



Department of Urban Redevelopment

Fort Pierce Authentic Tours Advisory Board Meeting

August 2, 2012

Minutes

Board Members Present: Clive Daem, Mark Harrison, Rosemary Knight, Chop Lege' Cristin Ryan, Jann Widmayer

Board Members Absent: Michael Adams, Charlotte Bireley, Donald Voss (*excused*)

Staff in Attendance: Jon Ward, Director; Anne Satterlee, Communications and Marketing Manager; Libby Woodruff, Grants Administrator

FPAT Members and Visitors: Vicky Tillman, Bobbie Deemer, Gay Guertin, George MacArthur, Adam Pozniak, Jim Masterson, Kerry Firth

Chop Legé called the FPAT Advisory Board meeting to order at 3:37 p.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance. Afterwards, Libby Woodruff called roll. Mr. Legé asked for approval of the Minutes from the July 5, 2012 Advisory Board meeting. **Motion was made by Mark Harrison and seconded by Rosemary Knight that the minutes from the July 5, 2012 meeting be accepted; motion carried.**

I. FINANCIAL REPORT

A copy of the financial statement as of June 29, 2012 was given to each Board member by Jon Ward. Jon explained that this is a recap of what our funding and expenses are to date. Total Funds Available - \$133,929.44. **Motion to approve the financial report for June 29, 2012 was made by Chop Lege', seconded by Clive Daem; motion carried.**

II. OLD BUSINESS

A. FPAT Promotional Booth Operations / Tracking Efforts

Libby explained that one of the recommendations from the Sustainability Strategy created by Becky Cardy was the recommendation that FPAT include an actual agenda items entitled "Sustainability Strategy" each month's agenda under "Old Business". She explained that this month's 'Sustainability Strategy' items will be presented by Anne Satterlee.

Anne explained that she and Libby have developed an electronic 'sign-up sheet' for FPAT members to be able to sign up to volunteer to be at the FPAT information booth at FPAT events. Anne passed around the sign-up sheet for the FPAT members to look at and explained that this should help coordinate their efforts to market FPAT at events. Chop thanked Anne for her efforts in getting this started and encouraged everyone to participate.

Libby proposed that an FPAT Board or regular member volunteer to coordinate the event sign-up list, and perhaps have other FPAT members volunteer to research upcoming events for the Advisory Board to consider for FPAT participation.

Chop suggested that Cristin Ryan take on the project of soliciting volunteers to oversee the project. Cristin suggested that the list could possibly be set up in Google. Libby agreed and stated that the event list currently has most of the regularly-scheduled yearly Fort Pierce events already listed. Libby stated that the event list will be ever-evolving.

Libby explained that she and Anne had talked about having all of FPAT's booth materials, rack cards for FPAT businesses, etc., available here at City Hall, so whenever it is time to setup the booth, the first person scheduled to open the booth could easily come by City Hall and pick up the materials, and the last person at the booth could break it down and return the materials to City Hall following the event.

Cristin asked if FPAT is going to decide on the number of events per month and Libby explained that it will be up to the FPAT Advisory Board to decide.

Chop said he believes that everyone sitting on the Board should volunteer some time to promote FPAT at special events. Libby suggested that all FPAT members should have an opportunity to volunteer, not just Board members. Anne stated that she will be coming up with some ways to 'test the waters' to see which events are beneficial for FPAT to attend.

Cristin commented that she is required to be at numerous events during 'season' and stated that if the FPAT booth is set up right next to her booth that this may work for her to help support the booth. She also said that it is important to be sure that FPAT only attends the events that they can most benefit from because during 'season' there could be five festivals on any given day. Anne agreed and stated that before we get in to 'season' is the time to come up with a way to track which ones are beneficial.

Anne then showed the members a sample 'discount card' for the Board's consideration. The cards would be printed and distributed at specific events. Special notations or markings will be placed on the cards so that when it is redeemed, the tourism provider can easily determine where the tourist obtained the card. Tourists would leave the card with the tourism provider to receive the discount listed on the card.

Anne explained that businesses providing discounts to list on the card is strictly voluntary. Rosemary explained that the Vistana currently distributes cards to provide discounts to a Vero strip mall to its customers. Rosemary commented that she brought this up for consideration because the Activities Coordinator at Vistana inquired if FPAT could offer some type of discount for Vistana guests, since all other tourism-type businesses marketing to Vistana provide some type of discounts.

Rosemary encouraged members to participate in a unified effort.

Chop said he would definitely be willing to try a discount.

Anne said she will send out an email to FPAT members to get started.

B. Visit Florida Membership / 45th Annual Governor's Conference on Tourism

Anne stated that the 45th Annual Governor's Conference on Tourism is September 5-7 in Orlando and encouraged anyone who wanted to attend to do so. Anne explained that the information is on line and you do not have to go but one day.

Anne stated that FPAT is now a member of Visit Florida. Chop commented that he is getting calls this week for his tours like never before. He asks the callers where they heard about him the callers are stating that they found him on the FPAT website.

Anne commented that we need to continue to cross promote each other. She said that she and Rosemary have worked on some things for the website and there will be some more work done on it as time goes on. Membership information is now all on the website. She wants to do some different things with the blog and in some other areas of the site as well, including the section that is just for FPAT members, where members can log in and access member-only type information. She said this would be coming soon.

Anne gave an overview of the October 26-28 – Treasure Coast Birding Conference. Anne suggested the Board consider having a booth at both festivals, in October and again in March. Festival will be held in Vero Beach. A “double sponsorship” costs \$750 and includes booth space at both events, the FPAT logo on the event banners and in event program.

Cristin asked if this is a sponsorship, what will the event attendance be – Anne explained that the one in October will be the first Treasure Coast Birding Conference; it will be a smaller event, but the one in March will be quite a bit larger.

Chop is organizing some of his friends who are former Audubon Society employees to help conduct bird tours for the event and wants to promote FPAT during the tours. Mark said he would email Chop information on being a group leader for the event.

Cristin inquired about the hours for the event October 26-28 (Friday-Sunday). Anne said she would find out the times for the booth and would send out times for everyone. Mark said it would be at the Bethel House Sanctuary at Orchid Island. Tourists will leave from there to go out to look for birds.

Libby asked if we are going to sponsor the event and arrange to staff the booths. Friday, October 26 (all day) will be the booth day. Chop asked if we have anyone to coordinate the event and recruit the volunteers. Mark said he could do the booth all day Friday and Sunday, if needed. Mark suggested that Captains Don and Dyana Voss might want to volunteer as well.

Anne said that if the Board agrees that they do want to sponsor the event, she will send out an email to find out which FPAT members would want to volunteer to staff the booth during Friday, October 26 and the Friday in March and schedule the specific times on the event calendar.

Anne explained that the booth costs are included in the cost of the sponsorship. Cristin asked how much were the levels of sponsorship and inquired if the Board would be voting on which level of sponsorship they would be making, or if whether or not they were going to sponsor at all.

Anne commented that this is totally up to the Board. Chop commented that this will be the crowd that FPAT needs to market to and Rosemary agreed and said this will be the perfect opportunity to use the discount card – and the spreadsheet, to sign people up and track who will have which shift at the booth.

Cristin asked if there was an opportunity for a free booth at the events. Anne explained that the booth space is purchased through the sponsorship. Mark explained that there are different levels. Cristin explained that her only concern is that FPAT has limited income coming in. Libby explained that FPAT has a certain amount of money already designated for marketing and advertising and that attending special events, etc. does not touch the grant funds. Jon Ward stated that currently, more than \$15,000 is available for marketing and advertising.

Libby explained levels of sponsorship. The Board voted to participate in the event at the \$750/Sponsorship level, which provides the FPAT logo on the event banners and programs and a booth at both festivals.

Cristin asked if they would vote via email on this. Jon answered that this will not be possible. Anne stated that she will send out the dates for the event and recruit volunteers to help with the booth.

1st motion – Does FPAT want to participate in the October and March Treasure Coast Birding Festivals. **Motion made by Clive Daem, seconded by Chop; motion carried.**

2nd motion – Which level of sponsorship will FPAT purchase? **Motion made by Clive Daem to purchase a \$750 sponsorship that will include a booth at both of the events, the FPAT logo inside the event programs and the FPAT logo on the event banners; seconded by Chop; motion carried.**

Libby suggested that as soon as our registration is complete, that we promote the events on the FPAT website. Anne confirmed that we would.

Cristin requested that in the future that whatever FPAT will be voting on should be sent out prior to the meeting so the Board could review the information prior to voting on it. Jon agreed.

III. NEW BUSINESS

A. Bylaws Update

Libby stated that the Bylaws do not currently contain any type of criteria for unexcused absences; hence, she sent a copy of the existing Bylaws with suggested wording for a proposed amendment to cover unexcused absences to the Board in their meeting packets.

Mark Harrison recommended that the Bylaws would list "3" unexcused absences.

Cristin commented that perhaps the Bylaws should define 'excused absences' since members could actually call in prior to every meeting and always be excused and never come. Cristin suggested possibly a greater number of absences. Jann suggested that any more than 3 absences, whether they are excused or not. Jon Ward explained that it is actually up to the Board to decide whether absences are excused or not, that just because someone calls in for an excused absence, does not make it excused. He suggested that the Board decide whether to accept the request to make it an excused absence at every meeting.

Jon said that in the future, the Board will vote to accept or not accept excused absences.

Cristin made a motion to approve the amended Bylaws, based on '3' unexcused absences, seconded by Chop; motion carried.

B. Marketing Partnership Opportunities with SLC Tourist Development Council

(Charlotte Bireley, excused from the meeting today due to health issues, placed this option on the agenda.) Anne Satterlee explained that she and Charlotte have spoken briefly about this and explained that St. Lucie County Tourism wants to collaborate with FPAT again this year for FPAT to advertise on the back cover of the St. Lucie County Travel Guide.

Anne also mentioned that she will talk with Charlotte regarding FPAT co-op'ing again with the County to purchase a National Geographic Explorer / Florida Edition advertisement and they will be looking at this in the near future.

Anne explained that this advertisement opportunity is very nice and provides electronic leads, which we are still getting every month. Leads are driven to the FPAT website and FPAT has the opportunity to market to those individual leads.

Anne stated that she does not know if Charlotte has additional information in mind to talk about with FPAT, and if she does, she will be sure to put it on the agenda.

Jon stated that County Commissioner Chris Dzadovsky, chair of the St. Lucie County Tourism Board, is excited about the increase in tourism. County Tourism is up this year more than it has been in the past several years. Jon commented that he is looking forward to FPAT taking advantage of some of the county's tourism monetary incentives.

Rosemary added that the County has been very successful with their 'specials' they offer during different times of the year, and perhaps FPAT may want to coordinate with them and have the County promote FPAT special offers on their website as well as ours.

Rosemary further explained that the County 'special offer' information is displayed on the County Tourism website, where they have pages set aside for "Special Offers" featuring discounts on packages, hotels, etc.

Libby asked and Anne suggested we schedule another marketing meeting. A marketing meeting was scheduled for Thursday, July 13th at 3:30pm in the City Hall conference room on the 2nd floor.

IV. BOARD COMMENTS

Chop stated that FPAT needs to include the community members around our businesses that provide a service to tourism, in one way or another. He introduced Vicki with St. Lucie Outboard Marine, Inc. and said they are definitely a business that is influenced by tourism in Ft. Pierce.

Chop stated that he is still not clear on who can and cannot be members. Jon explained that we have a new membership application that is very clear and qualifies everything and so that as potential members fill out the application, they figure out what type of membership they qualify for with FPAT.

Cristin asked if Board members could receive their Board packets electronically. Libby explained that this would save the City a lot of money on postage and time. Cristin stated that Board members could receive an email reminder that the information is available.

Chop asked if we were going to go forward with paper or electronic. Jann suggested that it should be 'opt in or opt out' to receive or not receive a paper packet. Chop commented that he has several people working in his email throughout the day and would rather have a paper copy sent to him in the mail, to ensure he gets it.

Libby said she would poll the Board to see who wants to continue receiving paper and who prefers to receive their Board information electronically.

Rosemary commented that she likes the checklist on the Membership Application and suggested that as a Board, that each member should complete the checklist now see where we can make improvements.

She also suggested that we should incorporate these results on our website so that people will see what we are doing as an organization that makes us more eco-friendly.

Libby explained that around October 1 all FPAT members would fill out a new application and post the results on our website so people looking at us will know right away, what we are doing toward being eco-friendly.

V. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Billy Gibson with Motorized Kayak Adventures stated that he will be happy to volunteer at FPAT events and that he has made the comment to serve the organization. Give him at least one day's notice and he will do whatever he can to help the organization. He also stated that he has added the FPAT logo and link to his website and now has online booking.

Bobbie Deemer, representing Heathcote Botanical Gardens stated that she is very excited to see a group like this working here in Fort Pierce. Mark Harrison commented that FPAT wants Heathcote as a member.

Vicki Tilman, owner of St. Lucie Outboard Marine, Inc. stated that she is just down the road from City Hall. Vicki also said that she is not so sure how friendly they are with the environment, because they are an outboard motor business, but with changing from gas to 4-stroke engines, and the marketing is now focusing more toward environmentally friendly information. Vicki said they have their seasons and bring a lot of people to Fort Pierce - an example was last week with the mini-lobster season and her husband helped a guy whose truck had blown up while he was trying to launch his boat. She stated that they get many tourists having trouble with their boats and they normally put the tourist first. An example of this is a man comes in to the store and says 'his boat broke'. He and his family are in Fort Pierce for 4 days, enjoying themselves, on a vacation. So, who do they put first, the tourist or their regular customer who is just in for a normal service? Most of the time they put the tourist first, since he is spending tourism dollars all over the City - to help make his visit to the City more enjoyable.

Vicki reiterated that their outboard marine business is helping tourism and building tourism in Fort Pierce. She stated that, for 3 years, she sat on the County Board that wrote the manatee rule. She said without tourism, St. Lucie Outboard Marine, Inc. is out of business.

Gary Guertin with the Coastal Angler Magazine introduced himself and gave a brief presentation on advertising opportunities with the Coastal Angler.

George MacArthur stated that he is a concerned citizen and has been gone awhile from Fort Pierce and is pleased to see how much FPAT has advanced.

VI. STAFF COMMENTS

Staff had no comments.

X. ADJOURNMENT

Motion was made by Clive Daem and seconded by Mark Harrison to adjourn. There being no further discussion, meeting adjourned at 4:40 p.m.