



**Accommodations Tax Advisory
Committee** 11:00 a.m., Wednesday,
September 8, 2021 Council Chambers
1207 Palm Boulevard
Isle of Palms, South Carolina

Public Comment:

Citizens may provide public comment here:
<https://www.iop.net/public-comment-form>

Agenda

1. **Call to Order** and acknowledgment that the press and the public had been duly notified of the meeting in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act.
2. **Approval of Previous Meeting's Minutes** - August 11, 2021
3. **Financial Statements** – Debbie Suggs, City Treasurer
4. **Old Business**
Discussion and consideration of alternatives for the allocation of 30% of the ATAX funds collected that must be used for advertisement and promotion of tourism currently managed by the Charleston Visitors Bureau
5. **New Business**
6. **Miscellaneous**
Date of next meeting: 11:00 a.m., October 13, 2021
7. **Adjournment**



ACCOMMODATIONS TAX ADVISORY COMMITTEE
11:00am, Wednesday, August 11, 2021
1207 Palm Boulevard, Isle of Palms, SC and
broadcasted live on YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/user/cityofisleofpalms>

MINUTES

1. Call to order

Present: Rusty Williamson, David Nelson, Doug Truslow, Ray Burns, Glenda Nemes

Absent: Malcolm Burgiss, Sally Muhlig

Staff Present: Administrator Fragoso, Treasurer Suggs

2. Approval of the previous meetings' minutes – July 14, 2021

MOTION: Mr. Truslow made a motion to approve the minutes of the July 14, 2021 meeting. Mr. Nelson seconded the motion. The minutes passed unanimously.

Ms. Nemes corrected the spelling of TERC.

3. Financial Statements – Treasurer Suggs

Treasurer Suggs said the fourth quarter payment from the State was received in amount of \$951,266. She reviewed the preliminary and unaudited balance sheet as of June 30, 2021 and a balance sheet as of July 31, 2021. She noted that the large fourth quarter payment is likely due to pent up vacation demand and is not a sustainable amount to be received in the future.

She reviewed the FY21 budget overages and the reasons for each. The overage for the fourth quarter CVB payment is because the budget reflected conservative estimates for these payments in light of COVID. The overage for the Marina bond debt service was also a budget estimate based on borrowing a certain amount at a higher interest rate. The City ultimately borrowed more money than anticipated but at a lower interest rate. Future payments to this debt service will be based on the amortization schedule.

MOTION: Mr. Nelson made a motion to approve the budget overages as presented. Mr. Williamson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Burns asked about the monies set aside for maintenance at the Marina. Administrator Fragoso said this is a placeholder for unspecified but anticipated maintenance needs, such as in common areas, as required by the lease.

4. **Old Business**

A. **Presentation from Helen Hill, Charleston Visitors Bureau and Dave Battista, Lowe's Wild Dunes**

Prior to the presentation, Ms. Nemes expressed concern that she and other short-term rental owners lacked representation in this presentation. Mr. Battista said he sees all short-term rental owners, big and small, as one group with the common goal of making the Isle of Palms a great place for people to visit.

Mr. Battista and Ms. Hill spoke about how the CVB and the ExploreCharleston.com website benefit the Isle of Palms, their media relations success over the years, and their commitment to the Isle of Palms moving forward. Ms. Hill shared the FY22 advertising schedule. Mr. Battista spoke about the importance of group sales for the Isle of Palms. Ms. Hill said there is a specific group of CVB employees dedicated to group sales. Mr. Battista said that overall promotion of the Charleston region has been profitable for the Isle of Palms.

Mr. Burns spoke at length about the formation of the City's own DMO. He reviewed how the City Council would go about setting up such an organization and its membership makeup. He shared research and information he has collected from outside sources including the City of Folly Beach who formed their own DMO over a decade ago.

He suggested that the City consider splitting the 30% funds between the CVB and its own DMO. He feels an IOP-targeted website will benefit all island businesses, big and small.

Mr. Burns encouraged Committee members to do their own research and be prepared to vote on the issue at the September meeting. Mr. Truslow and Ms. Nemes requested further data to help inform their decisions. Mr. Truslow said it would also be important to know any downsides to changing DMOs and how the residents feel about the services provided by the CVB.

5. **New Business**

A. **Consideration of approval of overages for FY21 – beach trash pickup in the amount of \$5,326; marina dock bond debt service in the amount of \$33,000; the Music in the Park event in the amount of \$1,300; and debt service on the 75' ladder truck for the Fire Department in the amount of \$1**

This issue was discussed and passed during the Financial Statements presentation.

6. **Miscellaneous Business**

The next meeting of the ATAX Committee will be Wednesday, September 8, 2021 at 11am.

7. **Adjournment**

Mr. Truslow made a motion to adjourn, and Mr. Nelson seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 12:21pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Nicole DeNeane
City Clerk