

**AMELIA**  **ISLAND**  
**TOURIST DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL**

Board Meeting  
Planning Workshop  
Monday July 23, 2018  
8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.  
Omni Conference Center – Racquet Park  
Fernandina Beach, FL 32034

Present: David Caples, Barbara Halverstadt, Bob Hartman, Danny Leeper, Jim McManemon, Chip Ross, George Sheffield, Roy Smith, Donald Stamets  
Absent: Jack Healan  
Staff: Gil Langley, Kate Harris, Susan Hurley, Jaime Fallon, Kaitlin Harris (Hayworth)

**I. Call to Order**

Meeting was called to order by Danny Leeper at 8:40am

**II. Public Input: Items not on the agenda**

No public input.

**III. Welcome**

**Gil Langley**

In welcoming everyone to the meeting, Mr. Langley reminded everyone that this is the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the TDC and the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the CVB. Mr. Langley introduced his staff and informed the board that Melanie Crawford has resigned from her position as office administrator. He shared the Strategic plan created in 1988 that has been successful, but we are looking at changes in all aspects of our industry and our new strategic plan should reflect these changes. We need to identify where we are going and how we plan to get there.

Mr. Langley introduced Will Seccombe who will be the planning workshop facilitator.

**IV. Opening Comments**

**Will Seccombe**

Mr. Seccombe asked each board member to share their expectations for today's meeting. Mr. Leeper thanked everyone and encouraged them to be open to considering how to continue our roadmap of success. Some key topics discussed were:

- What is good for the citizens who live here? What does it cost? Who pays, and who will it negatively impact?

- Continue to look for future consistency, but also look at ways to expand the increase and growth into the slower months.
- Be smart with future growth, know where our tipping point is.
- What does growth look like, where do we put our funds, how to expand the slower season.
- Importance of keeping a high-quality brand. Investigate new target markets. Balance working with the city and county.
- Tourism is important, and we need to blend needs of the community with the needs of tourists.
- Positive things are happening. We need to keep exploring new ideas to tell the Amelia Island story.

Mr. Secombe thanked everyone and pointed out there are three things that are also important for the discussion today: where tourism has been, where tourism is today and what will tourism be in the future.

He introduced Chris Thompson, President and CEO of Brand USA.

## V. **Opening Morning Speaker:**

**Chris Thompson**

We are in hyper-competitive global marketplace. Our competition is not limited to other places with a beach down I-95, it's with the Seychelles, the Caribbean, the whole world.

Three pillars of destination storytelling: Local DMOs - State DMOs - Brand USA, which does for the country what we do for this community. Need to work throughout the travel lifecycle.

Greatest long-term potential for the next 10 years is international. Tremendous opportunity with tourism growth outpacing GDP globally and strong increase in air travel. We have opportunity to build.

Consumers consume content in three main ways; On the go (Facebook, Instagram, Messaging), Leaning in (TripAdvisor, Expedia, Amazon), Leaning Back (Netflix, Hulu, Vimeo - the GoUSA channel fits here.) Brand USA is launching GoUSA TV channel.

Example of using music as core platform to accomplish job #1 is to remind people why they love the US and why they want to visit (as with Elvis Festival.) Tell the story through the rich unique history and artists today and tell it “from mobile to giant screen and everything in between” New IMAX with music focus to follow. Successful National Park IMAX which literally changed minds (81% who saw it said they now considered booking a trip.)

### **What should Amelia Island bear in mind?**

- Is the authentic, genuine, friendly brand promise we make something we can keep?
- How do we as an organization create value in ways only we can?

- Discerning travelers are focusing on whom they meet on the road. Will we stay friendly and welcoming?

## VI. Building Blocks

Gil Langley

- Who's Who – BOCC/TDC.
- Review Mission, Values, and Sustainability.
- Have been striving to keep visitation 650-700,000 per year get more return on dollar.
- 647,000 overnight guests last year but 1,402,900 total. 2/3 visitors to beach are locals or day trippers.
- 1,7964,600 local and resident spending - visitor spending tripled since 2000.
- Tourism has net impact of 47.3 million net revenue to county.
- 6.4M budget this year.
- Generating more revenue with less people - occupancy down, rates and revenue up.
- History of beach spending.

Q & A Session, discussion regarding bed tax collection. In closing this session, Mr. Langley reported that the TDC is audited annually.

## VII. Strategic Insights

Will Seccombe

- What's coming up between now and 2028, a cycle.
- Where do we want to be (in 10 years)?
- Looking back 30 years – we have had great success.
- Success can be your best and worst enemy.
- Important to remember – what is not going to change.
- Recession, hurricanes, wars... things will happen.
- If you know where you want to be, you can get there.
- We trust people we don't know more than we trust marketers.

### **What is it that we, as a community, want to be known for?**

Authentic, genuine, with a quaint downtown area and a warm historic feel. A unique destination with a natural quality throughout the Island. Uncrowded beaches and Southern charm.

To continue to protect our product, be stewards of this place. Don't market what is not there and then people tell the world that it's not that great and don't return.

### **Where do you see opportunity?**

Volume spread Nov-January.

Limits to capacity during busy times.

Baby boomers, millennials, repeat visitors.

JIA has 100 daily flights from 41 destinations.

OVERALL, let's consider the criteria of the visitors we want to enhance what we already have? Travelers who will:

- Come in times of economic downturn/not price-sensitive.
- Stay in off-peak periods during the.
- Spend more.
- Be less likely to cancel.
- Be more likely to come back and share.
- Have limited environmental impact.

## **VIII. Afternoon Speaker**

**Senator Aaron Bean**

Senator Bean briefed us on upcoming issues. He encouraged participation in elections and congratulated the TDC on a strong performance.

## **VIII. Afternoon Session**

**Will Seccombe**

### **What do we need to know about the next 10 years?**

- Things that worked before are not going to work in the future.
- The way we do business, the way we market to people has been transformed.
- There is a crisis of trust.
- Exponential change.
- Big Data makes us rethink traditional marketing.
- Artificial Intelligence- or cognitive learning or marketing automation will impact advertising placement.
- Digital User Interface - now voice search, next major disruption.
- Internet of Things.
- Virtual Reality and Augmented Reality.

### **How do we address these challenges in order to succeed?**

- Talk to travelers one to one with hyper personalization not mass messaging.
- Have a real voice search strategy, 95% of searches are going to be voice.
- Make sure what you put out there is adding real value to customers - the most helpful marketing ecosystems are the ones that are going to win.
- Maintain authenticity.
- Build circles of trust within community.

### **Feedback on value and mission statements:**

- How can we do a better job of illustrating what we do - generating out-of-market revenue that positively impacts visitors and residents?
- Get clear about what are the niches and market segments that we target to accomplish that.
- Need to add 'major' domestic and international markets to Guiding Principles.

**X. AITDC Business**

New bylaws for the CVB were passed out and discussed. Donald Stamets made a motion to approve, seconded by Barbara Halverstadt. All approved.

**XI. Adjournment**

Meeting was adjourned at 3:21 p.m.

Approved 9/26, 2018  
Tourist Development Council of Amelia Island, Florida

By:   
Danny Leeper, Chair

By:   
Attest: Gil Langle, Managing Director