



ACCOMMODATIONS TAX ADVISORY COMMITTEE

11:00am, Wednesday, October 2, 2024

1207 Palm Boulevard, Isle of Palms, SC

MINUTES

1. Call to order

Present: Ray Burns, Margaret Miller, Rebecca Kovalich, Park Williams (via Zoom), Barb Bergwerf, Chrissy Lorenz

Absent: Mike Boykin

Staff Present: Administrator Fragoso, Director Hamilton, PR Officer Yudchenko

2. Approval of previous meeting's minutes – August 28, 2024

Ms. Bergwerf made a motion to approve the minutes of the August 28, 2024 meeting, and Ms. Lorenz seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

3. Financial Statements

Director Hamilton said there is \$4.9 million in the ATAX account. The City received a \$4,000 grant for body armor. \$41,000 in interest has been earned to date in FY25. All expenses are tracking as expected. No State ATAX funds have been received as of yet.

Mr. Burns asked about the \$570,000 budget expense for the Waterway Boulevard Path project. Administrator Fragoso explained how that project has been financed and is being managed. She also shared the scope of the project and its current status. She said it is unlikely that the work will be completed in FY25, so some of those funds will be moved to FY26.

4. Old Business

A. Update on initiative in partnership with the College of Charleston's Office of Tourism Analysis regarding development of questionnaire to be made available to property managers on the island to distribute to visitors to gain insight into where visitors are coming from and what would drive them to return

Administrator Fragoso shared that she has received the draft of the survey but has not had the chance to review it yet. She will share it with Committee members.

She also reported that she recently met with island property managers regarding the survey and its goals. The property managers have embraced the idea and will encourage their renters to fill it out. They would like to review the survey prior to publication to make sure it benefits them as well. They would also like to receive the survey data when available.

Mr. Burns asked that owner-managed short-term rentals also be included in this effort.

B. Consideration of new design for the T-shirt program

Administrator Fragoso shared the narrowed-down entries for the new t-shirt design. She presented three choices as well as one to consider for a child's t-shirt. Committee members said they would like the design for the child's t-shirt to be available in adult sizes as well. They would also like this design to include some sort of autism awareness tag since the design was created by autistic members of the community.

MOTION: Mr. Burns made a motion to recommend Options 1 and 4 as the new designs for the t-shirt program to be purchased in amounts and sizes determined by staff. Ms. Miller seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

C. Discussion of responsibilities of ATAX Advisory Committee

Using information from the new member orientation, Administrator Fragoso reviewed the responsibilities of the ATAX Advisory Committee. She said, "The ATAX Committee is responsible for making recommendations on the State Accommodations revenue that the City receives every year."

She suggested that the Committee could review this material again at the start of the new year and provide more information about the budget planning process.

5. New Business

A. Consideration of application from YWCA for funding from remaining budgeted funds in FY25 for tourism related programs and sponsorships

As there was no representation from the YWCA for this application, the Committee agreed to schedule another meeting when their questions could be answered by someone from the organization. Mr. Burns would like to know the number of overnight stays created by the 2024 event. He also expressed concern about ATAX monies being used for an invitation-only event. He would also like to see their meeting agenda and content.

Administrator Fragoso said she will reach out to TERC to better understand the rules around using public funds for a private event.

6. Miscellaneous Business

The next meeting of the ATAX Committee will be Monday, November 4, 2025 at 11am.

Administrator Fragoso said she will extend the deadline for additional ATAX applications to October 25, 2024.

7. Adjournment

Mr. Burns made a motion to adjourn, and Ms. Bergwerf seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 11:47am.

Respectfully submitted,

Nicole DeNeane
City Clerk