



Town of Hilton Head Island
Accommodations Tax Advisory Committee

Thursday, August 12, 2021, at 9:00 a.m.

MEETING MINUTES

Present from the Committee: Jim Fluker, *Chairman*; Stephen Arnold, *Vice-Chairman*; John Farrell and Margaret Johnson

Absent from the Committee: Richard Thomas, Julie Martin, and James Berghausen

Present from Town Council: None

Present from Town Staff: John Troyer, *Director of Finance*; Jennifer McEwen, *Director of Cultural Affairs*; Rene Phillips, *Web Administrator*; 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. Roll Call- See as noted above.

4. Approval of Minutes

a. Accommodations Tax Advisory Committee Meeting July 8, 2021

Chairman Fluker asked for a motion to approve the meeting minutes from July 8, 2021. Mr. Arnold moved to approve the meeting minutes as submitted. Mrs. Johnson seconded. By way of roll call, the motion was approved by a vote of 4-0-0.

5. Appearance by Citizens

Skip Hoagland, Windmill Harbour spoke to the Committee regarding the new policy that the Tourism Review Expenditure Committee implemented, the Hilton Head Island-Bluffton Chamber of Commerce and other Accommodation tax issues he had.

6. New Business

a. Calendar Year 2022 Accommodations Tax Grant Application Workshop to discuss the Application procedure, expectations and to address Applicant questions and concerns.

James Fluker, Chairman, invited Rene Phillips, Website Administrator for the Town, to walk workshop attendees through the 2022 Accommodations Tax Grant online application process. Ms. Phillips explained the application in detail including the update portion of the application regarding tourist and visitor calculations and she also highlighted common questions she has received from past 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 can affect the over-all word count when answering questions. She also mentioned that when logging in with the organization's username and password, the application will pre-populate the 2022 application with information submitted for the 2021 application, including the budgets and financial statements, so that only the current years budgetary information will need 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 3rd at 4:00 pm is the absolute deadline for the 2022 Accommodations Tax Grant application submittals.

Following Ms. Phillips presentation, Cindaia Ervin, Committee Secretary, asked for those in attendance if they had questions regarding the application or process for 2022. Many attendees asked general questions regarding the hearing dates and the status of virtual meetings for the Town. Ms. Ervin stress that all funds remaining for the 2021 grant cycle must be used by December 31, 2021. Mr. Fluker thanked Ms. Phillips and Ms. Ervin for their guidance on the application and process and invited the workshop attendees to please contact Town Staff with additional questions or concerns should they have any during the process.

7. Chairman's Report

Mr. Fluker, Chairman gave a brief statement regarding how Accommodation's tax funding is distributed per statute. The purpose of the Committee is to review potential applicants for funding and recommend those for funding to Town Council for final consideration. State statute allows for the funding in 8 categories and the Committee consistently awards three categories; marketing and promotion, event related costs and facilities maintenance if found allowable.

Mr. Fluker stated that annually the Town must submit a report to the Tourism Review Expenditures Committee of the previous years awarded grants and the amount spent. If any awarded applicant is deemed as not an appropriate use of funding, then the Town must return those funds to the State. During a discussion by the Committee on the topic, Mr. Arnold asked that all applicants submit all the necessary information that the grant application asks for as it is important in the reviewing of the applications. Mr. Fluker thanked the other Committee members for their input and dialog of the awarding of the potential applicants.

8. Adjournment

At 10:03 a.m. Mr. Fluker adjourned the meeting.

Submitted by: Cindaia Ervin, Secretary

Approved: September 30, 2021