

Santa Rosa Tourist Development Office  
North End Committee  
August 1, 2016  
8:30 a.m.

**Board Members**

Vernon Compton  
Alan Lowery  
Jack Sanborn

**Attendees**

Adrienne Walker  
Dave Barnette  
Caron Sjoberg  
Shannon Ogletree

**Attendees**

Nicole Dees  
Al Wilson  
Gale Thames  
John Norton

**8:30 a.m. Sign-In Confirmation of a Quorum-** We have a Quorum. Vernon Compton asked to modify the agenda because he will have to leave and asked Jack Sanborn to take over at that point. Motion to approve the agenda made by Gale Thames and seconded by Alan Lowery. Motion passed and Agenda was approved with modifications and an additional agenda Item.

**Additional Agenda Item-** Committee/Board Operational Changes Discussion

**Approval of June 1, 2016 Minutes-** Motion to approve by Jack Sanborn and seconded by Adrienne Walker. Motion passed and Minutes were approved.

**North End Requests -** Connecting Nature & Commerce Developing Regional Trail Opportunities- Vernon Compton

Vernon Compton made everyone aware of the workshop coming up towards the end of September and stated that we have talked about connecting nature and commerce developing regional trail opportunities in the past and he attended a conference/workshop some time ago out of state with some regional folks from Santa Rosa County and Escambia County, looking at connecting nature and commerce and how we can better tie in our rural natural areas with economic benefits to the area. One of the things that grew out of that scene was a real opportunity in our entire region was developing a regional trail system; not one that has a lot of gaps in it and separated out like Milton, Bagdad, Pensacola, Blackwater, Navarre, and the City of Pensacola but all connected. Realizing to do that is not easy, this is not a workshop to address all the barriers and hardships in getting to the developing of a regional trail system but basically coming up with a vision which will include bike paths, multiple use trails, and sidewalks. Basically, it's connecting these urban, rural, and natural areas. For Santa Rosa County, that's big because we have a lot of natural areas. The better we connect them the

more people can use them; both residents and tourist. The goal of this workshop is bringing Escambia, Santa Rosa, and Okaloosa Counties together with the three southern counties that surround us to the North and to the West in Alabama. Some significant areas which have been looked at are Pensacola/Pensacola Bay Bridge and Scenic Highway to UWF getting the University of West Florida connected to the city of Pensacola and from UWF going across the Escambia Bay and coming up with a connection to Milton/Bagdad and ultimately up to the Blackwater State Forrest and Conecuh. In that is a coastal trail that would connect Navarre through Pensacola then Westward to Perdido and into Alabama along the coast. This is important because you cannot bring the level of Federal and State funding that is available to this area if you don't have a plan. A lot of the money that is available is going to Central and South Florida. They have done what we are trying to do with this and the larger regions have come up with a plan. We have a lot of support from local government. They want to see these kinds of things happen; we just don't have the money. This would help us to get there. Shannon Ogletree stated, if we don't work together across county lines or even state lines, federal funds are not flowing in this direction. It's a must. Compton stated he would like to see the TDC kick in \$2000 as a partner towards this project to help with this workshop. Compton then recused himself from any voting stating that he is involved with it as one of the leads putting this on and working with The Conservation Fund, but he does see an important connection to Santa Rosa County Tourism. Jack Sanborn made a motion recommending the TDC spend \$2,000 to sponsor this workshop with the stipulation of receiving (2) attendance registration tickets. Alan Lowery seconded and motion passed.

#### **Committee/Board Operational Changes Discussion- Vernon Compton**

This discussion is on some proposed changes to our Committee and Board Operations and maybe some additional items that might help us get more people engaged. Shannon and Julie met with Board members about some ideas that have been running through the staff to discuss ways which they see we can consider some changes to operations. The first changes is aimed at getting more people involved at the tourism level through what was described as Focus Groups which would be aimed at specific target areas of tourism like Bed Tax Collectors, Agricultural Tourism, Water Ways and Canoe/Kayaking, and Trails, etc.; different segments of tourism. That item is to get more engagement and would be outside of any committee, would not fall under county government, and would be led by one member of the TDC and aimed at that segment (TDC Member's segment) of the tourism industry. The second part was as the focus groups bring in more people, a proposal to not have the North End/South End committee and to have the Board Meetings moved to a Quarterly Meeting Structure. Their ideas were more involvement and more meetings of focus groups and having the Board quarterly meeting structure set at particular/critical times of this organization such as grant reviews,

marketing/advertising plans, and things like that. Compton stated he asked in his discussion that he see some things that he likes which really work well in the structure that we have, so why would we change something that's working and Shannon stated a very good point that we continue to grow as a TDC and always have a growing Bed Tax Collection, but at the same time it never hurts to look at how we can continue to improve this organization. Just because you're growing, it doesn't mean that you can't do things better. Other Board Members expressed concerns about Sunshine Laws preventing them from attending the same focus group meetings and quarterly board meetings lacking the continuity to deal with issues in a timely matter. They would prefer to revisit this issue at the September meeting which will provide time for each member to further explore the brevity of the changes. Also, this agenda item will be discussed at this Thursday's Board Meeting.

**DSBP Update-** Dave Barnette

Dave Barnette stated that they are working on the lay-out of the vacation guide. We have a photo shoot coming up in September and with those photos, we will be wrapping up the vacation guide. We will bring the cover and a sample spread or two on Thursday for you to see. We also have a FAM Tour coming up in October. The influencer campaign is a new concept that we are working on. It's kind of a hybrid in the sense of your advertising side and your public relations side, finding people that have blogs or a social media presents that have a tremendous influence and a really big audience that is the right audience for us and working with that person directly. It's a little bit like public relations in that we're giving them the information and getting them here like the FAM tour, but also like advertising because it was a paid effort as well. Barnette states that from what he understands, the results have been just overwhelming.

**Santa Rosa County Chamber/VIC Request Letter-** Shannon Ogletree

Shannon Ogletree referred to a letter from Donna Tucker (Milton Chamber of Commerce) in the supporting documents. They are looking at constructing a new facility over on Avalon Blvd. and have requested \$120,000 which is worth 12% of the project and spread over two years. Ogletree asked for the thoughts of everyone of supporting this and taking it to Thursday's meeting. Jack Sanborn asked if there is any office space that would come with that for the TDC. Ogletree said he would ask, also they wouldn't charge for us putting brochures in there.

**DMO PROZ Planning Sessions-** Nicole Dees-

The DMO PROZ Planning session dates are 8:30 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. on October 11, 2016 at the Santa Rosa County Economic Development Office for the North End and 1:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. for the South End in Navarre at the Santa Rosa County Tourist Development Information Center. The Tourist Development

Board of Directors planning session will be at the Navarre Tourist Development Information Center on October 12, 2016 from 9:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m. with lunch from 12:00 p.m. to 1:00 p.m.

**Beaches To Woodlands-** Nicole Dees

Today is the event sign-up deadline and there are a total of 37 signed up for this year. I have descriptions and dates to forward to Meredith and the advertising team and Navarre Press is working on the website. We have pretty much the same events from last year, but a few of them did not sign up this year and were not considered tourism events. All of the events/organizations were contacted. The first event starts on September 24, 2016 and the last one runs on November 11, 2016.

**Lodging Tax Update-** Nicole Dees

For June, we were at \$407,618.11 and up 11%.

**South End Request-** None

**Other Business-** Jack Sanborn

Kyle's term is expiring and advertisement begins August 5<sup>th</sup> for that. Assuming Kyle will put in a letter, but anybody else who's interested in being on the board certainly should put in a letter and submit it to Julie. Kyle's term is tourist related, he's not a bed tax collector.

**Gale Thames Motioned to end Meeting, Alan lowery seconded. Motion passed 9:45 a.m.**