

ATLANTIC CITY
TOURISM ADVISORY COMMISSION

MEETING MINUTES

Date: Tuesday, March 26, 2013
Time: 5:00 p.m.
Location: 15 S. Pennsylvania Avenue
Atlantic City, NJ 08401

PRESIDING: Sarah Beth Johnson, Vice-Chair

PRESENT: Keturah Jackson, Joseph Kelly, Joseph Maher,
Cortez Martin, Keith Mills, Ali Reynolds

ABSENT: William Cheatham, David Greenblatt

CRDA STAFF: Susan Thompson, Chris Filicello

OPENING STATEMENT

The meeting of the Atlantic City Tourism Advisory Commission was called to order at 5:00pm. The Chair requested a motion to approve the minutes of February 26, 2013. Mr. Martin made a motion to approve the minutes with a second from Mr. Kelly. Minutes were approved by unanimous vote of the Commission.

Ms. Thompson explained the new format of the agenda based on discussions at the last meeting.

CLEAN & SAFE AGENDA

Technology Upgrades – Susan Thompson

Ms. Thompson explained the CRDA has provided a \$3.5 million grant for technology upgrades to the public safety systems.

- An assessment has been completed by the Department of Justice and the report is being reviewed by the Public Safety Department. From the report, a project manager will be hired as an outside consultant to facilitate the installation of the upgrades.
- Cordero Technology – additional technology would be the next level once the CRDA grant has been utilized.
- Project Manager to be hired in May 2013 by City of Atlantic City

- Mr. Maher – requested criteria to hire project manager
- Ms. Thompson – Request for Qualifications to determine expertise will be followed by Request for Proposals
- Mr. Kelly – given the size and cost of the East Orange system, would the \$3.5 million cover that cost of implementation in Atlantic City since it is smaller than Atlantic City
- Ms. Thompson stated that will be determined by the project manager once hired.
- Mr. Kelly suggested checks and balances once implemented and asked who selects the project manager. Ms. Thompson stated the Authority would since it is funding the project.
- Mr. Mills asked if the project manager would be paid from the grant to which Ms. Thompson responded in the affirmative.
- Mr. Lamaine inquired if the task force led by Commander Gilbert be consulted on the project. Ms. Thompson stated that technology is not necessarily the expertise of law enforcement.

Code Enforcement – Susan Thompson

- The Authority approved a contract with the city to provide on outside consultant for additional code enforcement services specifically in the Tourism District. The \$130,000 grant is not executed yet.
- The commissioners discussed the length and purpose of the grant. Ms. Thompson stated the consultant would be on the street issuing citations and the grant was an annual amount.
- Ms. Thompson explained how the staff of the Authority canvassed the entire Tourism District using the checklist provided by Director Cox to determine existing violations. Over 230 violations were identified and categorized by safety and negative impact. This information will be provided to the city and the consultant to follow up.
- Mr. Martin inquired how long it has been since the study was conducted to which Ms. Thompson stated approximately 4 months.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AGENDA

CRDA Land Ownership – Keith Mills/Susan Thompson

- Mr. Mills indicated through an outlined map which properties are owned by CRDA.
- Ms. Thompson reviewed the taxes paid by businesses leasing CRDA property.
- Mr. Mills stated these payments are negotiated at less than the tax rate.
- Additional publicly-owned properties were discussed related to possible housing development, land swap and negotiations with the housing authority.
- Ms. Thompson stated the total land of Atlantic City is 10,000 acres and CRDA owns 54 acres. Within the 54 acres, Sheraton, The Walk and Renaissance Plaza pay over \$2 million in taxes with a shortfall of \$1 million to the city for those properties.

- An Economic Impact Statement has been approved to review the catalog of CRDA projects within the city and their overall impact.
- Ms. Johnson inquired to the annual budget of the city to which Mr. Mills stated he could find out.
- Ms. Mollineaux inquired how the Authority would get this message out because the residents are saying CRDA has done nothing for the city.
- Ms. Thompson stated once the analysis was complete, it will be posted on the website and possible community meetings could be planned.
- Ms. Mollineaux suggested a short version of the analysis.
- Ms. Thompson requested Mr. Mills discuss possible briefings with city leadership to bring them up to speed. Mr. Mills he did not think there was that much doubt to the CRDA accomplishments but the concern is the lack of input. Mr. Mills stated the issue is the lack of input to what happens in the Tourism District.
- Mr. Kelly stated investment of business development in the market does not happen without incentives.
- Mr. Kelly further stated the community needs to be continually educated on business development.
- Ms. Mollineaux stated CRDA needs to market itself.
- Mr. Lamaine inquired to the % of tax delinquency to which Mr. Mills stated 99% are collected.
- Mr. Lamaine inquired what happens to the properties that do not respond to code violations. Mr. Mills explained the process with the end result being possible foreclosure. Mr. Lamaine asked what happens to the people that are living in these units when they are condemned. Mr. Mills said there had been a reluctance to condemn in the past because they did not want to deal with relocating residents.
- Mr. Ricci inquired what teeth code enforcement had to which Mr. Mills stated elimination of income or closing the business/property.
- The commissioners and attendees continued to debate the pros and cons of the code enforcement process.
- Mr. Ireland stated aggressive enforcement of code enforcement is the only way the current situation is resolved.
- Ms Thompson asked who was in charge of emergency housing. Mr. Mills stated the American Red Cross handles this for the city. The city covers the cost up to 30 days which adds up quick when you have multiple families in need.
- Mr. Martin stated that someone needs to be held accountable and the city needs to start chipping away at the problem one property at a time.
- Mr. Lamaine stated the issues with economic development will not progress until the clean & safe issues with code enforcement are addressed.
- Ms. Thompson suggested a sub-committee of the Commission to address the code enforcement issues. We would need to determine where to direct the committee's recommendations. Mr. Ricci, Mr. Lamaine and Mr. Bulthius will serve on the committee.

MARKETING AND PROMOTION AGENDA

Tourism District Video Event – Joe Kelly

- Mr. Kelly stated he would continue to pursue with the President of the MBCA. The video will be shown at the event on April 9 which will unveil the spring campaign for the ACA.

EDUCATION & WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AGENDA

ACCC Workforce Development Center – Susan Thompson

- Ms. Thompson will invite a representative from the center to address the Commission in May. The center focuses on individuals interested in changing careers.

GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

Riaz Rajput - Suggested welcoming advertisement for visitors exiting expressway

- Cab companies – vehicles need to have uniform appearance
- Roads of tourism district are in terrible state of neglect– need to be addressed
 - Ms. Thompson stated CRDA does not have authority of the roads
 - Mr. Ireland stated the issue needs to be addressed at a council meeting
 - Mr. Maher – suggest mill & pave and forget curbs for now
 - Mr. Mills stated this is how the city has been addressing the issue lately
 - Mr. Lamaine inquired about Pacific Avenue mill & pave to which Ms. Thompson responded it was in design phase now with tentative start date in October 2013

Dennis Ricci – Why hasn't the city accepted Connecticut Avenue? Flooding is an issue more after the work than before.

- Mr. Mills was not certain of the issue

Ms. Wells - Inquired to the advertising of the Commission meetings to which Ms. Thompson stated the annual schedule is advertised

Mr. Lamaine – Kudos to marketing for Miss America promotions

Ms. Mollineaux - plaque for Fannie Lou is still missing – suggest CRDA work with city planning to get it replaced

- Mr. Mills described the missing plaque – stated all the plaques were removed during rebranding of the Convention Center
- Ms. Thompson will check with Mr. Guardian and get back to Ms. Mollineaux.

Hearing no further business or public comment, the Chair requested a motion to adjourn. A motion was made by Mr. Mills and seconded by Mr. Kelly. Motion was approved by unanimous vote of the commissioners.