

ATLANTIC CITY
TOURISM ADVISORY COMMISSION

MINUTES OF THE
TOURISM ADVISORY COMMISSION

Date: Tuesday, October 9, 2012
Time: 5:00 p.m.
Location: 15 S. Pennsylvania Avenue
Atlantic City, NJ 08401

PRESIDING: David Greenblatt, Chair

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

ABSENT: Sarah Beth Johnson, Joseph Maher

CRDA STAFF: Susan Thompson, Don Guardian, Heather Walls

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 August 28, 2012. Mr. Cortez made a motion to approve the minutes with a second from Mr. Cheatham. Minutes were approved by unanimous vote of the Commission.

SID Budget Presentation – Mr. Don Guardian

Mr. Don Guardian presented the Special Improvement District (SID) Budget broken down by each department within SID.

Ms. Keturah Jackson inquired if flowers would continue to be planted on MLK Blvd to which Mr. Guardian replied in the affirmative. Mr. Guardian added they have had irrigation issues due to vandalism.

Mr. Cortez Martin inquired how the SID assessment amount is determined. Mr. Guardian stated it is based on budget needs and assessed value of property. Ms. Thompson stated the rate has not changed in four years.

Mr. Martin recommended SID work with city to clean beach from berm to the ocean. Mr. Guardian stated SID could do that at very little additional cost to SID. Ms. Thompson added the SID services in the Tourism District are in addition to the services provided by the city to ALL tax payers.

Mr. Mills inquired if Clock Tower Park was maintained by SID to which Mr. Guardian responded in the affirmative. Mr. Mills confirmed it is owned by the city. Mr. Guardian stated SID would address the lights out at said park.

Mr. Mills inquired to the CRDA subsidy. Mr. Guardian stated the subsidy would be \$1.5 million to keep the SID assessment at the same level.

Mr. Martin inquired if it was more cost effective to own the warehouse building rather than lease it but Mr. Guardian stated it was not at this time.

Mr. Greenblatt inquired if a monorail has ever been considered. Mr. Guardian stated it was not feasible at this time. Ms. Thompson added the 2007 recommendations from a transportation study are still an option for the city. AECOM conducted the study and could be invited to attend a TAC meeting to familiarize the commission with the study. Mr. Martin inquired if it was a regional plan or only Atlantic City. Ms. Thompson stated it was regional with the focus being Atlantic City.

Mr. Greenblatt mentioned the area near the tunnel is not well-maintained. Mr. Guardian stated it was maintained by SJTA not SID. SID does spray the area for weeds because SJTA does not have licensed individuals for pesticides.

Mr. Kelly inquired to the relationship between SID and Public Works. If SID took on the public works responsibilities on the beach, would that free up their responsibilities and give them more resources for the neighborhoods? Mr. Guardian stated it would not be a significant increase in cost and added SID often helps the city with the cleaning responsibilities.

Mr. Mills would like to discuss the possibility of CRDA aid with the Uptown Park Community Garden. The city put it out to bid but all the bids were more than the city is able to pay. Mr. Guardian stated SID cannot bid on the project but could do it as a community service. Ms. Thompson added that we need to be cognizant of the fact that SID assessments are paid by the businesses in the Tourism District for additional services. Businesses paying the SID assessment could question work being done outside of its jurisdiction.

Mr. Martin inquired if the public rest rooms stay open for the Chicken Bone Beach concerts to which Mr. Guardian responded in the affirmative.

Mr. Greenblatt inquired if the stormwater drains could be addressed to make them more attractive and suggested something built over them. Mr. Greenblatt also suggested the lifeguard stands be upgraded. The Commissioners additionally discussed various aspects of the beach that could be improved.

Mr. Greenblatt inquired to the maintenance of the former Ruffu Ford property. Mr. Guardian stated it is out of the Tourism District and needs to be addressed by the property owner.

Mr. Kelly inquired if leasing the cleaning equipment had been considered and Mr. Guardian stated there is more benefit to SID in owning the equipment.

Mr. Martin inquired if the staff training budget needs to be increased with the increased number of employees. Mr. Guardian stated that has been included in previous line items.

Mr. Cheatham inquired what the percent of staff are Atlantic City residents. Mr. Guardian stated 78% and added qualified Atlantic City residents are always hired over non-residents.

Ms. Jackson inquired about the poles that will be installed for the cameras. Mr. Guardian stated the City Engineer determined the footings for the poles would not hold the poles so new footings need to be installed. The specifications are being prepared by the City Engineer and will be bid out.

Mr. Cheatham inquired about the property maintenance at the property on MLK Blvd and Atlantic. Mr. Guardian stated the city has cited the owner.

Ms. Jackson inquired when the next hires would be to which Mr. Guardian replied in the spring and the notices are sent out to city organizations and government before it is advertised in the Press.

Ms. Reynolds stated the Ambassadors have been increased on Pacific and Atlantic Avenue and their conduct is improving.

Plaque for Past Commissioners

The commissioners discussed a resolution versus a plaque. Mr. Kelly suggested a resolution due to the transient nature of some of the positions. The most important thing is to recognize them. Ms. Thompson stated two separate resolutions could be prepared for next month to present at next meeting.

Member Comments

Mr. Mills inquired to the status of a letter regarding a joint initiative to the city. Ms. Thompson stated it was sent to the Executive Director and to City Council and Mayor.

Ms. Reynolds asked the Commissioners to look out for a lot of changes in the city over the next few months and pay attention to their PACE newsletter.

Mr. Martin mentioned that Mr. Cheatham sent a letter to TRUMP regarding property maintenance of their property and he received a response stating they would take care of the area in question. The letter from TRUMP is included in your packets.

There being no public comment, the Chair requested a motion to adjourn. A motion was made by Mr. Kelly and seconded by Ms. Reynolds. Motion was approved by unanimous vote of the committee.

Meeting adjourned at 7:05pm.