

## **ACCOMMODATIONS TAX ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

11:00 a.m., Wednesday, October 7, 2009

The regular quarterly meeting of the Accommodations Tax Advisory Committee was held at 11:00 a.m. on Wednesday, October 7, 2009 in Council Chambers of City Hall, 1207 Palm Boulevard, Isle of Palms, South Carolina. Attending the meeting were Committee members Burgis, Ferencz, Nelson and Chairman Ward, City Administrator Tucker, Assistant to the Administrator Dziuban and City Clerk Copeland. Despite the excused absences of Committee members Hollingsworth, Linville and Miller, there was a quorum present to conduct business.

### **2. Approval of Previous Meeting's Minutes**

**MOTION:** Committee member Burgis moved to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of August 5, 2009 as submitted; Ms. Ferencz seconded and the motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

### **3. Citizens' Comments**

Carla Pope, Operations Manager for Morgan Creek Grill, presented a program to the Committee intended to boost business on the island in the off-season via a radio promotion that would sell "Palm Bucks" that would purchase items on the island at a discounted rate. For example, a purchase of twenty-five dollars (\$25.00) in "Palm Bucks" could be redeemed on the island for a dinner valued at fifty dollars (\$50.00) with one (1) of the participating restaurants. Ms. Pope reported that she had been using this sales technique through Clear Channel Broadcasting with great results; the promotion would bring island residents into island businesses, but also attract residents from other parts of the tri-county area. She suggested that the promotion run from November 1, 2009 through February 28, 2010 and that the funds being sought would be to run the promotion on one (1) of Clear Channel's radio stations.

**MOTION:** Ms. Ferencz moved to hold a Special Meeting at 11 a.m. Monday, October 12, 2009; Mr. Nelson seconded and the motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

If the promotion were to begin November 1, it was imperative that this Committee take an action because the approval of funds would also have to be endorsed by the Ways and Means Committee and City Council.

### **5. Old Business – None**

### **6. New Business**

#### **A. \$15,000 Request for Spoleto Festival USA – 2010 Season**

Stephenie Steele represented Spoleto Festival USA to make the annual request for the arts event from the City; she noted that, although the event program remains a well-guarded secret, there would be dance and orchestral programs suitable for the entire family that would be suitable for the City's support. She also commented on the fact that state and county funds for Spoleto had been deeply cut and corporate sponsors were reducing their backing as well.

**MOTION: Mr. Nelson moved to approve support of a Spoleto USA event for the 2010 season in the amount of \$15,000; Mr. Burgis seconded.**

Mrs. Ferencz asked if she understood that the City would be providing support for an unknown event at this time; Ms. Steele confirmed that to be true. Mrs. Ferencz asked what percent of the cost of the event the City's funds would cover; Ms. Steele explained that, although the City's sponsorship is attributed to one (1) event, all of the money goes into one (1) pool for the festival as a whole. Ms. Steele further explained that sponsorship is primarily a vehicle of promotion for the sponsors – the Isle of Palms will be included in all general Spoleto emails, as well as the brochures and programs. Historically, all of the island's accommodations have been booked during the festival; many of the performers prefer to stay on the island. Ms. Steele noted that there are typically one hundred fifty thousand (150,000) hits to the Spoleto website and the City of Isle of Palms would be listed as a sponsor from the beginning. Ms. Steele also indicated that she works closely with Administrator Tucker each year to select the most suitable event for the City to support.

When asked specifically about the state cuts to Spoleto by Chairman Ward, Ms. Steele said the reduction had been thirty percent (30%), and Charleston County's available sponsorship funding had been reduced from one and a half million dollars (\$1.5 million) to a portion of one hundred fifty thousand dollars (\$150,000).

Chairman Ward stated that he could not support a sponsorship of fifteen thousand dollars (\$15,000) when the Committee was operating on fund balance; he noted that the 2009 Spoleto request had been for twenty thousand dollars (\$20,000), but fifteen thousand dollars (\$15,000) was approved.

**Amendment: Mrs. Ferencz moved to reduce the amount of support for Spoleto 2010 to \$7,500; Mr. Burgis seconded and the amendment PASSED on a vote of 3 to 1 with Mr. Nelson casting the "nay" vote.**

**Call for the Question: The amended motion PASSED on a vote of 3 to 1 with Mr. Nelson casting the dissenting vote.**

**B. \$1,000 Request from The Fort Sumter-Fort Moultrie Historical Trust**

There was no one present from the Trust to present their program; the group will be contacted and the topic will be added to the agenda for the Special Meeting of October 12.

**C. \$25,000 Request for July 4<sup>th</sup> Fireworks**

Treasurer Suggs noted that the expenditure for the July 4<sup>th</sup> fireworks had been included in the FY 10 budget; therefore, this did not need to come before the Committee for approval.

**4. Quarterly Financial Statement – Treasurer Suggs**

Treasurer Suggs pointed out initially that no revenues, other than a very small amount of interest, reflective of the FY 10 fiscal year have been received. Expenditures for the first quarter were reviewed also. On page 7 of the “Detailed Expense Statement,” the Treasurer indicated that the jet ski purchase for FY 2010 had been approximately eight hundred fifty dollars (\$850.00) over the budgeted amount.

**MOTION: Mr. Burgis moved to approve the over-budget amount of \$847.78 for the jet ski purchase; Mr. Nelson seconded and the motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**MOTION: Mr. Burgis moved to accept the quarterly financial statement as presented; Mrs. Ferencz seconded and the motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**7. Miscellaneous Business**

**Special Meeting: 11:00 a.m., Monday, October 12, 2009.**

**Next Regular Meeting: 11 a.m., Wednesday, January 6, 2010.**

**8. Adjourn**

**MOTION: With no further business to come before the Committee, Mr. Nelson moved to adjourn at 12:13 p.m.; Mrs. Ferencz seconded and the motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**