



Town of Hilton Head Island
Accommodations Tax Advisory Committee
Thursday, July 9, 2020 at 9:00 a.m.
MEETING MINUTES

Present from the Committee: Dru Brown; *Vice-Chairman*; Jim Fluker, Richard Thomas, Stephen Arnold and Julie Martin

Present from Town Council: Tamara Becker

Present from Town Staff: Josh Gruber, *Assistant Town Manager*; John Troyer, *Director of Finance*; Cindaia Ervin, *Finance Assistant*

Present from the Media: None

1. Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order at 9:00 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. Crystal Award Presentation

a. Brad Marra

Assistant Town Manager, Josh Gruber, presented Mr. Marra with his Crystal Award. Mr. Marra served six years on the Accommodations Tax Advisory Committee and Mr. Gruber thanked him for his excellent service on behalf of Town Council.

b. Roger Freedman

Assistant Town Manager, Josh Gruber, presented Mr. Freedman with his Crystal Award. Mr. Freedman served three years on the Accommodations Tax Advisory Committee and Mr. Gruber thanked him for his excellent service on behalf of Town Council.

4. Swearing in of Reappointed & New Members

a. Richard Thomas

Assistant Town Manager, Josh Gruber, swore in reappointed committee member Richard Thomas. He congratulated him on behalf of Town Council and thanked him for his important role he will continue to serve in the community.

5. Roll Call- See as noted above.

6. Approval of Agenda

Vice Chairman Brown asked for a motion to approve the agenda. Mr. Arnold moved to approve as submitted. Mr. Thomas seconded. By way of roll call, the motion was approved by a vote of 5-0.

7. Special Orders

a. Election of Chairman and Vice Chairman

Mr. Arnold made a motion to appoint Andrew Brown as Chairman. Mr. Thomas seconded. After discussion by the Committee, by way of roll call, the motion was approved by a vote of 5-0.

Mrs. Arnold made a motion to appoint James Fluker as Vice-Chairman. Mr. Thomas seconded. After discussion by the Committee, by way of roll call, the motion was approved by a vote of 5-0.

8. Approval of Minutes

a. Special Accommodations Tax Advisory Committee Meeting May 28, 2020

Chairman Brown asked for a motion to approve the revised meeting minutes of May 28, 2020. Mr. Arnold moved to approve the meeting minutes. Mr. Thomas seconded. By way of roll call, the motion was approved by a vote of 5-0.

9. Citizen Comments

Citizen Comments Public comments concerning agenda items could be submitted electronically via the Town's Virtual Town Hall portal. Citizens could comment on agenda items by phone during the meeting, by signing up with the Committee Secretary. The public comment period closed the day prior to the meeting at Noon. There were 9 comments submitted for a total of 27 minutes of public comment. There were no requests from citizens to participate by phone. All citizens' comments were provided to the Committee members for review and made a part of the record.

10. Unfinished Business

a. Consideration of policy recommendations to Town Council for the 2020 Accommodations Tax grant recipients affected the COVID-19 virus.

John Troyer, Director of Finance, shared with the Committee the results from Staffs survey regarding those grantees affected by COVID-19. The results were that most grantees would still attempt to use the awarded funding for the remainder of 2020 however, they requested that the Accommodations Tax Advisory Committee (ATAC) consider a one-year extension for funds to be used until December 31st, 2021. Chairman Brown opened the floor for discussion regarding the 2020 grantees affected by the COVID-19 virus. After much discussion, the Committee felt that each of the organizations needs could be different however, they potentially could all have similar issues using awarded funds for the remainder of 2020 due to the future unknown guidelines that COVID-19 may bring. They decided that it would be necessary to recommend to Town Council that they allow a one-year extension for those ATAX grantees awarded for 2020. This would allow the grantees the flexibility to spend awarded funds in 2021 with the understanding that all funds would have to be expended by December 31, 2021. They also wanted the grantees to work with Town Staff to attempt to use as much of the awarded funds in 2020.

Chairman Brown asked for a motion to recommend to Town Council that the awarded grantees continue to work with Town Staff to seek reimbursements of the awarded funds in 2020 and allow for a one-year extension for all 2020 ATAX grants, enabling the grant recipient the ability to use the 2020 funding through December 31, 2021, if needed. Mr. Arnold moved to approve the recommended policy set forth by the Committee. Mr. Thomas seconded. By way of roll call, the motion was approved by a vote of 5-0.

The Committee was pleased with the outcome and hoped that this would help the grantees in planning for 2021.

11. New Business:

- a. Discussion Regarding Potential Improvements to the Accommodations Tax Grant application for 2021.

Chairman Brown opened the floor for discussion regarding any potential improvements to the 2021 Accommodations Tax Grant Application. The Committee felt that the current draft of the ATAX application captures information that is pertinent to helping the Committee decide on organizations that apply for ATAX funding. After discussion by each member of the Committee, they all agreed that the current 2021 draft ATAX application does not need to change. Chairman Brown asked for a motion to approve the Accommodations Tax Grant application for 2021. Mr. Arnold moved to approve the draft application as is. Mr. Thomas seconded. By way of roll call, the motion was approved by a vote of 5-0.

12. Adjournment:

Mr. Brown adjourned the meeting at 9:26 p.m.

Submitted by: Cindaia Ervin, Secretary

Approved: August 13, 2020