



**Town of Surfside  
Tourist Board  
MINUTES**

**March 6, 2017 5:30 p.m.**

Town Hall Commission Chambers - 9293 Harding Ave, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
Surfside, FL 33154

**A/B. Call to Order/Roll Call**

The meeting was called to order by Chair Cohen at 5:34 p.m.

Present: Chair Barbara Cohen  
Vice Chair Jessica Weiss\*  
Secretary Marianne Meisheid  
Terry Cohen  
Jennifer Zawid

Also present: Vice Mayor Barry Cohen, Commission Liaison  
Guillermo Olmedillo, Town Manager  
Duncan Tavares, Acting Asst. Town Manager (AATM)  
Melissa Richards, Marketing and Special Proj. Coordinator  
Jane Graham, Assistant Town Attorney  
Elora Riera, Deputy Town Clerk  
Frantza Duval, Recording Clerk

Chair Cohen welcomed Board Liaison, Vice Mayor Cohen to the meeting.

**1. Approval of Minutes: February 6, 2017 Regular Meeting**

**Secretary Meisheid made a motion to approve the minutes as written. Board member Zawid seconded the motion which carried unanimously on voice vote.**

\*Vice Chair Weiss arrived at 5:39 p.m.

**2. A/R (Resort Tax)**

AATM Tavares explained that last month it was stated that the spreadsheet reflected resort tax collected from Airbnb rentals, but the agreement with Airbnb did not begin until March 1st. What was shown in short term rentals are those properties that have registered with the Town through the resort tax ordinance.

**3. Permanent Downtown Lighting**

AATM Tavares stated that there have been discussions on improving the downtown lighting and electrical. The streetscape budget was minimal so the electrical that is currently in place was under the constraints of that budget.

There are options to upgrade the electric. The Town has received initial quotes of approximately \$500,000 to correct the lighting on the two blocks of Harding Avenue which is something that suits more of the needs of the Board and the direction they would like to go. It also may provide the ability of permanent lighting.

Secretary Meischeid questioned why these funds would come from the Tourist Board fund rather than Town funds and Assistant Town Attorney Graham replied that the determination would come from the Town Commission and whether they feel that this project falls under Tourism related purposes.

Commission Liaison, Vice Mayor Cohen stated that the lighting was definitely something that would help provide better lighting, but he was not expecting it to cost so much. It is good to start looking into this project and getting information to see what type of lighting will best fit the Town.

Secretary Meischeid commented that it is a great idea but feels that the funding for the lighting does not fall under the realm of the Tourist Board and should come from the Town budget.

Discussion ensued regarding the downtown lighting and where funding would come from and the options for permanent lighting to reflect the different holidays.

George Kousoulas of 9225 Collins Avenue spoke to this item and felt that it was a great idea.

#### **4. FAM Discussion – Sean McKeen, General Manager Residence Inn**

AATM Tavares commented that Mr. McKeen would like to speak about FAM (familiarization) trips where the industry learns about the property or destination and that it is an important part of the approach to selling a destination.

Mr. McKeen presented information to the Board regarding FAM and how it can benefit the Town, businesses and hotels.

To answer Secretary Meischeid's question, Mr. McKeen would be requesting the Tourist Board to donate one FAM a month which would be approximately \$1,200-\$2,000 a month.

Board member Zawid suggested getting input from the other hotels on this project. She believes that it is an interesting idea but she would like to get more information.

AATM Tavares believes that this is something that the Board should look into although he is unsure of where the Board would allocate the funds from within their budget. He commented that some funding was not used for tradeshows by the Residence Inn and he suggested that those funds could possibly be used for the FAM program.

Board member Cohen asked if the Board could be provided with a breakdown of the costs for each item such as room and food and Mr. McKeen responded in agreement.

AATM Director Tavares commented they will look at this program in more detail with the other hotels in the summer.

There are options to upgrade the electrical. The town has received initial quotes of approximately \$50,000 to contact the utility or the two blocks of Haring Avenue within is something that suits more in the needs of the Board and the direction they would like to go. It also may provide the ability of potential funding.

Secretary Michels questioned why these funds would come from the town Board fund rather than Town funds and Assistant Town Attorney Graham asked that a determination would come from the Town Commission and whether they feel that the town or the utility should be responsible for these costs.

Commission Liaison, Vice Mayor Cohen stated that the lighting was relatively concerning that they would help provide better lighting but he was not expecting a lot of cost. It is good to start looking into this project and getting information to see what type of lighting will best fit the town.

Secretary Michels commented that it is a great idea and that the town Board for the lighting does not fall under the town of the town Board and would come from the town budget.

Discussion ensued regarding the downtown lighting and what funding would come from and the options for funding to reflect the different levels.

George Koussios, 2525 Collins Avenue spoke to his firm and that it was a great idea.

A. F&M Discussion – Secretary Michels, General Manager Respondek Ann

AATM Tavares commented that Mr. Michels would like to speak about F&M (familiarization) maps which usually focus on the property or destination and that it is an important part of the approach to selling a destination.

Mr. Michels presented information to the Board regarding F&M and how it can benefit the town, businesses and hotels.

To answer Secretary Michels' question, Mr. Michels would be requesting the Board to donate one F&M a month which would be approximately \$100-\$200 a month.

Board member Zavis suggested getting input from the other hotels on the project. She believes that it is an interesting idea but she would like to get more information.

AATM Tavares believes that this is something that the Board should look into although he is unsure of where the Board would allocate the funds from within their budget. He commented that some funding was not used for familiarization by the Residents Inn and he suggested that these funds could possibly be used for the F&M program.

Board member Cohen asked if the Board could be provided with a breakdown of the costs for each item such as room and board and Mr. Michels responded in agreement.

AATM Director Tavares commented they will look at this program in more detail with the other hotels in the summer.

## 5. First Fridays Update

AATM Tavares commented that the Commission approved to transfer \$48,000 to the operating budget for First Fridays so that the Board can fund the events. There will be four events in total beginning in May.

They are in the process of refining the agreement with Sarah. He has been directed by the Board and staff to be more detailed in the deliverables and he is working on that at the moment and if the Board has any comments or feedback to please let him know.

Secretary Meischeid would like to know if the Board will be able to see the agreement before it is signed.

AATM Tavares stated that traditionally and as a matter of policy, a Board directs the Administration to proceed with an agreement based on what the Board has seen. His concern is that if he were to bring the agreement to the Board to view, there would be many opinions and it would delay the process. There has been an abundance of feedback from the Board over the last few months.

Discussion ensued regarding the Board being able to see the agreement before it is approved and signed.

Vice Chair Weiss asked if it would be possible for the Board to ask the vendor to commit to a certain percentage as a service fee so that the board would know that the balance went 100% to the event and any surplus could go towards the next event or refunded back to the Boards budget.

Board member Cohen commented that she disagrees with this agreement because there was no competition and she felt that there should have been more proposals. She feels that the Board did not get their money's worth.

**Secretary Meischeid made a motion to see the agreement before it is signed. Board member Zawid seconded the motion.**

Assistant Town Attorney Graham commented that in her experience, she has never seen a Board look at an agreement before it is signed. If the Board feels that there are certain conditions that are important, they can make a recommendation.

George Kousoulas of 9225 Collins Avenue and Victor May of 9117 Froude Avenue spoke on this item.

**The motion failed 3-2 with Vice Chair Weiss, Board member Zawid and Chair Cohen being the dissenting votes.**

## 6. Tourism Director Positon Update

AATM Tavares stated that they have received a number of applications and are earmarking the beginning of April to have interviews for those applicants. Applications are still being accepted by the Human Resources Department until then.

## **7. Tourism Questionnaire Update**

AATM Tavares commented that Marketing and Special Projects Coordinator Richards created a simple form that was approved by the Board and it has been very helpful.

Discussion ensued regarding the questions being asked on the questionnaire.

**Secretary Meischeid made a recommendation to remove question #5 and to revise the last question to also ask what the Town can do better. The recommendation passed unanimously on voice vote.**

## **8. Banners Update**

AATM Tavares suggested that the Board wait until after the hurricane season to discuss the banner program. He stated that he can bring it back to the Board as he receives more images. With that being said, banners are hung in the summer months and he will hang the banners that were most liked by the Board.

## **9. Third Thursdays Update**

AATM Tavares commented that the inaugural event was a success. They are going through a little bit of a learning curve because there was a different format this year. There was a request that the start time be changed to 6:30p.m start. A half hour earlier start can be accommodated for families which will not affect the budget. There were approximately 400 people in attendance. Based on the Boards decision, the theme for the event series will be uptown beach town.

## **10. Sister Cities Update**

AATM Tavares commented that he was unable to attend a meeting with the County but Board member Zawid attended in his absence. He implored the Board to look at this as a community initiative and he would like Board member Zawid to be the Liaison for this program. In speaking with Board member Zawid, she has good ideas and suggestions.

**Chair Cohen passed the gavel to Secretary Meischeid and made a motion to nominate Board member Zawid as the representative for the Sister Cities program for the Town of Surfside. Secretary Meischeid seconded the motion which was carried 4-0. Vice Chair Weiss was absent.**

AATM Tavares commented that there is an upcoming meeting in Virginia that he cannot attend and he recommended that Board member Zawid attend in his place.

**Board member Cohen made a motion to allocate between \$1,200-\$1,500 for Board member Zawid to attend the Sister Cities Conference in Virginia. Secretary Meischeid seconded the motion which carried 4-0. Vice Chair Weiss was absent.**

7. Tourism Questionnaire Update

AATM Tavares commented that Marketing and Special Events Coordinator Richards created a simple form that was approved by the Board and used to survey residents.

Discussion ensued regarding the questionnaire being used and the results.

Secretary-Melachoid made a recommendation to remove question #6 and to revise the last question to also ask what the Town can do better. The resolution passed unanimously on voice vote.

8. Banner Update

AATM Tavares suggested that the Board wait until after the banner program to discuss the banner program. He stated that he had thought that the Board would be reviewing the program. With that being said, banners are being set up in the summer months and he will bring the banners that were most liked by the Board.

9. Third Thursday Update

AATM Tavares commented that the inaugural event was a success. They are doing through a little bit of a learning curve because there was a different format this year. There was a request that the start time be changed to 6:00pm since a half hour earlier than was recommended for families which will not affect the budget. There were approximately 400 people in attendance based on the Board's best estimate. The event series will be a follow up event.

10. Sister Cities Update

AATM Tavares commented that he was unable to attend a meeting with the County and Board member Zwick attended in his absence. He reported the Board to look at this as a community initiative and he would like Board member Zwick to be the liaison for this position. In speaking with Board member Zwick, she was given a list of suggestions.

Chair Cohen passed the gavel to Secretary Melachoid and motion was carried to nominate Board member Zwick as the representative for the Sister Cities program for the Town of Burke. Secretary Melachoid seconded the motion which was carried 4-0. Vice Chair Weiss was absent.

AATM Tavares commented that there is an upcoming meeting in Virginia that he cannot attend and he recommended that Board member Zwick attend in his place.

Board member Cohen made a motion to allocate \$1,500-\$2,500 for Board member Zwick to attend the Sister Cities Conference in Virginia. Secretary Melachoid seconded the motion which carried 4-0. Vice Chair Weiss was absent.

**11. Next Tourist Board Meeting: Monday April 3, 2017 at 5:30pm: Discussion with Event Organizers**

**May 1, 2017 meeting: Jacober Creative Update and FY17/18 Marketing Plan discussion; holiday lights vendors**

There was no discussion on this item.

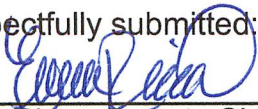
**12. Public Comment**

None.

**13. Adjournment**

**Board member Zawid made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:25 pm. Secretary Meischeid seconded the motion which carried unanimously on voice vote.**

Respectfully submitted:



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Elora Riera, Deputy Clerk

Adopted by the Board on this 3<sup>rd</sup> day of April, 2017

  
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Barbara Cohen, Chair