

TOURISM ADVISORY COUNCIL
SPECIAL SESSION

JULY 14, 2015

The Tourism Advisory Council met in Special Session on Tuesday, July 14, 2015, 4:00 p.m. in the Derek D. Daniels Conference Room of the Athens Partnership Center with the following members present, to-wit:

Mike Coston
Brad Smiley
Chet Patel
Rae Priestley
Deanne Boswell
Toni Clay
Virginia Reeder

Philip Rodriguez, City Administrator
Bonnie Hambrick, City Secretary
Sherri Skeeters, Tourism Coordinator

Others present: Keith Loper, Bob Miars, Mary Eggleston and Peggy Rhodes;

Constituting a quorum at which time the following proceedings were enacted, to-wit:

ROLL CALL

Chairman Coston did a roll call of the Tourism Advisory Council members. Brad Smiley attended the meeting but was not present during the roll call.

DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

No action was taken.

CONSENT AGENDA;

- A) CONSIDER APPROVING MINUTES OF THE JULY 7, 2015 REGULAR SESSION.

A motion was made by Toni Clay, seconded by Chet Patel to approve the Consent Agenda. The motion carried unanimously.

**DISCUSS APPLICATION PROCESS FOR ELIGIBLE ORGANIZATIONS
REQUESTING HOTEL OCCUPANCY TAX FUNDING FOR FY2016**

Sherri Skeeters explained the application process with the Tourism Advisory Council since TAC members had not seen the application before the agenda packets went out. Sherri went over the highlights and emphasized several items the TAC members need to consider as they review each applicant's request for funding.

HEAR PRESENTATION FROM THE ATHENS TEENAGE BASEBALL
ASSOCIATION REQUESTING HOTEL OCCUPANCY TAX FUNDING
FOR FY2016

Chairman Coston mentioned that guests would be presenting in the order that the applications were received. Keith Loper, in the absence of Chris Tinsley, presented the request for funding on behalf of the Athens Teenage Baseball Association. The ATBA is requesting \$15,000 to bid for Athens to host the Dixie Youth Baseball State Tournament in the summer of 2016.

HEAR PRESENTATION FROM THE HENDERSON COUNTY REGIONAL FAIR
PARK COMPLEX REQUESTING HOTEL OCCUPANCY TAX FUNDING FOR
FY2016

Chairman Coston introduced Bob Miars, chairman of the Henderson County Regional Fair Park Complex, who presented the request for funding on behalf of the Complex. The Complex is requesting \$12,973 to go toward the purchase of 20 new stalls, allowing the facility to retain its current shows and facilitate attracting additional shows that bring in hotel guests to Athens.

HEAR PRESENTATION FROM THE EAST TEXAS ARBORETUM REQUESTING
HOTEL OCCUPANCY TAX FUNDING FOR FY2016

Chairman Coston introduced Mary Eggleston, executive director of the East Texas Arboretum, who presented the request for funding on behalf of the Arboretum. Peggy Rhodes, board member of the East Texas Arboretum, also assisted with the presentation. The Arboretum is requesting \$7,500 to be used for advertising of the Haunted Halloween and Fall Festival in October 2015.

DISCUSS APPLICATIONS RECEIVED FROM ORGANIZATIONS REQUESTING
HOTEL OCCUPANCY TAX FUNDING FOR FY2016

- ATHENS TEENAGE BASEBALL ASSOCIATION
- HENDERSON COUNTY REGIONAL FAIR PARK COMPLEX
- EAST TEXAS ARBORETUM

Chairman Coston asked the TAC if anyone had any additional questions of the three organizations requesting funding. Chet Patel asked if TAC members could get more information, if needed, from the ATBA since Chris Tinsley was not present. Sherri Skeeters informed the TAC members that any questions they had could be emailed to her and she will bring it back to the board at the next meeting.

DISCUSS/CONSIDER SPECIAL SESSION ON WEDNESDAY, JULY 29, 2015 AT
4:00 P.M. TO DISCUSS THE PROPOSED BUDGET FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF
TOURISM

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Chairman Coston asked if 4:00 p.m. on July 29 worked for everyone and Deanne Boswell said she would be out of town. The consensus was to meet at 4:00 p.m. on Wednesday, July 29, 2015. Chairman Coston mentioned the Special Session is to discuss the proposed budget, which includes the three organizations that presented their request for funding at the meeting today.

OPPORTUNITY FOR CITIZENS TO EXPRESS ITEMS OF CONCERN

There was no discussion.

A motion was made by Chet Patel, seconded by Virginia Reeder to adjourn.

PASSED AND APPROVED THIS THE 1ST DAY OF SEPTEMBER, 2015.

Mike Coston, Chairman

ATTEST:

Bonnie Hambrick, City Secretary