

ACCOMMODATIONS TAX ADVISORY COMMITTEE

July 2, 2008

The regular meeting of the Accommodations Tax Advisory Committee was held at 11:00 a.m. on Wednesday, July 2, 2008 in Council Chambers of City Hall, 1207 Palm Boulevard, Isle of Palms, South Carolina. Attending the meeting were Chairwoman Tucker, Committee members Hollingsworth, Linville, Miller, Nelson and Ward, City Administrator Tucker, Treasurer Suggs and Assistant to the Administrator Dziuban.

1. Since Chairwoman Tucker arrived a few minutes late, Mr. Linville called the meeting to order and acknowledged that the press and the public had been duly notified in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act.

2. Approval of Previous Meeting's Minutes

MOTION: Mr. Ward moved to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of May 7, 2008 as submitted; Ms. Hollingsworth seconded and the motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

3. **Citizens' Comments** - None

4. Monthly Financial Statement – Treasurer Suggs

Treasurer Suggs presented the May 2008 Financial Statement. She reported that there was approximately \$890,000 in the bank with the bulk of funds in the Local Government Investment Pool. The only entry to revenue was interest earned in May. The Treasurer then reviewed expenses paid since the last meeting; the largest expense was twenty thousand dollars (\$20,000) for replacement of the gym ceiling. Treasurer Suggs reported that, when the final accounting for the year was completed, she anticipated a smaller deficit than the \$87,766 currently indicated because some of the budgeted expenses did not occur or were less than budgeted. The schedule entitled "Schedule of Municipal Tax Collections, January – May" presented the comparison of collections in 2008 versus 2007 and showed an increase of six percent (6%).

5. Old Business

Update on Visitor's E-newsletter

Assistant Dziuban reported that the task was nearly complete and that a promotional newsletter would go out to visitors to the island by the end of the week. She noted that data entry of visitors' emails had been completed, but she did report that some of our visitors had chosen not to share their email addresses with the City and that some had clearly indicated that did not want to receive emails from the City. When the E-newsletter goes out at the end of the week, the names of the Committee members will

be included; Assistant Dziuban commented that the E-newsletter was very friendly and welcoming to our visitors, as well as informational.

Administrator Tucker remarked that the staff would welcome feedback from the Committee once they have received the first E-newsletter.

In the way of information for the Committee, Administrator Tucker reported that a resident had commented at the last City Council meeting of two (2) concerns she had relative to the May ATAX meeting. Her first concern was regarding the Committee's change in its meeting frequency; she wanted to know what laws governed the meeting frequency and what approvals did the Committee need from City Council to change its meeting schedule. There were also questions posed regarding the performance of "You're A Good Man, Charlie Brown." Administrator Tucker stated that City Council had requested that the staff research the answers to those questions and that Mr. Schlitt of The Company Company be present at the Ways and Means Committee meeting of July 15, 2008 to give a full accounting of the show's revenues and expenses. Administrator Tucker explained her perception of Council's concerns as a difference between what the City Council approved for the performance and what was actually done. She related that she had gathered from information exchanged that there was concern that there had not been enough effort made for there to be a performance date and promotion of that performance in such a way that the mission of the ATAX money for return on investment – get a cultural event out there that our visitors and residents to attend - that those efforts had not been made as much as had been represented in the application.

When asked to be more specific about the issues on the "Charlie Brown" performance, Administrator Tucker commented that there had been a discrepancy between the performance date indicated on the application and the actual performance date. She added that expected Mr. Schlitt to explain the difference as one where, by the time the request went through the full approval process to receive authorization and when he was able to reserve the space, the original date was not available and he was forced to make an "on the spot" decision. There appeared to be the feeling among some members of Council that the change in date did not afford the strongest possibility of maximum attendance since one (1) performance was in the middle of the afternoon – a time that would not encourage attendance on a sunny afternoon in a beach community. Another concern had been that some did not feel that enough promotion had been done to encourage attendance. Basically the problems were the difference between what was proposed to acquire the funding and what actually occurred.

Discussion followed about the issues presented by the Administrator and ways to satisfy the concerns of City Council members. Administrator Tucker did state that people seeking ATAX funds need to understand that, if there is going to be a deviation between

the details included in the request and those of the actual event, they must follow the appropriate protocol to approve the change.

On the subject of the meeting frequency, Treasurer Suggs has spoken with the Tourism Oversight Committee and learned that there are no state requirements concerning the number or frequency of ATAX meetings. Research has not been completed into the City's ordinances. The City will send the inquirer a letter with the findings on both of her concerns once all of the data has been gathered.

6. New Business - None

7. Miscellaneous

Fireworks are scheduled for Friday, July 4th between 9:15 p.m. and 9:30 p.m.

8. Adjourn

MOTION: Mr. Ward moved to adjourn the meeting at 11:40 a.m.; Mr. Linville seconded and the motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Respectfully submitted:

Marie Copeland
City Clerk