



## **ACCOMMODATIONS TAX ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

**10:00am, Wednesday, April 23, 2025**

**1207 Palm Boulevard, Isle of Palms, SC**

### **MINUTES**

#### **1. Call to order**

**Present:** Rebecca Kovalich, Park Williams, Barb Bergwerf, Rod Turnage, Chrissy Lorenz, Margaret Miller

**Absent:** Mike Boykin

**Staff Present:** Administrator Kerr, Director Hamilton

#### **2. Consideration of FY26 Budget for State Accommodations Tax Funds**

Mr. Williams said it will be important to keep track of the ATAX revenues throughout the budget year should they be affected by national and international policies and economics.

**MOTION:** Mr. Williams made a motion to recommend to City Council the approval of the FY26 Budget for State Accommodations Tax Funds. Ms. Bergwerf seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

#### **3. Consideration of the FY26 budget from the Charleston Visitor's Bureau**

Catherine Dority, Lori Smith, and Chris Campbell were present to answer questions about the proposed FY26 budget for the Charleston Visitor's Bureau.

Ms. Kovalich asked where travel expenses are located in the budget. Ms. Smith said travel-related expenses are accounted for in trade show line items. She said the effectiveness of trade show attendance is evaluated internally and they "bring back only the best to you for our plans" in FY26.

Ms. Bergwerf asked what percentage of the CVB's budget is related to the Isle of Palms. Ms. Smith said that IOP is 4% of the overall budget and provides 9% of the ATAX revenues.

Ms. Kovalich asked where salaries are accounted for in the budget, and Ms. Smith said that salaries are not addressed by TERC and are not part of the budget as presented. Discussion ensued about the shared employee between the City and the CVB, her job duties, and the critical work she does getting information out to the public about the City.

Mr. Turnage asked why there is such a significant decrease in funds budgeted for Visitor Services. Ms. Smith explained that this number represents a new method in which the CVB

allocate funds for each municipality in an attempt to make the amounts fair. She assured the Committee that the Isle of Palms is still being promoted through Visitor Services.

Mr. Campbell said they have not seen significant changes with their service via Air Canada. The CVB is constantly looking at how public policy affects the travel market. He said the numbers for the first quarter appear to have been affected by January's storm, one less day in February, and Easter in April instead of March. April has had a "strong start."

Ms. Lorenz asked if all Committee members could receive the CVB Weekly email. Ms. Smith will add them to the mailing list.

**MOTION: Ms. Bergwerf made a motion to recommend that City Council approve the FY26 CVB Budget as presented. Ms. Lorenz seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.**

**8. Miscellaneous Business**

The next meeting of the ATAX Committee will be Wednesday, May 14, 2025 at 10am. The Committee will discuss and vote on the three applications for grants at that time.

**9. Adjournment**

Ms. Bergwerf made a motion to adjourn, and Ms. Kovalich seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 10:36am.

Respectfully submitted,

Nicole DeNeane  
City Clerk