

**Tourism Advisory Committee
Minutes
July 20, 2022**

TAC Attendees: Sue Adler, Melinda Allen, Charlie Brazil, Steven Brenneman, Jason Combs, Dee Ann Geeslin, and Michael Owens

TAC Absences: Vaughnette Goode-Walker, Nancy Maia, Jay Wiendl

City Staff: Rachel Buck and Eddie Grant

Guests: Carson Daley and Michael O'Donovan

Call to order: 8:38AM

Tourism Advisory Committee Agenda July 20, 2022

1. Approval of Minutes from May 18, 2022

J. Combs asked if anyone had any questions or amendments to the minutes. There were no amendments. S. Adler made a motion to approve the minutes. J. Combs seconded the motion. The minutes passed unanimously.

TAC meeting

2. Director's Report: Rachel Buck

• **RHI update: Eddie Grant**

RHI is in the city, and we are working on an office of nightlife to provide services to the city. The group spent an extended weekend two weeks ago gathering info from the city.

E. Grant spent some time going over a short presentation for the TAC members. This process will take 6-12 months. RHI has 3 more visits to Savannah and E. Grant and R. Buck have been in constant contact.

S. Alder asked who RHI is talking to at the current Police Dept. R. Buck said they have met with the whole department of police, fire, and public safety.

M. Owens asked for clarity on the timeline – if implementation was November of 2022. E. Grant said that is their projected timeline. M. Ownes asked if SCAD was in session currently and this timeline is far too aggressive. He added that tourism is not the driver of nighttime economy. He said that SCAD is a large portion of the nighttime economy and with this timeline, RHI won't be able to observe that. E. Grant said that was a good point to bring up to RHI over the next visit.

M. Owens asked how an opportunity could be made for officers to meet and talk with RHI in an opaque way.

S. Adler said the only thing that truly matters is public safety and it should be adjusted when a new police chief comes in.

M. Owens said he thinks this is off to a great start and thinks TAC should continue to provide oversight and suggestions.

- **Bicycle and Segway Ordinance update**

R. Buck said they are still in a 90-day observation phase and will revisit this in August. R. Buck said while watching the tour companies, she has noticed things that she would change in the ordinance such as touring the squares.

S. Adler asked as R. Buck sees things, is she updating the tour companies? R. Buck said no, and no companies have reached out. She said this would be discussed in August after the 90-day observation period.

- **Creeper Van**

R. Buck has submitted a memo to the City Manager to send to Mayor and Aldermen with TAC's recommendation to deny Creeper Van Savannah a Tourism Permit.

- **Tour Service for Hire Ordinance**

R. Buck has had her first meeting Mobility and Parking and Tourism Compliance to discuss anything that has happened in past year that needs to be changed in ordinance. She will include others from industry to see if there are any changes that may affect them in a negative way. There are a few additions that need to be made such as the Gem cars. R. Buck is having a meeting with the Gem cars tomorrow. M. Owens asked for clarification on where the Gem cars can pick up and begin a tour. M. Owens said that it would be reasonable to mention that members of TAC discussed at length where they could and could not park for tours and they are violating that. M. Owens went on to say that some TAC members are disappointed in the decision.

Quadracycle parking will be added in the ordinance. M. Owens told R. Buck she handled Johnson Square parking well. M. Owens said she worked quickly and efficiently at getting signage at Johnson Square and asked if she could get new signage for other tour stops.

- **Tourism Advisory Committee Makeup**

R. Buck said in past meetings, there were discussion of adding two seats. Term limits were discussed.

M. Owens said he agreed with J. Combs in that the organizations will communicate annually about who the person representing them would be. He stressed continuity has been one of the reasons TAC has been so successful.

C. Brazil added that board members should be active. J. Combs said after two missed meetings, there should be a discussion with that organization regarding the seat.

J. Combs asked if R. Buck could put this in an email and send to the members to review and discuss.

M. Owens asked J. Combs to clarify the meeting that TAC makeup was discussed.

J. Combs stated that the Tour Service for Hire Ordinance states TAC should revisit the makeup of TAC every three years and make a recommendation to Mayor and Alderman. During the March meeting, TAC voted to add a representative from the Canal District and a representative from the restaurant community. The vote passed unanimously. TLC and Visit Savannah will select the restaurant community representative after Council approves the ordinance revision and selects a Canal District representative.

M. Owens added that he is unsure that this needs to be taken in front of the council at this time. Melinda agreed with M. Owens that TAC is capable of taking care of the needs of the westside at this time.

J. Combs said since this has been voted on already, we will have to vote again.

M. Owens made a motion to appeal the vote and review. S. Adler seconded. M. Allen, C. Brazil, M. Owens, S. Adler, S. Brenneman voted in favor. J. Combs voted against.

3. Other Business

- Carson is leaving the TLC.
- TLC will be opening an office in the Golden Isles.

Adjourned 9:37AM