



TOURIST DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL MEETING
Friday, March 13, 2020

DRAFT MINUTES

The Tourist Development Council meeting was called to order by Orange County Mayor/TDC Chairman Jerry L. Demings at 9:01 a.m.

Quorum: Established

Present: - Chairman/Orange County Mayor Jerry L. Demings
Mayor Buddy Dyer, City of Orlando
Mayor A. Dale McDonald, City of Maitland
Jörg Heyer, Area General Manager, Sheraton Vistana Resort
Jesse Martinez, General Manager, The Alford Inn at Rollins
John Stine, General Manager/Director of Business Development, Icon Park

Absent: - Jodi Bainter, Director, Central Florida Sales and Marketing Distribution Strategy, Disney Destinations, LLC
David Bartek, Vice President of Operations, Loews Hotels at Universal Orlando
Rick Pullum, President, One Florida Bank

Pledge of Allegiance

Call for Public Comment – None

Approval of the December 6, 2019 TDC Meeting Minutes

A motion was made by Jesse Martinez and seconded by Mayor McDonald to approve the minutes from the December 6, 2019 meeting of the Tourist Development Council. The motion carried by a unanimous vote of all members present.

Orange County Convention Center Report

Mark Tester, Executive Director, Orange County Convention Center, presented a report on recent convention/tradeshows activity for January 2020 – March 2020, which included Meetings & Conventions, Coronavirus (COVID-19) impact, North-South building expansion, and upcoming event activity for April – June 2020. Mr. Tester provided highlights of the impact of rescheduled shows that have confirmed new dates, and negotiations to bring cancelled events back to Orange County. He discussed how the North/South expansion would allow us the flexibility to be in the forefront of marketing opportunities and allow the Convention Center to capture new types of business. He ended his presentation by noting the Convention Center anticipates breaking ground this year on the North/South expansion.

Orange County Comptroller Report

Robin Ragaglia, Director of Finance and Accounting, Orange County Comptroller's Office, presented the Convention Center's preliminary financial statements as of January 31, 2020, the status of Tourist Development Tax revenues and Metro Orlando lodging statistical data. In response to Mayor Demings' question regarding a forecast of the second quarter, Ms. Ragaglia stated preliminary Convention Center operation financial statements for February look favorable. Comptroller Phil Diamond contributed by stating the March final numbers are to be released the first week in May. Mr. Diamond also stated older numbers show we might look at the months following 911 for guidance where the revenue went down 32%. Mayor Demings then referenced an eight-week impact from the 2004 consecutive hurricanes as an indicator of what we will potentially face with the Coronavirus situation.

Visit Orlando Update

George Aguel, President/CEO, Visit Orlando, presented an update relative to the current information on Orlando's positioning in the media. Mr. Aguel stated out of 576,000 stories related to the Coronavirus, travel and tourism, Orlando represented 2.7K of those stories. He also mirrored Mayor Demings' comment referencing some of our history that will help give us some perspective. Visit Orlando will continue to gather information and facts for evaluation in reference to the park closures for the next two weeks, and they are conducting weekly research that will help inform us about consumer sentiment and how that will help with plans going forward. Visit Orlando is looking at adjusting media marketing plans--carefully considering how much and what type of messaging is going out over the next few weeks. Visit Orlando is also collaborating with members, hotels, restaurants, retail outlets and other attractions that have not indicated they are closing.

The bigger goal is to build consumer confidence that they can continue their plans to visit our community as we move in to the spring and summer period. On the convention side and with all of the cancellations, 90% of delegates still plan to come to Orlando. Mr. Aguel offered statistical data that 90% of our visitors come for leisure, 91% are domestic travelers, 70% of visitors arrive by car (providing potential accessibility without being impacted by the travel ban), and 1% of our international visitors represent countries impacted by the travel ban. Visit Orlando continues to place emphasis on all key markets and will place additional marketing emphasis on our Florida population, Nashville, Charlotte, Atlanta and New York. As consumers feel a little more settled, they will react to specials offered that make it attractive to visit our destination. Visit Orlando's new marketing campaign showcases the Orlando destination as a growing and changing place where there's always something new to experience. Mr. Aguel stated Visit Orlando's media platforms are evolving, especially the use of streaming opportunities, and they are working on marketing that connects emotionally with consumers, allowing them to visualize what it is like being in Orlando.

Following Mayor Demings' comments about the cruise industry's weakened status, Mr. Aguel commented that Visit Orlando is trying to respond to the consumers who have cancelled cruises or European trips/vacations and are looking for alternate destinations.

Other Business - None

Adjournment – The meeting was adjourned by Mayor Jerry L. Demings at 9:57 a.m.