



Department of Urban Redevelopment

Fort Pierce Authentic Tours Meeting

January 5, 2012

Minutes

John Barry "Chop" Legé called the meeting to order at 3:35 p.m., followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Board Members Present: John Barry "Chop" Legé, Donald Voss, Charlotte Lombard, Michael Adams, Mark Harrison, Jann Widmayer

Board Members Absent: Roger Rucker, Jaye Melanson (**excused**), Clive Daem (**unexcused**)

Staff in Attendance: Jon Ward, Director; Anne Satterlee, Communications and Marketing Manager; Queen Thompkins, Administrative Assistant

FPAT Members and Visitors: John L. Provance, Chairman of Communitywide Council; Kerry Firth; Anne Hought; James Burke; Cristin Ryan; Linda Fowler; Dyana Voss; Sheryl Paul; Bill Gibson; Jim Oppenborn; John Smith; Michael Stark; Warren Falls; Camie Sellin; Dede Wilson; April Price

Chop Legé called the FPAT Advisory Board meeting to order at 3:31 p.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance. Afterwards, Queen Thompkins called roll. Mr. Legé asked for approval of the Minutes from the December 1, 2011 Board meeting. Don Voss suggested that in reference to "**Members Present; Members Absent**", it should be changed to "**Board Members Present; Board Members Absent**". When listing "**Visitors**", it should be changed to "**FPAT Members and Visitors**". There being no further changes to the minutes, **motion was made and seconded that the minutes from the December 1, 2011 be accepted; motion carried.** Mr. Legé asked that each visitor introduce himself or herself.

I. FINANCIAL REPORT:

A copy of the FPAT Financial Statement was given to each Board member and FPAT member. Mr. Ward stated in Fiscal Year 2011 \$75,000 in grant funding was provided by the CDBG program. For Fiscal Year 2012, \$80,000 was funded. FPAT has received \$1,300 in membership. \$38,166.88 has been awarded to members as grants. Mr. Ward said this is not a complete report. He said \$5,000+ is obligated for the website development. Currently there are approximately \$118,133.12 net funds available.

OLD BUSINESS

A. Upcoming Fundraising Events:

Chop Legé said January 20th will be the first kickoff for the fundraising event. It will be called "**Cajun Caribbean Cuisine-Sunset Tours On The Boat**". Roy's Liquor will be sponsoring the "spirits". The event will start at 4:30 p.m. All proceeds will go to COKEE and FPAT. Mr. Legé said this would be done twice a month. Another fundraiser will be held on March 9th for Mardi Gra. Mr. Legé asked for help from the Board members. Tickets will be available for sale and he asked that the members help sell tickets.

Don Voss asked how the Boat Parade went and Mr. Legé stated the parade was excellent but they didn't participate because they didn't receive their lighting in time. He said quite a few members of the Board came and enjoyed the ride.

B. Oysterfest:

Mr. Voss said he attended the Oysterfest meeting last month and everything is moving along. They are still in need of volunteers. The website is still under construction, so they haven't been able to place on the website, that FPAT are co-sponsors. Committees have been set up and individual groups have been formed to take care of everything. Mr. Voss said he will be giving out red arm-bands and he has volunteered to be the "Oyster".

Mr. Legé said he was also at the meeting and was very impressed with the progress that's being made. He said the committee is really getting the event together. Mr. Legé asked if any of the Board members have suggestions for fundraising events; please

bring them to the Board meeting. The purpose is to try to raise money for FPAT.

Jon Ward said there is a significant artist here in town named Pat Cochran and he's a sculptor. Mr. Ward said he created an oyster belt buckle. This might be one of the things to incorporate as a fundraiser. This would support local businesses and it would be nice to support our local artists.

C. Marketing Update:

Anne Satterlee said the website is underway and the contract has been sent to the City Attorney's office for approval. She said the website will be up in about two (2) months. The FPAT members contact information has been added to the website. Ms. Satterlee showed a copy of the advertising in the "Inside Track Almanac". Mr. Legé gave recognition to Kerry Firth and thanked her for the great article.

II. NEW BUSINESS:

A. Boys and Girls Scout Getting Involved with FPAT:

Mr. Legé said he will need some help with this project. The Girl Scouts have called him and they want to book trips on the boat. They also want to do overnight stays. Mr. Ward stated that Charlotte Lombard might have good information on where they can go camping. She can give a list on the space the County has for camping. Mr. Legé said he could give Ms. Lombard the Troop Leader's number so that she can give her a call; they are looking for anything exciting to do.

Mr. Legé referred to Jann Widmayer for suggestions and she stated she has been working closely with the Girl Scouts for a while. Mr. Legé said he's been receiving call from the Girl Scouts of Palm Beach County as well. The unit is pretty big; it covers the South Florida area.

Mr. Voss said when the Cracker Trail comes to Fort Pierce; they stay at the Harbor Point Park. He said this is close by the water but the only problem is there are no facilities for the kids to use. Mr. Ward asked if they had money to pay for tours. Mr. Legé said the Troop Leader was asking for a discount. He said they are looking at the cost for the camping and other different things. Ms.

Widmayer said usually what the Girl Scouts like is the full program, one price. If we got several different places for them to go to and things to do, or travel, we would incorporate everything and give them one price per person. She said you could separate and offer several different things because some of the kids might not be able to afford everything, but if we have different things for them to focus on, then it might be affordable for them.

B. FPAT Members Individually or as a Group Direct Marketing Efforts to Reach the General Public:

Mark Harrison said he has taken the tour vehicle to the Farmer's Market, Fridayfest, Westfest, and other locations. This is the reason he has the FPAT sign, to go on the tour vehicle. Mr. Harrison said his question is, is he doing this individually or is he doing this as FPAT. He said all of his funding was primarily used to get the tour vehicle, get it insured, licensed and get it on the road. Mr. Harrison said he really need funds for direct marketing. He said this is the reason he has been talking to different people; how are people finding us. He stated that Red Stag has had some ads in the Hometown Newspaper, but out of every five (5) inquiries he gets from that, three (3) of them are other people that want advertisement in their periodicals. Mr. Harrison said last week was his best week and this clearly shows that tourists are in town. He was concerned that his prices were too high and there was going to be some resistance. Since he has done a smaller vehicle, he has not experienced any price resistance. Mr. Harrison said that Joyce Chartin, who's one of the visitors present, is his horseback tour provider and they have now started horseback riding tours. He stated what he needs to find out is; are there other FPAT tour providers that would be interested in going to Fridayfest, Westfest, and to be at other events? Mr. Legé stated he has said previously that we have to get help from the committee. He stated that Mr. Harrison can't do everything by himself; Mr. Harrison agreed.

Mr. Harrison said he knows they are in need of volunteers for the Oysterfest, but the most effective way for him to reach the public is for people to see the vehicle. When he gets a newspaper article, people will see that he's starting a horseback tour. Mr. Harrison said the horseback tours they will be presenting are going to be twice as expensive as going to the beach but it will be a longer ride. He said if others are interested in marketing, please come see him.

Mr. Legé pointed out that he visited the Navy Seal Museum's website and noticed they had 58,000 visitors this year. He said what he's getting at is if you brought the website in, how many people could benefit from each other's website. Mr. Legé said in order for this to happen, we need the FPAT Board to get physically involved; to go to Fridayfest and other events, but it should be done fairly.

Jann Widmayer suggested having an outdoor FPAT kiosks that will have each FPAT member's information and is available 24/7. Mr. Ward used Main Street as an example. They don't just hope that volunteers will show up for Fridayfest. They assigned a month to each group that would be participating in Fridayfest. You would include all FPAT members to market at Fridayfest and other events that take place throughout the year. Each FPAT member would be assigned a month to market his or her business and FPAT during an event. One of the requirements of membership is to participate.

Mr. Legé suggested that tents should be purchased and they cost from \$100-\$200. He asked Mr. Harrison if he would be in charge of getting the names of people that want to work. Mr. Ward said he's noticed flat screen televisions appearing in restaurants all over town showing advertisements. He said print advertising has a place but electronic advertising is a large component too. There is a place in our marketing for the long distance client that are not here yet. Mr. Ward said as we develop our program it needs to be balanced, it needs to be electronic and print; it needs to be long distance and local. He said, maybe the new kiosk should be a flat screen for outdoor usage.

Mr. Ward said we are at the point in our marketing plans where the website is almost ready. Some of the flyers and brochures are almost ready; programming is almost ready.

He said we did our initial grant program last year and we tried to focus on things that were capacity building and sustainability building with our businesses. This is our first time with this program and we will be doing a better job this year. Mr. Ward said as you can see, some of the things we got were significant for us; both trailers, vehicles, repairs to existing equipment, and saddles. They were all very useful and very well implemented. He said the Commissioners have no complaints. There have been no complaints from the public, and the Communitywide Council is supportive.

He said there are two (2) things that he wants to fund this year. One of the things is physical items; that's sustainability or capacity building equipment needs that we have. Mr. Ward said we will still have people who will need saddles and bits, more kayaks, more paddles, or whatever type of equipment you will need to run your business. He said last year we bought a laptop to help somebody run their business. Those types of things are expenditures. We want to continue to fund those sorts of things. Mr. Ward stated our primary mission is marketing all of our members and we need to find the appropriate way to do it. He said the Board should give some thought on what is effective communication. Mr. Ward said he wants to come up with the appropriate amount of money the Board wants to dedicate to the second round of grants and he wants the Board to give some thought to how they want to divide the funds from hard sustainable equipment kind of purchases versus marketing. Mr. Ward said he wants the Board to think about their marketing budget and he wants them to think about electronic versus print versus experiential. He said these are the three (3) things he's thinking about in marketing. Once the website is up and running it is important that all FPAT members have a quality website presentation also. A website designer could be hired to look at every FPAT member's website and spend a certain amount of money on his or her website. Mr. Ward stated if \$200 were paid in consulting fees for every website, for every member, that's not a lot of money and it would get a lot of value.

Mr. Ward spoke of print; what would be the appropriate way to do print. He said everybody could be given a print allowance. He stated the third thing is experiential. Mr. Ward said the question is, do we want to have a booth in other places, do we want to be at other festivals in other parts of the State. He said there was a proposal last year for a grant to have people go to trade shows and set up a booth for us. Mr. Ward said if the Board thinks this is an appropriate use of funding of their marketing dollars, let's develop a budget for it. Mr. Ward said he wants to make sure we are meeting the mission goals of the organization and that is to market and build capacity for our local businesses.

Mr. Voss asked how do you write a grant as an individual company for marketing FPAT? He asked if Mr. Ward was suggesting that groups of people combine because this is where he's confused on the electronic; on the trade shows. He said with the print basis,

again, if an individual is asking for marketing money for marketing FPAT, he has a concern on how that would work.

Mr. Ward said the strength of FPAT is that we are stronger as a group than we are as individuals. He said instead of giving everyone \$2,000 to run ads, run group ads that are complimentary to everyone. He stated you would be telling the story of a larger destination as opposed to individual businesses.

Mr. Voss asked if they agreed together to submit one grant as a group for marketing and individual grants for something else, is this possible. Mr. Ward suggested the Board is going to make those types of decisions, this is your marketing direction. We are going to market as a group and we will not fund other marketing. Our marketing dollars will be spent on group marketing and website development.

Mr. Harrison said if they are going to do group marketing, this is the time to do it now. Mr. Ward said he wants specific recommendations from the Board. He stated that he wants the Board to give him a percentage of the dollars that will be used and give a suggested budget for other types of grant.

Mr. Legé suggested having a meeting to discuss a marketing budget. The Board members agreed to meet next Wednesday, January 11 at 3:30 p.m.

Mr. Legé said at the next FPAT meeting, which will be February 2, there will be a guest coming, Janette Marsh, and she will be offering ideas on how to obtain different types of grants.

Charlotte Lombard said every year the St. Lucie County Tourism participates in an advertising opportunity called, "**Undiscovered Florida**". It's an insert that's put in the National Geographic Explorer every year. She said it's very eco-targeted and it circulates out to over 300,000 people. Ms. Lombard said they are in it every year and she wanted to approach the Board to see if FPAT would be interested in co-oping with TDC on this opportunity this year. It would be part of the marketing plan. Mr. Legé asked what it would cost. Ms. Lombard said she was going to bring it before the Board at the next meeting and be able to let him know then. Jann Widmayer said since they will be having a marketing meeting next week, if Ms. Lombard could have something written up and send it to the meeting. Ms. Lombard said she would.

Mr. Voss informed the Board that we have a new member joining FPAT, "Florida Airboat Excursion". **Motion was made by Don Voss and second by Charlotte Lombard that the Board approves Florida Airboat Excursion becoming a member of FPAT, motion carried.**

III. BOARD COMMENTS

Mr. Legé said because he does advertising for himself, he knows it is a big expense and if it's done right, he said he would probably have a lot more business. He stated this is the reason he is looking forward to the help from the Marketing Committee.

Mark Harrison mentioned that tomorrow between 3:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m., at the Marriott on Hutchinson Island, the Everglades Restoration Committee is having the Eco-tour Operating Showcase with eco-operators and business owners. Check-in starts tonight. Mr. Ward said this is an example of the kind of long distance event that FPAT might want to be a part of.

Mr. Harrison also wanted to announce that Red Stag Sanctuary Tours is now doing tours for Club Med.

IV. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Pattie Gibbons, from Orca, mentioned an event on "Fat Friday", which is February 17th at the Backus Museum to benefit COKEE. Mr. Legé said the event has been moved to March 9th. Ms. Gibbons said that ORCA would like to join FPAT and she would be willing to work on the Marketing Committee.

A comment was made concerning public events such as, the Naturefest, the Pelican Island Festival. It would be nice to have FPAT on display at the upcoming events.

Carol Harwood commented that she is currently with Harbor Branch and she was formally with the Audubon Society in South Texas. She said they had some particular challenges with ecotourism. Ms. Harwood said what worked for them was going outside of their community. Get outside this market and draw new people in.

Charlotte Lombard commented that the TDC is a Florida member and FPAT may want to consider becoming a member of "Visit Florida". They would have access to all of the advertising and publicity. You get PR leads and other important things as a member.

The Board was asked how they prospect for new members for FPAT. Mr. Legé answered he goes door-to-door to try to recruit people to join FPAT. It was asked if there is a hotel on the list and the answer was yes, Dockside Hotel. Mr. Ward said we are open for more. It was suggested that FPAT recruit one of the larger banks to show that they are supporting the community of Fort Pierce.

Mr. Ward stated that this morning he attended the East Coast Rail meeting in Cocoa, FL. He said it is another element of how we grow, how we advertise and how we make ourselves a destination.

10. Adjournment:

Motion was made by Don Voss and seconded by Mark Harrison to adjourn. There being no further discussion, meeting adjourned at 4:53 p.m.