

**MINUTES OF MEETING
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
ST. JOHNS COUNTY, FLORIDA
JULY 25, 2018
9:00 A.M.**

Proceedings of a special joint meeting of the Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) of St. Johns County, Florida, and the City of St. Augustine, Florida, held in the auditorium at the County Administration Building, 500 San Sebastian View, St. Augustine, Florida.

Proof of publication of the special joint meeting was received, having been published in *The St. Augustine Record* on July 11, 2018.

Present: Henry Dean, District 5, Chair
Paul M. Waldron, District 3, Vice Chair
James K. Johns, District 1
Jeb S. Smith, District 2
Jay Morris, District 4
Michael Wanchick, County Administrator
Patrick McCormack, County Attorney
Bonnie A. Putman, Deputy Clerk

Also in attendance: Darrell Locklear, Assistant County Administrator; Joy Andrews, Assistant County Administrator; and Regina Ross, Deputy County Attorney

City of St. Augustine:

Present: Mayor Nancy Shaver
Vice Mayor Todd Neville
Commissioner Leanna Freeman
Commissioner Roxanne Horvath
Commissioner Nancy Sikes-Kline

(07/25/18 - 1 - 9:00 a.m.)
CALL TO ORDER

Dean called the meeting to order.

(07/25/18 - 1 - 9:00 a.m.)
INVOCATION

Smith gave the invocation.

(07/25/18 - 1 - 9:01 a.m.)
PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Shaver led the Pledge of Allegiance.

(07/25/18 - 1 - 9:02 a.m.)
ROLL CALL

The clerk called the roll: All Board members and members of the City of St. Augustine commission were present.

(07/25/18 - 2 - 9:03 a.m.)

1. DISCUSSION OF THE POTENTIAL USE OF BED TAX AND REVENUE FOR CITY INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS

John Regan, City Manager for the City of St. Augustine, reviewed the amendment of the Tourist Development Tax Statute; the partnership with the County, regarding transportation and parking; and the costs of the initial start-up for infrastructure projects, which include land acquisition/shuttle parking facility, shuttle capital acquisition, and restroom/visitor solid waste impacts.

(9:13 a.m.) Sikes-Kline commented on the City's responsibility and the visitors' centers.

(9:15 a.m.) Morris stated that he was on the TDC Board and that the recommendation of the 5th cent by the TDC was for it to be utilized primarily for beach renourishment. Discussion ensued on the TDC budget process and the procedural process of establishing a new category.

(9:20 a.m.) Ross provided clarification on the creation of a new category. Discussion continued on the recommendation by the TDC, regarding public facilities and beach renourishment.

(9:25 a.m.) Dean supported a comprehensive approach, incorporating beach renourishment, and infrastructure within the City of St. Augustine. He noted the lack of revenue. Morris commented on the advertising budget and the lack of funding.

(9:29 a.m.) Horvath supported taking money from advertising. Morris noted that a recommendation should come from the TDC.

(9:31 a.m.) Shaver commented on the TDC budget, regarding beach renourishment, and the proposed allocations of the 5th cent.

(9:31 a.m.) Freeman requested acknowledgement that there was a need for transportation and a need to accommodate the tourists. Morris responded that these were common goals. He commented on funding by the TDC for advertising. Discussion ensued on the allocation of funds.

(9:36 a.m.) Johns questioned the construction of hotels with lack of infrastructure. Shaver spoke on the two different populations, including overnight visitors, and the zoning guidelines. She stated that over the last 24 months, there was a ten to fifteen percent increase in hotel rooms.

(9:39 a.m.) Sikes-Kline questioned the Board's guidelines and policies and whether the BOCC had discussed the allocation of funds by the TDC. Morris provided information on Board policy.

(9:42 a.m.) Waldron questioned whether the BOCC could request the TDC to bring back options to the Board. He requested a plan by the TDC and the amount in budget reserves. Ross responded and spoke on the conditions of the allocation of the TDC funds, noting that 40% of the \$10 million must be spent on advertising. Shaver commented that a first step would be to review proposed projects.

(9:45 a.m.) Neville commented on the increase in hotels; revenue from the TDC bed tax; and funding options, including land acquisition. Freeman suggested asking the residents where they wanted the money spent and a referendum on funding options.

(9:51 a.m.) Jesse Dunn, Director of the Office of Management and Budget, provided information on the TDC reserves for each budget category.

(9:52 a.m.) Regan commented on the hotels' requirements to provide parking and their own infrastructure.

(9:54 a.m.) Tom Reynolds, 880 A1A Beach Boulevard, supported the one cent increase in the bed tax. He stated that the City of St. Augustine Beach needed additional funding. He commented on tourist fatigue and the need for traffic relief.

(9:57 a.m.) Kelly Sullivan, 141 Kingston Drive, Vilano Beach, Florida, spoke in support of the one cent increase, the need for infrastructure, and safety concerns.

(10:00 a.m.) Ed Slavin, P.O. Box 3084, spoke on tourist fatigue, hotel growth, advertising, and the need for infrastructure, including parks.

(10:03 a.m.) Jean Penny, 215 3rd Street, Vilano Beach, Florida, spoke on road closures and the traffic concerns.

(10:07 a.m.) Shannon Lake, 6970 A1A South, Chair of the St. Johns County Visitors and Convention Bureau (VCB) Board of Directors, spoke on the recommendation of the VCB to use the revenue from the 5th cent on destination marketing.

(10:10 a.m.) Robert Porter, One News Place, Director of Public Policy of the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce, spoke in support of utilizing the additional one percent bed tax increase solely for beach renourishment.

(10:12 a.m.) Undine George, Mayor of the City of St. Augustine Beach, 2200 A1A South, St. Augustine Beach, spoke on the discontent of residents and tourism fatigue; infrastructure needs; advertising dollars; the allocation of funds; and the TDC budget. She mentioned the increase in revenue by the TDC and the use of unbudgeted revenue for infrastructure.

(10:18 a.m.) Vivian Browning, 30 Beachcomber Way, Vilano Beach, Florida, spoke in support of utilizing the increase in revenue, per the bed tax, for beach renourishment. She commented on the proposed water taxi system, and asked that the City provide a dock space.

(10:21 a.m.) Rachel Bennett, 920 Saltwater Circle, stated the residents were also tourists and they suffer the degradation of the infrastructure brought on by the tourists. She was in support of using bed tax money on infrastructure. She commented on the lack of cooperation by the City with the funding for the Sunshine Bus and road closures in Vilano Beach. She noted lower impact fees were better for developers and the need to provide solutions that would benefit the residents, at least as much as benefitting the tourists.

(10:24 a.m.) Richard Goldman, President/CEO at St. Augustine, Ponte Vedra and the St. Johns Visitors and Convention Bureau spoke on the visitors' experience, the lifestyle of the residents, and the need to invest in the infrastructure. He compared the \$10 million generated by the TDC tax, which was a user tax, versus the \$52 million in local sales tax and property taxes generated by touristic businesses; and spoke against a break in marketing.

(10:28 a.m.) BJ Kalaidi, 8 Newcomb Street, stated that people came to St. Johns County for the sunshine, low taxes, and the beach. She supported the one cent increase in revenue, to be utilized for beach renourishment.

(10:30 a.m.) With the passage of the new legislation, Dean encouraged the TDC to have a discussion, following up from the discussion during the meeting, and bring back to the BOCC any future recommendations for the 2019 fiscal year.

(07/25/18 - 4 - 10:33 a.m.)

2. OTHER BUSINESS ITEMS

Regina Ross, Deputy County Attorney, provided details of the proposed water taxi service.

(10:34) *A consensus from the Board was given to move forward with pursuing a discussion with the City of St. Augustine on entering into a lease to allow commercial use at the St. Augustine Pier, as well as bringing back to the Board for final consideration, a program that would allow for boat owners to apply to the County, a request to use the floating pier to operate water taxi services and/or water tour services.*

(10:35 a.m.) Ross noted that the City of St. Augustine Attorney, Isabelle Lopez, was present and she had mentioned the opioid litigation. Ross provided an update.

(07/25/18 - 4 - 10:35 a.m.)

ADJOURN


With there being no further business to come before the Boards, Dean adjourned the meeting at 10:35 a.m.

Approved _____ August 21 _____, 2018

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
OF ST. JOHNS COUNTY, FLORIDA

By: 
Henry Dean, Chair

ATTEST: HUNTER S. CONRAD, CLERK

By: 
Deputy Clerk

