

**TOWN OF HILTON HEAD ISLAND
ACCOMMODATIONS TAX ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

Date: August 16, 2018 **Time:** 9:00 a.m.

Members Present: Brad Marra, *Chairman (Acting)*; Dru Brown; Rob Bender; Roger Freedman; Jim Fluker; Julie Smith and Richard Thomas

Members Absent: None

Staff Present: Josh Gruber, *Assistant Town Manager*; John Troyer, *Director of Finance*; Brian Hulbert, *Staff Attorney*; Jennifer McEwen, *Culture and Arts Network Director*; Marcy Benson, *Senior Grants Administrator*; Rene Phillips, *Website Administrator*; and Cindaia Ervin, *Finance Assistant*

Council Present: Kim Likins

Others Present: Members of Organizations interested in applying for 2019 Accommodations Tax Grants; Members of the public.

Media: None

1. Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order at 9:03 a.m.

2. FOIA Compliance:

Public notification of this meeting has been published, posted, and mailed in compliance with the Freedom of Information Act and the Town of Hilton Head Island requirements.

3. Swearing in of New Member(s):

Mayor Pro Tempore Kim Likins swore in newly appointed committee members James Fluker and Julie Smith. She congratulated them on behalf of Town Council and thanked them for their important role they will serve in the community.

4. Special Orders:

a. Election of Chairman and Vice Chairman

Rob Bender made a motion to elect Brad Marra as Chairman and Dru Brown as Vice Chairman. Mr. Freedman seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

5. Approval of Minutes:

a. Mr. Freedman moved to approve the minutes from the Accommodations Tax Advisory Committee Meeting on July 12, 2018 at 9:00am. Mr. Thomas seconded the motion. The Motion passed with a vote of (5-0).

6. Chairman's Report:

Brad Marra, Chairman, thanked all interested organizations present for attending the applicant workshop. He reminded those present that not only is the Committee open for questions but also staff should they need help.

7. Unfinished Business:

None

8. New Business:

a. Calendar Year 2019 Accommodations Tax Grant Applicant Workshop.

i. Review of application procedure: Rene Phillips-*Web Administrator*

Brad Marra, Chairman, invited Rene Phillips, Website Administrator for the Town, to the dais to walk the workshop attendees through the 2019 Accommodations Tax Grant online application process. Ms. Phillips explained each step in detail and highlighted common questions she has received over the years. She informed the applicants of helpful hints including not to "cut and paste" responses from Microsoft Word since doing so will add background data that will affect the over-all word count. She also mentioned that when logging in with the organization's username and password, the application will pre-populate the 2019 application with information submitted for the 2018 application, including the budgets and financial statements, so that only the current year budgetary information needed to be uploaded. Ms. Phillips emphasized that if an applicant finds they have uploaded a document in error, or if technical assistance is needed, they should contact her for help via phone or email. Finally, she reminded the group that September 7th at 4:00 pm was the absolute deadline for the 2019 Accommodations Tax Grant application submittals.

Mr. Marra thanked Ms. Phillips for her guidance on the application and invited the workshop attendees to voice their questions or concerns. Mr. Marra emphasized to the applicants present that the effectiveness summary is a significant tool to the applicants applying and the committee members when reviewing the applications, as there is a lot of material to review in such a short amount of time and it helps them get a clear picture of the each organization. He indicated that it also allows for the committee members to understand how effective the efforts of each organization put forth were received. He also spoke about applicant hearing days and asked each applicant to please stay within the allotted time of 20 minutes for questions and answers. During the meeting there was also clarification regarding a prior year's change to include information of visitors and tourists. The change made now allows the Committee to understand not only the number of visitors served; however it also includes the documented number of tourists served the variance of the two.

ii. Review of adopted meeting calendar.

Mr. Marra reviewed the 2018 adopted meeting calendar with the applicants and no questions were raised.

iii. Questions and comments by applicants.

No additional questions and comments were raised by the applicants present.

iv. Questions and comments by committee members.

No additional questions or comments were raised by the committee members. Mr. Marra thanked everyone for taking the time to attend the meeting and made note of the 2019 application deadline.

7. Adjournment:

Mr. Marra moved to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Freedman seconded the motion and it passed with a vote of 7-0. The meeting was adjourned at 9:28 a.m.

Approved:

Respectfully submitted:

Brad Marra, Chairman

Cindaia Ervin, Secretary