

PROCEEDINGS
TOURISM DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
FRIDAY, February 11, 2022

The meeting was called to order by Chair Graskey at 12:10 pm in Government Center 270.

1. Roll Call

Members Present: Lindsey Graskey (chair), Keith Kern, Bruce Barron, JoAnn Jardine, Pattie Soliday

City Staff Present: Mayor Paine, Chief of Staff Scherf, Contract Specialist Darwin (online), Deputy Clerk Becken, Assistant Clerk Rowell (online)

Members of Public: Taylor Pederson, Briana Fianst, Jenny Van Sickle (online), Shelly Nelson (online)

2. Approve Minutes from 2/4/2022

Motion by Councilor Kern, seconded by Commissioner Jardine and carried.

3. Commission status & voting process

Chair Graskey asked the mayor to explain how the commission stands now that they are a group of 5 and how voting and quorum must be handled. Mayor Paine shared multiple interpretations of possible applicable ordinances and statute. With 1 spot open on the commission, Mayor Paine offered to appoint someone if the group wanted, but did not want to appoint someone who didn't have experience with the current workings of the group. Mayor Paine offered to appoint himself—which has been done with other committees and commissions like this one—and serve until April when new appointments are to be added. Commissioner Jardine favored the idea as the mayor has been engaged in all the meetings. Councilor Kern disagreed as he voiced appreciation for the mayor's engagement and facilitation and insight, but thought the independent decision making was important. Discussion continued on lack of clarity and mayor agreed to look further and talk to city attorney.

Discussion continued about commissioner legal expectations and protections. Mayor Paine shared he thought the commission, as all were appointed and doing the business of the city, were under the umbrella of the city in situations involving the commission. He agreed to talk to the city attorney and schedule a time for him to be present to answer commissioners' questions and give written opinions.

Commissioner Soliday motioned for commissioner discussions with the public to go through Chair Graskey first to avoid possibility of going outside of open meeting laws. Chair Graskey seconded. In discussion Councilor Kern and Mayor Paine reflected that it was not an enforceable ask to limit the discussions of citizens, and that the open meeting law did what the motion was asking, so was not needed. Commissioner Soliday retracted her motion.

4. Discussion on current balance of the TDF fund

Councilor Kern shared details from the TDF meeting earlier this week. Current balance is roughly \$125,000 that can be spent. Applications are limited right now, but anticipated to increase as weather warms up, as has been TDF application trend. Commissioner Soliday asked how the TDF advertises the availability of grants. Commissioner Jardine said through the Chamber website and word of mouth. Commissioner Soliday asked if the TDF could do more to get the word out. Councilor Van Sickle added that the parks and rec department grant also advertises the TDF funds. Councilor Kern said he would bring that to the next TDF meeting.

Commissioner Soliday brought up the expired agreement between the city and the Chamber, asking why the fund balance of the TDF—outlined in the agreement—was not being turned over to the new commission as she read in the contract. The mayor made the distinction between ‘terminate’ and ‘expire’ and how it has been interpreted by finance. Commissioner Soliday asked if that could be something the city attorney could clarify. The mayor added it to the list for the city attorney. Questions about that extension issued by council for use of grant funding from 2020 were brought up, and will be clarified to understand when certain money in the TDF needs to be spent.

5. Review final draft of TDC grant application

Commissioner Soliday had minor fixes to the application—renumbering pages and removing highlights. Councilor Kern motioned to approve the amended grant application and hold the finished product for release at a later date. Commissioner Soliday seconded. Discussion—Councilor Kern would like to see the TDF grant program be used until it has exhausted its resources before the new grant option is made available to avoid confusion. Commissioner Jardine agreed releasing the new grant application will be better when there aren’t two—then people won’t have to decide which is best. Motion carried.

6. Compare and contrast currently released marketing RFPs

Chair Graskey shared information from her communication with the city attorney as far as what would be required to go into a closed session. Mayor Paine noted that reasons the committee originally noted may not have fit the criteria, but in deeper conversation noted the proposals include noted ‘confidential’ content and the discussion would include deliberating use of public funds. Shelly Nelson (online) voiced objection to going into a closed session at the current meeting as it was not agendaized in that way. Chair Graskey agreed and confirmed that was not the intent of the commission. Councilor Kern motioned to hold this item in committee. Commissioner Barron seconded, carried.

Mayor Paine shared new information on the voting question from item 1, and noted the group can make decisions through voting with the ‘majority of those currently present’—including via zoom, clearing up earlier questions.

7. Discuss dates for interviews for marketing RFP proposals

Councilor Kern motioned for items 7 & 8 to be reversed. Seconded by Commissioner Soliday, carried. Councilor Kern noted Fridays can’t work for him any longer. Group agreed for the proposed closed meeting for discussing proposals to be Thursday, February 17 at 3:00. Commissioners were also asked by Chair Graskey to send her their availability through April, so future meetings could be set.

8. Future meetings and alternative options

Commissioner Barron motioned to hold setting interview dates in committee until Thursday’s meeting. Second by Councilor Kern, carried. Commissioners will bring their calendars in order to set a good date for interviews along with setting alternates if needed. Mayor noted the closed session can only be used for the noted sensitive information, and the commission will have to come out of the anticipated closed session to set the dates.

9. Business by Commissioners

None at the time.

10. Adjournment

Adjourned at 1:15 by Chair Graskey.

Respectfully submitted by Stephanie Becken, Deputy City Clerk