



Town of Hilton Head Island  
**Accommodations Tax Advisory Committee**

Thursday, August 11, 2022, at 9:00 a.m.

**MEETING MINUTES**

**Present from the Committee:** Jim Fluker, *Chairman*; Richard Thomas, *Vice-Chair*; Stephen Arnold, John Farrell, Julie Martin, James Berghausen and Margaret Johnson

**Absent from the Committee:** None

**Present from Town Council:** None

**Present from Town Staff:** John Troyer, *Director of Finance*; Rene Phillips, *Web Administrator*; Cindaia Ervin, *Finance Assistant*

**Present from the Media:** None

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**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 the Agenda**

Chairman Fluker ask for a motion to move agenda item 8: Chairman's Report to the beginning of the agenda. Mr. Berghausen moved to move the agenda item, Chairman's Report to the beginning of the agenda. Mr. Arnold seconded. By way of roll call, the motion was approved by vote of 7-0-0.

**5. Chairmans Report**

Chairman Fluker stated for those present in the audience that he understood that there could be some confusion regarding the changes made to the 2023 Accommodations Tax Grant Application. He assured all that there were no changes made to the process nor were any additional requirements needed. The intent was to understand how/if any of those applying for funding are currently collaborating with other community organizations. Other Committee members echoed Mr. Fluker's thoughts and welcomed those present to voice any comments should they have any. Mr. Berghausen, Committee Member, shared his process of evaluating applicants for funding based on the amount of funding requested versus the number of tourists served. He wants to be efficient with the limited funding that is available, especially in anticipation of times when grant requests exceed available funding. When it does, the recommendation process will require more selectivity. Each applicant's demonstrated efficiency in reaching and serving our tourists is likely to receive greater emphasis.

## **6. Approval of Minutes**

### **a. Accommodations Tax Advisory Committee Meeting July 7, 2022**

Chairman Fluker asked for a motion to approve the meeting minutes from July 7, 2022. Mr. Berghausen moved to approve the meeting minutes with a correction of Deputy Town Manager Josh Gruber be added as swearing in officer. Mr. Arnold seconded. By way of roll call, the motion was approved by a vote of 7-0-0.

## **7. Appearance by Citizens**

Cindaia Ervin, Committee Secretary, stated that comments concerning agenda items were to be submitted electronically via the Town's Open Town Hall portal. The public comment period closed the day prior to the meeting at 4:30 p.m. At the conclusion of the Open Town Hall, there was one comment that was submitted to the committee and made a part of the official record and there was one request from a citizen to speak to the Committee in person.

At the time of appearance by citizens and again prior to the chairman adjuring the meeting, Mr. Skip Hoagland was not present.

## **8. 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 Cindaia Ervin, Finance Assistant for the Town, to walk workshop attendees through the 2023 Accommodations Tax Grant online application process. Ms. Ervin 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 2023 application with information submitted for the 2022 application, including the budgets and financial statements, so that only the current years budgetary information will need to be uploaded. Ms. Ervin emphasized that if an applicant finds they have uploaded a document in error, or if technical assistance is needed, they should contact Rene Tuttle, Web Developer for help via phone or email. She also highlighted the rephrased question regarding collaborations of organizations. Members of the public, thanks to Mr. Fluker's discussion during his chairman's report did not have any additional comments or questions regarding that topic. Finally, she reminded the group that September 2<sup>nd</sup> at 4:00 pm is the absolute deadline for the 2023 Accommodations Tax Grant application submittals.

Ms. Ervin asked for any final questions regarding the application and process for those in attendance. Many attendees asked general questions regarding the hearing dates and the status of virtual meetings for the Town. Ms. Ervin stressed that all funds remaining for the 2022 grant cycle must be used by December 31, 2022. Mr. Fluker thanked Ms. Ervin for her presentation of the 2023 Accommodations Tax Grant 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.

## **9. Adjournment**

At 9:38 a.m. Mr. Fluker adjourned the meeting.

**Submitted by:** Cindaia Ervin, Secretary

**Approved:** October 7, 2022