

HERNANDO COUNTY TOURIST DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

“The Hernando County Tourist Development Council will identify, create, support and enhance activities, consistent with community assets, that increase visitation and provide local economic impact.”

June 5, 2025 – MINUTES OF MEETING

The Hernando County Tourist Development Council conducted their meeting on Thursday, June 5, 2025, at 2:00 pm. The meeting was held at the Florida's Adventure Coast Visitors Bureau, 205 E. Fort Dade Ave., Brooksville, FL 34601. The meeting had been advertised, and the public was invited to attend. The following is an attendance record and summary of discussions that took place at the meeting.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mike Dolan
Yann Milcendeau
Roger King
Catherine Reeves
Therese White

STAFF:

Tammy Heon, Tourism Development Manager
Valerie Pianta, Director of Economic Development
Michelle Rose, Administrative Assistant II

EXCUSED: Brian Hawkins, Diane Greenwell, JW McKethan, Christa Tanner

CALL TO ORDER: Roger King called the meeting to order at 2:03 pm, on Thursday, June 5, 2025. The following is a summary of discussions that took place. Due to lack of quorum at the start, no initial votes were taken, but the meeting proceeded with financial and operational discussions until quorum was reached.

FINANCE REPORT: Tammy Heon

TDT collections for April 2025 are \$333,285, a 33.50% increase over April 2024's total of \$249,606.

TDT collections for May 2025 are \$359,971, a 33.6% increase over May 2024's total of \$269,429.

Fiscal Year to Date TDT total collections are \$1,996,010; an increase of 48.4% from last year's collection of \$1,345,015; Marketing and Operation Revenues are \$1,596,808; Destination Development Revenues are \$399,202.

Revenue Forecasts: Tammy Hoen reported that she had updated the forecasted revenue for the remainder of the year.

- A flat revenue performance for the remaining five months would result in collections of \$3,026,364.

- A 10% increase could yield \$3,120,399, There is enough concern about declining consumer confidence that she is holding off on any changes to this year's budget.

Key Revenue Drivers:

- Vacation rental homes, especially Cabot Citrus Farms, are performing strongly. Cabot's ADR (average daily rate) is around \$400 midweek and \$600+ on weekends, for a one-bedroom unit.
- Cabot's rentals fall under the short-term rental category, which now accounts for more than 50% of all TDT revenue.
- While traditional hotel metrics (ADR, occupancy, RevPAR) are declining, vacation rentals are trending upward, balancing overall growth in the destination and TDT collections.

Therese White joined the meeting at 2:11 pm.

MINUTES of the March 27, 2025, TDC Meeting: A copy of the minutes of the March 27, 2025, TDC Meeting was included in the meeting packet.

MOTION: A motion was made by Mike Dolan to approve the minutes of the March 27, 2025, TDC Meeting. Motion seconded by Yann Milcendeau. Motion passed; all in favor and none opposed.

FINANCE REPORT: *Continued*

Year-to-date Expenditures as of June 2, 2025, are: Personnel and Benefits - \$239,255 with a balance of \$168,269; Operating Expenses - \$565,952 with \$104,090 in Outstanding Encumbrances with a balance of \$964,510; Non-Operating Expenditures including reserves - \$2,954,458; Transfer to Other Funds includes our health insurance and the Chinsegut Hill Manner's liability insurance - \$62,720. Our total budget for FY25 is \$5,059,253; we have a remaining balance of \$4,149,956.

The Marketing and Advertising RFP is open and drawing over 30 interested firms, responses due later in June. Our budget includes \$680,000 for future agency media buys and collateral redesign.

MANAGER'S REPORT: Tammy Heon

SEO, Website Updates and Chatbot: Tammy Heon reported that the BOCC denied the contract amendment with ITI Digital, overriding TDC approval. Discussion ensued, including the idea that TDC Members may want to start attending BOCC Meetings when Tourism has items on the agenda.

Economic Impact Report for FY23 from Visit Florida:

- \$2,277,712 in TDT Collections

- \$264.4 Million Visitor Spending, which was a 5.3% increase over FY22
- \$303 Million Business Spending

Visitor Spending by Category:

- Lodging - \$81.0M
- Food & Beverage - \$75.1M
- Ground Transportation - \$52.0M
- Shopping - \$30.5M
- Entertainment & Recreation - \$25.8M

Employment:

- Jobs Supported - 5,020
- Wages - \$42.3M

Taxes Generated and Paid by Visitors - \$49.8M

- \$32.0M - State & Local
- \$17.8M - Federal

Online Travel Agencies (OTA), Short Term Rental Supply: The count increased about 150 units over the past two months, mostly on the west side. We have contracts and are collecting data from both AirBnB and VRBO.

Lodging Market Snapshot: ADR is up for vacation rental properties and slightly up for hotels. Occupancy is declining somewhat in hotels but continuing to climb in vacation rentals. RevPAR and Revenue are down in hotels and up in VRHs. Our hotels need a little help.

NEW BUSINESS:

TDC Grant Funding Application: Stage West Community Playhouse

The Stage West New Works Festival is a three-day celebration of original, new theatre works scheduled for August 22-24, 2025. Based on points earned and the one-third allowance of their budget, the recommended TDC Grant Funding award is \$1,500.00. Tammy made a recommendation of \$1,500.00.

Discussion ensued. Therese White asked if the TDC could raise the grant to \$2,000?

MOTION: A motion was made by Mike Dolan to approve TDC Grant Funding for Stage West Community Playhouse in the amount of \$2,000.00. Motion seconded by Catherine Reeves. Motion passed; all in favor and none opposed.

Summer Media Campaign: Miles Partnership

Tammy Heon proposed a Summer Media Campaign to drive visitation and positive impact our hoteliers. She obtained several quotes, based on a \$30,000 spend and now recommends a campaign from Miles Partnership. The campaign is programmatic advertising using AI for targeted, optimized ad placements. It utilizes our existing commercial, thereby minimizing creative development costs to maximize media spend. Ads to appear on streaming platforms (Roku, Prime, AccuWeather, etc.), along with native content.

MOTION: A motion was made by Therese White to approve the purchase of summer advertising in the amount of \$30,000.00 with Miles Media Partnership. Motion seconded by Mike Dolan. Motion passed; all in favor and none opposed.

Brooksville Information Kiosk: The kiosk resembles a large phone, with touchscreen display and requires underground electric and cable connections. Tammy suggested a courtyard adjacent to the courthouse near Broad Street. The TDC reconsidered due to lack of pedestrian traffic in that location. A potential alternative is near the mermaid state, a more frequented area with higher weekend activity and foot traffic. The TDC is exploring more effective placement.

Weeki Wachee Springs State Park Information Kiosk: The kiosk will be installed after construction of the new building at the park is complete.

Spanish Travel Series: John Athanason will be at Weeki Wachee Springs State Park on Saturday, June 7th, hosting a Spanish Travel Series broadcast by Telemadrid, a public television station in the Community of Madrid, Spain. They will be shooting an episode showcasing the park's iconic mermaid performances, natural spring and the unique charm that defines Florida.

BUDGET FY26: The TDC was presented with printed copies of the Destination Development Budget and the Marketing and Operations Budget.

Destination Development: The County is officially working on the Weeki Wachee Preserve Project. Design is nearly complete, and the intent is to move forward with construction next year. The TDC has no authority over the Destination Development expenditures.

Marketing and Operations Budget: Tammy discussed the Marketing Expenses and Operating Expenses in detail, line by line, highlighting changes from last year. Discussion ensued.

MOTION: A motion was made by Mike Dolan to approve the Marketing and Operations Budget FY26 as presented. Motion seconded by Catherine Reeves. Motion passed; all in favor and none opposed.

Budget FY26 will be presented to the BOCC for final approval.

DATES TO REMEMBER:

- TDC Meeting, July 24th, 2025
- Front Porch Art Walk, Saturday, June 7th
- Business Preparedness and Continuity Mixer, July 1st
- Scallop Diving Season Begins July 1st

TDC MEMBERS REPORT:

Catherine Reeves reported that she and other downtown businesses have not seen an uptick in bicycle tourism, which is attributed to the lack of signage at the Park. The Russel Street Park kiosk needs upkeep and updating, ASAP. She also reported that in the last week of June, The Bistro is getting a new kitchen.

Tammy Heon reported that when Brooksville Main Street has the map complete, we will print it in large format for the Russel Street Park kiosk. In the meantime, we will explore other display ideas for the kiosk.

Yann Milcendeau reported that the renovations at The Hernando Beach Motel are complete and the name “Hernando Beach Village” has been adopted. He enthusiastically reported that revenues have increased over last year.

Therese White reported that Motel 6 is doing well this year, and their numbers have increased. The motel is now seeing visitors, as opposed to previously being filled by hurricane relief workers.

Roger King reported that The Dolan House has models coming in from Los Angeles, California and New York City for photo shoots scheduled Friday and Saturday.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None submitted, and nothing to report.

The meeting was ajourned at 4:16 pm.

Prepared by:
Michelle Rose