

ORDINANCE NO. 2015-_____

AN ORDINANCE OF THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF LEON COUNTY, FLORIDA, AMENDING ARTICLE III OF CHAPTER 11 OF THE CODE OF LAWS OF LEON COUNTY REGARDING THE TOURIST DEVELOPMENT TAX; AMENDING SECTION 11-47 RELATING TO THE TOURIST DEVELOPMENT PLAN; PROVIDING FOR CONFLICTS; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

WHEREAS, the Leon County Tourist Development Plan serves as the blueprint to guide the activities of the Leon County Tourist Development Council and the expenditure of tourist development tax revenue; and

WHEREAS, the Board desires to amend the Leon County Tourist Development Plan;

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF LEON COUNTY, FLORIDA, THAT:

Section 1. Section 11-47 of Article III of Chapter 11 of the Code of Laws of Leon County, Florida, entitled “Tourist Development Plan Funded,” is hereby amended to read as follows:

Sec. 11-47. Tourist Development Plan Funded.

The tax revenues received pursuant to this article shall be used to fund the Leon County Tourist Development Plan dated February 10, 2015 ~~February 12, 2013~~, which is attached hereto as Exhibit A and which is hereby adopted and incorporated into this article.

Section 2. Conflicts. All ordinances or parts of ordinances in conflict with the provisions of this ordinance are hereby repealed to the extent of such conflict, except to the extent of any conflicts with the Tallahassee-Leon County 2010 Comprehensive Plan as amended,

1 which provisions shall prevail over any part of this ordinance which is inconsistent, either in
2 whole or in part, with the said Comprehensive Plan.

3 **Section 3. Severability.** If any word, phrase, clause, section or portion of this
4 ordinance shall be held invalid or unconstitutional by a court of competent jurisdiction, such
5 portion or words shall be deemed a separate and independent provision and such holding shall
6 not affect the validity of the remaining portions thereof.

7 **Section 4. Effective date.** This ordinance shall have effect upon becoming law.

8 DULY PASSED AND ADOPTED BY the Board of County Commissioners of Leon
9 County, Florida, this 10th day of February, 2015.

10 LEON COUNTY, FLORIDA

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13 By: _____
14 Mary Ann Lindley, Chairman
15 Board of County Commissioners
16

17 ATTESTED BY:
18 BOB INZER, CLERK OF THE COURT
19 AND COMPTROLLER
20

21
22 By: _____
23 CLERK
24

25 APPROVED AS TO FORM:
26 COUNTY ATTORNEY'S OFFICE
27 LEON COUNTY, FLORIDA
28

29
30 By: _____
31 HERBERT W.A. THIELE
32 COUNTY ATTORNEY

EXHIBIT A

LEON COUNTY TOURIST DEVELOPMENT PLAN

(Date of Adoption: February 10, 2015~~February 12, 2013~~)

The Tourist Development Plan contained herein will serve as a blueprint to guide the activities of the Leon County Tourist Development Council (TDC) and the expenditure of tourist development tax revenue. The goal of this plan is, including but not limited to: increasing the number, length of stay and expenditures of visitors to the County in pursuit of business, conference/convention, leisure, educational, sports or film related travel.

As designed in Section 125.0104, Florida Statutes, the TDC shall act as an advisory council to the County Commission on matters pertaining to the expenditure of tourist development tax proceeds. This body shall meet at least quarterly and, from time to time, shall make recommendations to the County Commission for the effective operation of the special projects or for uses of the tourist development tax revenue and perform such other duties as may be prescribed by county ordinance or resolution. The TDC shall continuously review expenditures of revenues from the tourist development trust fund and shall receive, at least quarterly, expenditure reports from the County. Expenditures which the TDC believes to be unauthorized shall be reported to the County Commission and the Department of Revenue.

An annual Marketing Plan and budget will be developed by County staff, utilizing industry stakeholder input, and thereafter presented to the TDC for its consideration. The TDC will then issue a recommended budget in support of the Marketing Plan to the County Commission.

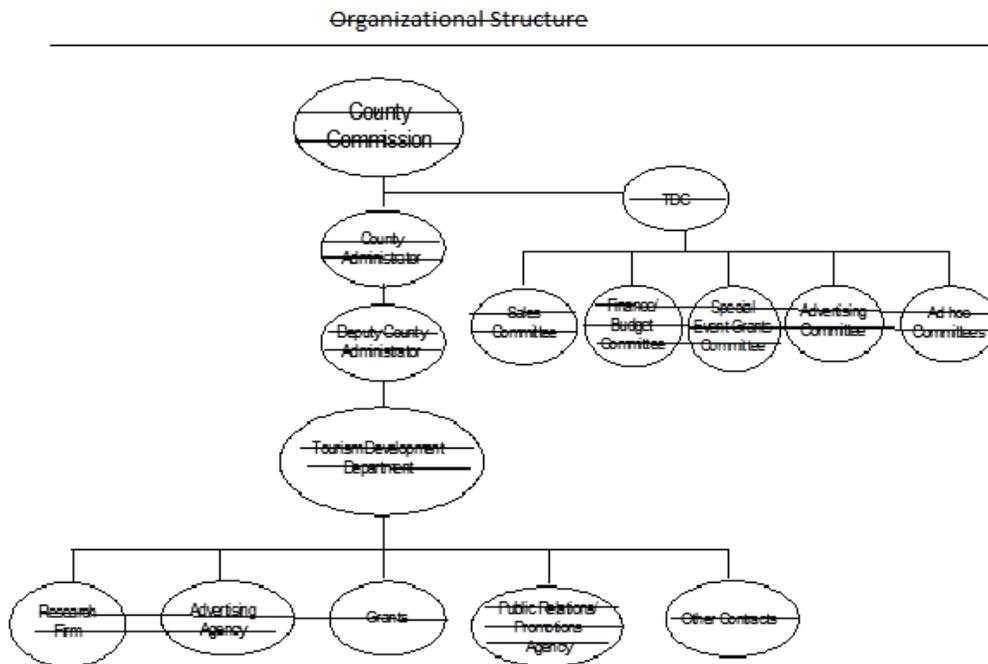
Expenditures which the TDC believes support an optimum Marketing Plan for Tourist Development may be allocated to the following elements: (1) advertising; (2) public relations/promotions; (3) research and analysis; (4) direct sales; (5) convention and visitor services; (6) special events; ~~and~~ (7) administration; and (8) the cultural grant program, the capital needs matching grants for arts and cultural facilities program, and components of the Capital Area Cultural Plan that support economic development through tourism and related marketing. Effective October 1, 2014, the one-cent tourist development tax which had been dedicated to the performing arts center(s) shall no longer be dedicated for such purpose and shall be retained by the County to be utilized in accordance with Florida law. ~~The budget allocations for construction,~~

~~operation, maintenance, and associated costs of a Performing Arts Center have been established by Ordinance at 20% of tourist development tax collections.~~

All expenditures of tourist development tax revenues, including the Marketing Plan shall be presented to the County Commission as annual recommendations of the TDC, but in no case, shall the total of all budget allocations exceed 100 percent of the annual estimated revenue budget.

It is the intent of the County Commission that excess funds accumulated annually in the Fund Balance may be used in non-budgeted tourism promotion situations, such as following natural disasters, emergencies, or other unanticipated events, subject to the approval of the County Commission.

Staff assistance to the TDC shall be provided by Leon County employees in the Department of Tourism Development under the direction of the County Administrator or his designee, on behalf of the Board of County Commissioners. ~~The director of this department shall report to the County Administrator through the Deputy County Administrator. The operational flow of the TDC is presented below:~~



In order for the TDC to have best possible information to serve as an advisory council to the County Commission, tourism development staff will provide at least quarterly reports to the TDC on its activities. In addition, the contractors providing services for marketing research, advertising and public relations/promotions will also make similar reports. Periodic issues relating to the tourism industry will be presented and discussed as desired or necessary.

The TDC will recommend expenditure of available tourist development tax dollars in the following categories:

Advertising

Advertising is an important component in the TDC's Marketing Plan. An advertising agency or agencies may be retained by the County after a thorough search of appropriate firms is conducted. The agency will work with staff and the TDC's advertising committee and be responsible for developing an image of the County that will be uniformly projected in all the visitor related advertising including TV, radio, print, internet, etc.

The agency, as directed and coordinated by staff, will be responsible for the following tasks:

1. Create, produce and place advertising messages that increase awareness of the County as a destination for business, convention, sports, film, leisure travel and other niche markets once identified.
2. Develop a media plan that identifies the optimum utilization of available advertising dollars to both leisure and various trade markets.
3. Develop cooperative advertising programs with hotels, airlines, attractions and other industry stakeholders.
4. Maximize the reach and effectiveness of www.visittallahassee.com and any other Web sites that may be utilized by the County for tourism promotion.
5. Provide support in the development and production of targeted collateral materials such as the Visitor Guide.
6. Other tasks as assigned.

Public Relations/Promotions

A public relations firm may be retained by the County to perform the following functions:

1. Develop a public relations strategy consistent with the goals of the Marketing Plan for Tourist Development.
2. Develop and coordinate promotions to support advertising efforts.
3. Develop and implement publicity strategies for key markets and targeted media.
4. Design and implement strategies to communicate with local citizens the achievements and goals of the TDC.
5. Develop and coordinate strategies to support advertising and publicity efforts.
6. Other tasks as assigned.

Research and Analysis

Research will help provide a clear understanding of who is the County's core customer and identify the size and scope of certain target markets to help to refine the creative message intended to be conveyed. The research firm of record will seek to generate information from visitors and potential visitors which can be utilized in developing marketing strategies. The information will be gathered by interviews with visitors at hotels, airports, attractions and other businesses frequented by tourists, business conferences and conventions, and special events. Interviews may also be conducted with visitors in key target cities and via the Internet to determine their perceptions of Tallahassee as a destination for convention, vacation, business, etc. Questions will be asked and research analyzed on items such as length of stay, money spent, demographic considerations and interest in specific activities, etc. Research and analysis will be utilized to help establish benchmarks from which to measure the TDC's success with advertising, promotion and direct sales strategies. Research will provide the necessary information to make course corrections in marketing strategy.

Direct Sales

Direct sales shall comprise a very important component of the Marketing Plan. It is vital to effectively mesh the direct sales efforts with the advertising and public relations strategies in order to be successful in winning leisure, sports and convention and conference business. Direct sales involves a host of activities directed at conference planners, travel agents, tour operators,

consumers, film producers, sports promoters and others as identified including attending related trade and consumer shows, conducting sales missions, direct mail and email, and joining and becoming active in trade associations. It also involves doing a good job of servicing these groups when they come to Leon County. The advertising and public relations agencies will be supportive and ensure printed materials, ads, and publicity are cohesive and effectively communicate the tourism related messages of the TDC and County.

Convention and Visitor Services

An essential ingredient in marketing conventions to prospects is the quality of services rendered. Details must be efficiently handled to make a convention a success, such as: hotel rooms, air and ground transportation, support services, catering, etc. A welcoming and informative visitor services program is also important in making all guests feel that the County is a special destination and one worth returning to on a regular basis.

Special Events

The Marketing Plan shall also recognize the importance of special events in drawing visitors to the destination, especially in shoulder months. The TDC will recommend a grant program to assist groups and organizations in marketing new and existing events that are proven or have the potential to draw overnight visitation to the County.

Administration

The County will hire professional staff as necessary to handle administrative matters and to carry out its policies. The responsibilities of the director shall include but not be limited to the following:

1. Ensure all programs and activities comply with state and federal statutes and local ordinances.
2. Direct, coordinate and monitor activities of all professional staff and tourism related firms or vendors under contract with the County.
3. Develop, direct, coordinate and monitor the annual Marketing Plan as recommended by the TDC and approved by the County Commission.
4. Direct, coordinate and monitor the marketing grant program as approved by the TDC.

5. Coordinate and act as liaison to all local and regional stakeholders involved with tourist related development including the Chambers of Commerce, universities, arts groups, state and local tourist agencies, hotels, attractions and restaurant associations, etc. Also work with local, state and regional media to effectively communicate TDC and County programs to the public and to convey the importance of increased visitor business to the local economy.
6. All other duties as assigned.

Cultural Grant Programs

Commencing October 1, 2014, one cent of the tourist development tax may be allocated to support the cultural grant program, the capital needs matching grants for arts and cultural facilities program, and components of the Capital Area Cultural Plan that support economic development through tourism and related marketing.

In addition, for five years commencing October 1, 2014, the County may dedicate an additional ¼ cent of the tourist development tax to support the cultural grant program, the capital needs matching grants for arts and cultural facilities program, and components of the Capital Area Cultural Plan that support economic development through tourism and related marketing. Monies accrued from the ¼ cent tourist development tax during Fiscal Year 2015 shall be held in arrears by the County and distributed to the Council on Culture and Arts (COCA) in each subsequent fiscal year.

The funds described above shall be utilized by COCA for the support of the cultural grant program, the capital needs matching grants for arts and cultural facilities program, and implementation of components of the Capital Area Cultural Plan, provided such projects, programs and expenses associated therewith are consistent with the uses authorized in section 125.0104, Florida Statutes. The TDC shall make recommendations to the County Commission on appropriate requirements for the capital needs matching grants for arts and cultural facilities program, if any. Commencing October 1, 2019, the ¼ cent tourist development tax described in the second subparagraph above shall be reallocated to the Tourism Development Division to

fund expenditures consistent with those authorized uses set forth in section 125.0104, Florida Statutes.

Summary

The goal of the Tourist Development Council is to be a respected and trusted advisory council to the County Commission on matters relating to the expenditure of tourist development tax proceeds. It is the intention of the TDC to maximize the involvement and coordination among local stakeholders for the overall achievement of our community visitor goals. The TDC will work closely with staff and the contractors to develop and recommend the best possible annual Marketing Plan and budget with the understanding that maximizing the amount of tourist development tax dollars available for marketing is a vital consideration.

The County Commission shall adopt, upon recommendation of the TDC, a tourism vision statement and a tourism mission statement that will provide additional guidance for all TDC recommendations.