.

Ms. Holbrook introduced Amber Batchelor as new President and CEO.

Ms. Holbrook presented a PowerPoint presentation to the Council updating on projects being worked on since her last presentation and projects they have coming up over the next few months. A copy of the presentation was on file in the Board of County Commissioners Office. Sebastian Visitor's Center has become a certified visitor information center for Visit Florida. They get people not only coming in looking for information and things to do in Sebastian but also want to visit other parts of the State. They provide that information as well. Sebastian Chamber installed some people counters when they did their renovations a few years ago. This report shows the visitation over 2017, 2018 and part of 2019. Based on the numbers, they've had a 26 percent increase in visitors in 2018 compared to 2017. 2019 visitation has been way up from the previous years. A lot of visitors into their Center. They like to keep track of where people are inquiring from when they ask for a Visitor's Guide. Charts show in 2019 a lot of people are inquiring from other parts of Florida, Indiana, New York, Pennsylvania, Illinois and Canada.

When visitors come into Center, they are encouraged to sign into our Visitor's log. Not everyone does but if they do, they ask them to give their name, their city, state, zip and their email address so they can be added to the monthly Tourism Guide that is sent out that has information about what's going on each month. Ms. Holbrook shows where people are visiting from. They like to compare where they're inquiring from and where they actually visit from. So, it shows a lot of people from other parts of Florida escaping the hustle and bustle and quite a few from Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and New York, Michigan.

Ms. Holbrook indicated they are excited to launch the 2019 Visitor's Guide Project. They print 25,000 Visitor Guides annually. They are distributed at the I-75 and I-95 Welcome Centers, Melbourne International Airport, Chamber Visitor Centers, several tourism-related businesses in Indian River County and Sebastian River Area. They are also mailed in response to inquiries and distribute them to local festivals that they attend. The Visitor's Guide is paid through advertisers. It doesn't use any TDC dollars to print this publication.

Ms. Holbrook indicated as far as upcoming festivals and events, Sebastian Chamber has four concerts left in our eight series Concerts in the Park. These concerts have had great turnout. At the last concert there were over 800 people. Tickets were distributed to everyone who attends to kind of track the attendees and prizes are raffled off during intermission which is a great opportunity for our local businesses, the tourism partners to give away prizes and then they're heard in front of a large crowd and they're promoting their business and it's a great way for them to track the attendees. At the last concert they had a lot of new faces because they didn't know what to do with their ticket. They've been doing it for 20 years now so they're very well received in our community.

As far as festivals, last weekend they were at the 27th Annual Pelican Island Water Life Festival celebrating Pelican Island's 116th Birthday.

This weekend the Chamber will be at the 4th Annual Shrimp Fest and Craft Brew Hullabaloo. It is a three-day festival at Riverview Park. The Chamber will be at the festival selling t-shirts and giving away other area information. This summer the Chamber will be at the 4th of July festival held at Riverview Park.

The Chamber is working on a new Chamber website. They feel they'll get a lot of new content opportunities and story branding and a lot of search engine optimization and key word placement so they're very excited. The website should launch at the end of April. They are very excited for all the opportunities that this new site will give. As far as marketing objectives, Sebastian really wants to target regional groups and small to large meetings that would fit their area. To help them bring their conferences here and create those unique experiences and kind of be their liaison to those experiences so that in their off time they can enjoy the amenities and attractions that our area has to offer. So they came across an opportunity to submit a proposal to host the 2019 Annual FACP Conference which will be held in September over the course of three days midweek. This will bring 120 Chamber professionals throughout the state to the conference. It would be a great opportunity to bring those professionals to our area and highlight our different hotels, attractions. They worked with several local tourism partners, the IT Center, Holiday Inn Suites, Costa d'Este, Transportation Services to put together a proposal to try to entice them to come here for their annual conference. The Chamber should be finding out whether their proposal was accepted soon.

In their efforts to try to target more of those small meetings and groups, the Chamber has applied for a minority grant through Visit Florida. They requested \$17,500 and if awarded, the Chamber hopes to host a minority grant tour that would bring people to our area in June about 20 group leaders from these different organizations and they want to target people from other organizations from other parts of Florida as well as nationwide. By targeting these organizations that host small to large scale meetings and conferences and conventions they can bring them to our area and showcase our ECO tourism, our hospitality, our small town charm and then hopefully they'll bring their families back here for vacation in the future. They have carefully chosen organizations that we know our area can comfortably accommodate that fit within their meeting space. The Chamber will find out this summer if they're awarded the grant.

Last year, the Chamber had received a grant from Visit Florida to produce their Designation Video. This year they had applied for a \$5,000 advertising matching grant to help promote that video and digital platform. If the Chamber is awarded this grant, it would go toward utilizing global ads and You Tube to promote their web minute video and it would encourage summer travel. The Chamber will find out this summer if they are awarded the grant. Sebastian Chamber of Commerce is a certified visitor information center. Every year they attend their annual Summit. Patty Williams, the Chamber's information specialist and Ms. Batchelder were able to attend conference. It is a great way to network with other Visitor Center and destination marketing organizations throughout the State to find out what they're doing at their Centers.

The Trans Florida Central Railroad Trail opened last June. The Chamber has had so many people coming in wanting to know how to access it, different access points and how long it is. Britney Melchiori, Communications and Marketing Specialist put together a brochure that highlights all the social work with Indian River County and City of Fellsmere and MPO and

Indian River County Historical Society top this together. It is given out at the Visitor Center and also on line for people to access.

Mr. Kite, Owner/Operator Tourist Accommodations, questioned Ms. Holbrook regarding whether the Trail is going to go all the way out to Stick March? Whether there is state funding? What's the long range? He likes the three-mile rail. Ms. Holbrook indicated there is a sidewalk that you can take all the way from U.S. 1 to the Fellsmere Trail Head Preserve but there are plans to expand that out to the Stick March. Commissioner Adams explained that the City of Fellsmere and the County has been working with State Park to figure out how they can allow us to take it west. Ultimately, the Trail is supposed to go all the way out to Headwaters Lake west of Fellsmere. So that would take it through City of Fellsmere, through the County portion and then what's currently now FJV's property. The process is being worked in segments. The next segment hopefully will be between the current Trail head of the Fellsmere Trail headed 95 and downtown Fellsmere at South Carolina where they put in the new storm water park and they're moving the old train village to around that area.

Mr. Hayes, Interested in Tourist Accommodations (not Operator) Representative, is in favor of the rail to trail system. He believes they have worked so well in other communities.

Ms. Holbrook discussed a marketing master series that the Chamber is hosting next week. The Chamber is bringing Google into their area. This is an event that is open to the public, to the community, business leaders. They have shared a promo code with the Indian River County Chambers so they can invite their Chamber members to attend at Sebastian Chamber's rate. It is great for tourism partners because the main method is story branding and how to grow with Google. Tourism is all about telling a story and so for Sebastian Tourism partners to be able to better tell their story and maybe learn some tips on how to do that and also to have a greater presence on Google, it's a great opportunity for them. There is room available.

Last summer a few of the Chamber's Tourism Partners got together and they were very interested in creating a mural district. They did some research and went on a field trip down to Coral Springs and Hollywood and got some insight into how their programs were started and what they've learned along the way and so they put together some materials. They presented it to the City Council on January and basically the program will just showcase the charm of our area and the history. The murals will tell the story of the area. There will be certain categories, everything that kind of represents our area. The Chamber is excited to host a workshop with the City and hopefully work on that and implement a mural and arts program in our area.

One of the areas we promote and one of Sebastian Chamber's attraction was featured in the March issue of *Oprah Magazine*. This was a story written by a professional skydiver, Amy Chmelecki. It was about her experience with her team Flight Girls last February 2018 when they were here at Sky Dive Sebastian. It was a wonderful opportunity to have our area featured.

Sebastian Chamber wants to target summer season so they will be launching a retargeting campaign through the Visit Florida Coop. It will start in April and May and basically when people are researching the Visit Florida site, they will be retargeted with

their video using their designation video campaign and it will promote summer vacations to our area.

Sebastian Chamber has been working with the Sebastian Inlet District for decades and they are very excited to work with them to promote their Centennial Celebration coming up in May. They are doing a big dinner and then in September they are going to have a big community event.

Commissioner Adams indicated that Sebastian Inlet is one of the top parks in the state as far as visitors.

National Travel and Tourism Week is coming up May 5th through 11th and this year they want to start a week-long campaign promoting our tourism partners and stressing the impact that tourism has to our area to everyone in our community. They want to target Florida and other people in other places with social media campaign.

While doing research for some professional development related to tourism, Ms. Holbrook came across an opportunity through Miles Media. They were offering a scholarship to attend Southeast Tourism Society's Marketing College and the region covers 12 states and they pick one scholarship recipient for each state and Ms. Holbrook found out last month that she was awarded the Florida scholarship. So, in May she will be attending the Marketing College at the University of North Georgia for one week. She plans to learn from these tourism professionals and bring that knowledge back and share it with our tourism partners and implement those plans in our future marketing plans.

Indian River Area Chamber of Commerce Marketing Update – Allison McNeal is sick today. Ms. Dori Stone is appearing on her behalf.

There will be not a presentation of the marketing update by Ms. McNeal because she is not at the meeting.

Ms. Stone shared that they have been working on a couple of things that they have been busy working on at the Chamber and that Ms. McNeal's team has been working on. The Chamber has kicked off the I Treasure Coast Regional Marketing Campaign. That campaign is with Visit Florida as a partner, St. Louis and Martin County. Markham & Stein have been the marketing team that has worked with that. That campaign is really looking at our region as a regional big picture trying to make sure that we can continue to combine assets and really make the most of what we have and create those marketing opportunities outside of our region. A couple of interesting things have happened since this campaign kicked off which I would say was in early winter. They have been on a number of consumer shows. Ms. McNeal went to Boston and New York. In December and January, they had a TV station from Canada come down and film some view roll that they've been using to market during their Canadian weather. So that's been really successful as well as a number of other campaign items in some of the Toronto areas and so forth. We do have a current plan with this right now for print and digital as well as social media campaigning. It is aimed at those Northeast/Midwest states as well as Canada at this point with the bigger picture down the road of looking at both continuing to market toward Canada, to the United Kingdom and Germany for our tourism partners. We continue to market Boston and New York that they continue to market in as well as Atlanta. The brand deliverables are going to be their strategic planning and brand platform as well as the

logo and style guide website and launch page development and creative assets. Those are well underway right now so they really feel, like, they're beginning to get some great traction on this program.

They are also working on their Visitor's Guide as well and they should hopefully have that out by next month. They're also continuing to update their website and continuing to brand that especially in this relationship with I Treasure.

Mr. Kite discussed being very pleased with the I Treasure. He feels the leverage there and the cross selling is a good opportunity. He had a question regarding the distribution of the funding. Ms. McNeal can give Mr. Kite the specifics and Ms. Stone will ask Ms. McNeal to send that information to all the board members.

Ms. Stone indicated that everything that the Chamber has done to date has been within the budget that they had approved last year. The Chamber did do a Red Tide special process which is going along very well to continue our region after the Red Tide issue and we did receive a grant from Visit Florida on that as well and are continuing to leverage that out. That has been very successful as well.

Mr. Kite requests a note on the Red Tide special process from Ms. Holbrook.

Dodgertown Historic Status Update - Ruth Stanbridge

Ms. Stanbridge updates the Board on what their many historical documentaries have been producing for them and for the County over the past couple of years. They have done seven videos up to now. They're complete and they have some that are coming soon. They've done the airport, the Warriors, Dodgertown, the Old Barrel Man Dig, Jungle Trail, the Holstrom House and the Gifford High School. They are all completed are on their website and they are available to the hotels, the restaurants and anyone else who would like. They can be downloaded and you can send them out through emails. They have some coming up and as Ms. Holbrook mentioned, the Sebastian Inlet they've worked diligently with the Sebastian Inlet District. They also have been editing a video in Indian River Farms. Indian River Farms is where their drainage canals come from and that's where the Vero Man came from. They also just last week did an interview with the children of the Bridge Tenders. On March 23rd at Royal Palm Point Park, they are dedicating a marker to the first wooden bridge which would have connected Vero to the beach and a few years later we became Vero Beach. The things that we started for our local like the Rails to Trails have now generated a lot of interest in our local community, our local history and our local environment. Ms. Stanbridge presented a clip from a video that they did at the Gifford High School in the Gifford Community. That clip was also used for Major League Baseball to induce them to come to Indian River County. It was also used as part of the Federal Designating U.S. Civil Rights Trail Movement.

Commissioner Adams questioned Ms. Stanbridge regarding the Dodgertown Property being put on the Civil Rights Trail. Dodgertown is the first sports complex facility that was designated and one of the reasons was because of this clip. The Civil Rights Trail goes all through the south. It goes from New York State all the way down any place that played an important role in the Civil Rights Movement.

Commissioner Adams indicated there is marketing efforts that that organization does around the Trail itself that now we are being included in.

Ms. Stanbridge indicated that it's a Federal designating trail and so it will be blasted out all over the United States. There will be certain times of the year and, of course, next month in April we have the Jackie Robinson Baseball Game. So that will be during Black History Month. MLB is very interested in promoting that whole situation because they will be bringing in from the inner cities for these tournaments and games and camps to Historic Dodgertown. The Historical Society is working closely with the County on the conceptual plans for that. Over in Historic Dodgertown we have a marker that says baseball and Dodgertown. They would like to put a marker over in this 35 acres that says baseball and civil rights because that was why that was purchased in the first place.

Social Media Campaign Update – Cultural Council – Barbara Hoffman

Ms. Hoffman thanks the Board for providing them additional monies in their grant to do a special project which was bringing videos in social media. At this time, they have produced three videos that have been shown. Ms. Hoffman presented a video presentation. They have combined their Google ads with this video and is getting a tremendous amount of exposure. The video ran from January 31st to February 14th and it was run in ten affluent cities of Massachusetts. The ad resulted in those two weeks in 24,377 video views and 8,151 reacted, clicked, commented or shared. Of that 60.7 percent were men. 33.3 percent were women and with 92 percent aged 35 and above. The ad also ran in the top ten affluent cities in Pennsylvania but it was the same market view attracting. The ad resulted in 29,336 video views and 9,614 reacted, clicked, commented or shared. 59.1 percent were men. 40.9 percent were women and 91 percent were aged 35 and above. At the next meeting, Ms. Hoffman will show the other four videos.

Follow Up to Discussion from May 16th, 2018 Meeting – Commissioner Adams

Commissioner Adams indicated at the May 16th, 2018 meeting that the Board had discussed municipal grant requests and different grant requests. It was a good discussion and Commissioner Adams believes it was generally agreed that municipalities and other governmental agencies should be encouraged to corroborate and partner with our tourism partners such as the Chambers, the Historical Society, the Cultural Council, Sports Commission, etc. Commissioner Adams believes in the presentations that were shown today that we saw a lot of those types of corroborations. To bring proposals forward in the future, since we're going into the budget process we just kind of need to clarify what our policy is for staff. Commissioner Adams thinks that the cleanest way to do that would be to make a motion that we would not accept grant applications from other governmental agencies or municipalities and would encourage them to corroborate with our local tourism groups to bring the projects forward. Commissioner Adams wanted to discuss this issue because there has been some questions going into the budget cycle and at our next meeting we will be going through the grant proposals. She wanted to make sure everybody was on the same page.

ON MOTION BY Ms. Kinchen, seconded by Mr. Hayes, the Council unanimously (8-0) approved the Proposal Grants as presented.

Tourism Study – Commissioner Adams

Last year, we talked about the airport marketing project and the need for the airport to have a marketing study done. Those discussions have been ongoing and one of the things that came out of that is a need for a visitor/tourism study. Most of the airlines that Allison McNeal and Eric have spoken with have marketing departments and programs when they locate to a new airport. What they really need to do is attract those airlines as well as other tourism in our communities to get a clear understanding of who are visitor is, where they come from, how long they stay, what they do when they're here and all those different things that go into really understanding who our customer or visitor is. Commissioner Adams thinks that one of the things that we need to do in this next coming budget year would be to have a visitor study done. We can carry over the money that hasn't been utilized for the airport marketing plan. We could combine that with some additional funds that staff feels they can come up with and move that forward in this coming fiscal year. This would give us the ability to really use those numbers to craft what we're doing as the TDC moving forward. It would be a TDC initiated plan so the idea would be that it would be overseen by a working group made up the two Chambers, some budget staff and that would move over. The estimated costs are around \$40,000 to \$50,000. St. Lucie County just went through a similar process last year. It was very successful. It's helped them in some rebranding areas. It's also helped them grow business at their airport as well as look at other infrastructure and tourism things that they need for their beaches and those types of things. Commissioner Adams would like to just get a general okay or even a motion to bring back more detailed information on a visitor study, the RFP process and how that would look moving forward for consideration in our budget process. We haven't done an in-depth visitor study here in quite some time.

There was discussion regarding the last time it was done. Commissioner Adams believes the last one was done in 2005. It was high level and was done for a branding type of campaign.

Mr. Kite, Owner/Operator Tourist Accommodations Representative, indicated that he thinks it was when they were making the tourism website at the Chambers. Mr. Kite would like to have a study and pricing. He indicated he spoke with Eric at the airport about how to get another airline. Mr. Kite feels that if we were to do this study, what he would to see is the results and leverage that Ms. McNeal got out of the branding initiative of the three counties or the grant that Ms. Holbrook is doing. He feels that the study would provide our tourism partners the resources needed for grant applications. They would also be able to help them in finding grant location places, like, Visit Florida. There may be others out there that we're not aware of. So that this package that we produce each year they could use in their searches for grant opportunities for our tourism development that may be available in those given years. Separately, obviously use it on a strategic basis, like, the airport itself or any other tourism opportunity that we see.

Commissioner Adams indicates that the idea is not to do a study and put it on the shelf and never reference it again. We have antidotal information and I think we can all speak to the antidotal information we have about where our particular customers are coming from and what they're doing while they're here but we don't have anything really comprehensive and countywide that could drive our tourism dollars and our strategic options moving forward about where we need to be spending that money. What people are doing, what they're looking for? Commissioner Adams wants the study to be very useable so that our all of our tourism partners but even the municipalities can use that. The St. Lucie study that was done was very comprehensive and gave them a strategic path forward.

Mr. Kite, Owner/Operator Tourist Accommodations Representative, requested that Commissioner Adams provide him with a copy of the St. Lucie study.

Commissioner Adams would like a more robust discussion. She wanted to introduce the idea and see if it was something the Board was interested in and then bring back more information for discussion at the June budgeting meeting.

Mr. Kite, Owner/Operator Tourist Accommodations Representative, questions Ms. Stone where whether there are resources from Visit Florida to assist.

Ms. Holbrook will reach out to her Visit Florida representative to see if she has a suggestion on who maybe they use.

Ms. Stone indicates that when Ms. Holbrook went to an event with Eric, they met with several airlines and the airlines really did ask for this visitor survey information. That's a key to them to make some marketing decisions and the Chamber doesn't have that information available. She would be happy to have the Chamber talk to Visit Florida and see if there is grant opportunities available but even without those opportunities, it's a study that still needs to take place. Ms. Stone indicated that Ms. McNeal and Eric had talked about the needs based rather than looking at doing a marketing plan for the airport that might not be practical at this point in time. They felt it would be more practical at this point in time to think about transitioning into a visitor's survey that was more countywide and much more comprehensive. Ms. Stone believes when we share the St. Lucie RFP with the Board, that it will be a very comprehensive document that will get us where we need to go. Ms. Stone believes that we can use their example. They have three or four consultants that we can bid this out to and ask if they would be interested in doing this with us.

Mr. Kite, Owner/Operator Tourist Accommodations Representative, responds that he didn't want the grant to be used for the study. He wanted the study to be available for future grants.

Ms. Stone responds that this is a year-long study. This is not going to be short-term. She feels this is going to take 12 months to really complete a full visitor's survey. Ms. Stone feels that at the end of this, there will be opportunities as we tee up for next year's budget process to talk about what we do with this information and the best way to leverage this out for our entire community whether it's countywide, whether it's the other not-for-profit jurisdictions, municipalities. She feels that everyone will have that opportunity and it is the Chamber's intent to look at how we're going to leverage the State out for those next opportunities.

Mr. Kite, Owner/Operator Tourist Accommodations Representative, responded that he has no problem with using them but sometimes if we already know all that, a fresh set of eyes with another strong RFP that was of that caliber coming in and we hybrid those two, then we get to see theirs and ours. Or it may be its better that the people that did the study in St. Lucie already have enough knowledge and can provide a better study then the other fresh set of eyes so Mr. Kite doesn't know the solution to that but it may be when we see the RFPs come in, that decision could be made.

Ms. Stone indicated that the basic concept of the visitor survey is pretty much standard. She doesn't believe that there's all that many incremental changes that you would want to make to that particular data stuff that you're looking for. Ms. Stone is not sure that you would want to per se tweak or play with the analysis that's going to go into that especially a format issue.

Mr. Howle, City of Vero Beach Representative, feels that the airport is an economic power house for the county as a whole. When the Board first recommended to allocate these dollars towards ads for the airport, Mr. Howle was very excited about it because it's not something that we typically do and he felt that at this point in time we had at least a pretty good feeling that we might be on the cusp of bringing another airline in here. Mr. Howle is not sure where we stand on that issue. Mr. Howle feels it's a good idea for the study as long as it's not overlapping. We're not spending the money that would overlap on some of the more or less detailed information that we all have on a regular basis so spend it well and it might be good to look at what St. Lucie has already put forth as a guideline to make it as streamline as possible. Mr. Howle's only fear is that if the circumstances arises where we do need some money to allocate toward advertising in order to facilitate bringing in a new airline are we going to be able to do that the following year?

Commissioner Adams feels that this gives us the base to build on what you're talking about to justify those tourism dollars and she feels that as we went down the path of trying to build a marketing plan for the airport what we found was that the airlines really wanted to handle their own marketing. They had their brands and their messages that they were trying to convey but what they needed to attract a new airline was the airport needed to be able to provide to those airlines where our tourists were coming from, who was coming to the community so they could make sure their routes were matches for our area so we could get the right airline in here.

Mr. Howle, City of Vero Beach Representative, indicated that they wanted our data to see if it matches up with their ridership.

Commissioner Adams indicated that once they locate here they pull out their marketing plans and push people to their destination. There are multiple layers and this is kind of that missing card and she believes we were all focused on the marketing part of it for the airport itself and once we got into it, we realized well, maybe our focus is already being taken care of through other outlets and what we really need to provide to get that airline here is the hard data. So we're kind of pairing and turning a little bit so we can then start building a program in subsequent years to do exactly what we're talking about.

Mr. Howle, City of Vero Beach Representative, indicated he has no reservations.

Mr. Hayes, Interested in Tourist Accommodations (not Operator) Representative, questioned Commissioner Adams about the possibility of finding out what data the airlines really want and he thought that the Chambers would have the data that they need as far as where people are coming from.

Commissioner Adams explains that the Board has antidotal data and the data that the Board has on a study basis is outdated. She feels that some of that information is available but not on a deep level that they're really looking for to justify expansion of services.

Mr. Kite, Owner/Operator Tourist Accommodations Representative, believes that they're looking for statistical items that we don't have access to.

Ms. Mechling, Interested in Tourist Accommodations (not Operator) Representative, asked where the \$40,000 or \$50,000 to pay for the study would come from TDC dollars?

Mr. Brown indicated that the \$25,000 that was allocated to the study through the Chamber we would come up with the other \$15,000 to \$25,000 as the total number that we're looking at. Its \$40,000 to \$50,000 with some funds out of next year's allocation. Some good news is we have some marketing dollars that were previously allocated to Historical Dodgertown that are needed in the new agreement so that's a source that we could use for those additional dollars and we can present a plan to the TDC Board. If the Board decides to move forward with this concept today, what we can do is we can bring back a formalized financing plan at the June meeting so that you could make your funding decisions based on how we would fund that and how the overall picture would be.

Commissioner Adam's goal is to just get some buy in and then we can bring back more details and more thoughts through the plan based on the Board's comments at the June meeting.

Mr. Kite, Owner/Operator Tourist Accommodations Representative, asked Mr. Brown if that's something where the RFP is to go out if that was seconded or would that have to wait for the county budget to be approved in September, October and then the RFP? So we would be looking at the following kind of fiscal year or can we take that up with dollars that are available here in this budget?

Mr. Brown responded that his base answer would be that we would want to wait until October 1st until we got the whole dollar amount. To the extent we've got the \$25,000 in the current year that's not being used, we could begin the process at that time. Based on the time we get there we would have the funding decisions made by TDC and the budget set by the Board for the following year. He feels that we would be comfortable moving that forward before and not having to wait until that October 1st date so we could get it rolling.

ON MOTION BY Mr. Howle, seconded by Mr. Kite, the Council unanimously (8-0) approved the Proposal Grants as presented.

Other Matters:

None.

Adjournment

There being no further business, Chairperson Adams adjourned the meeting at 3:10 p.m.

Next Scheduled Meeting: Wednesday, June 19, 2019 at 2:00 p.m.