DUVAL COUNTY TOURIST DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, June 11, 2026, 10:00 a.m.
City Hall - Lynwood Roberts Room

TDC Members: City Council President Carrico (Chair), City Council Vice President Howland (Vice Chair), City Council Member Randy White, Jitan Kuverji (*excused*), Dennis Chan, Dennis Thompson, Mark VanLoh (*excused*), Michael Jenkins (*10:30 a.m. arrival*), Shawn LaNoble

TDC Staff: Carol Brock (Executive Director), Brett Nolan (Administrator), Phillip Peterson (Council Auditor), Daren Anderson (General Counsel)

I. Welcome and Call to Order — **Chair Carrico**

The Chair called the meeting to order at 10:01 a.m. and attendees introduced themselves for the record.

II. Public Comments Including Action Items — **Chair Carrico**

Chris Hoffman, Jacksonville Beach Mayor

Mayor Hoffman expressed strong support for the Springing the Blues application and the two other Jacksonville Beach events seeking TDC support. She highlighted the positive impact of TDC-supported events on local businesses and tourism in the Jacksonville Beach area.

III. Approval of Minutes — **Chair Carrico**

The minutes of the April 16, 2026 Regular TDC meeting were **approved unanimously as distributed**.

IV. Tourism Strategic Plan Update — **Dennis Thompson**

Dennis Thompson opened his remarks by thanking Council President Carrico for his role in supporting the Tourism Strategic Plan Advisory Committee. He emphasized that the Tourism Strategic Plan and its pillars were included in the meeting packet for all members to review. Mr. Thompson reminded the board that the Tourism Strategic Plan Advisory Committee was convened on April 27, and the minutes from that session were provided in the packet. This meeting generated twelve new ideas that were now entering the pipeline for further evaluation. To facilitate prioritization, Carol Brock was tasked with distributing a spreadsheet to each TDC member to rank the impact and priority of each idea, after which the consolidated feedback would be reviewed by a publicly noticed committee meeting. The process was designed to comply with sunshine-law requirements, meaning individual feedback would not be shared before the committee meeting. Mr. Thompson presented a concise one-page overview of the strategic-plan process, noting that it originated from the Downs and Saint-Germain study and has since driven multiple actions by Visit Jacksonville. He outlined the four-step workflow: (Step 1) Tourism Strategic Planning Advisory Committee gathers comments and proposes ideas which meets bi-annually; (Step 2) Plan committee meeting to review the strategic plan and adds ideas to the pipeline; (Step 3) TDC reviews, prioritizes, and moves selected ideas to the planning and action phase; and (Step 4) the TDC director and team manage implementation, after which the cycle repeats.

Seeing no further questions from the board, Mr. Thompson concluded his presentation.

V. TDC Event Grant Requests — **Chair Carrico**

Chair Carrico instructed Ms. Brock to provide an overview of the grant requests. Ms. Brock stated that while several of these grants scored a low score, it was predominantly due to the timing of their events as it relates to the city's needs period and also several are returning applicants which get points deducted for each year they received a TDC grant.

2026 Florida Fin Fest — **Niko Costas**

Ms. Brock introduced Niko Costas, representing Florida Fin Fest. He described the two-day ocean-education, conservation, and music festival scheduled for September at the SeaWalk Pavilion. He emphasized the event's growth to its sixth year and its free-admission model, noting its role as a tourism driver. He then asked the board if they had any questions.

Councilmember Kevin Carrico questioned a discrepancy between the projected hotel-room count (1,100 rooms) and the estimated bed-tax revenue (the lowest among the grants). Ms. Brock explained that free festivals typically generate lower tax estimates due to the formula used by the Destinations International Event Impact Calculator prepared with assistance from Visit Jacksonville. Phillip Peterson, Council Auditor, added that he also lacked a clear answer and would follow up with Ms. Brock after the meeting.

Motion (Howland / 2nd White): Approve Real Time Entertainment & Management to receive a special event grant of $60,000 from the Tourist Development Council FY 25-26 Event Grants account for the 2026 Florida Fin Fest. – **approved unanimously**.

2026 Beaches Oktoberfest **Josué Cruz**
Ms. Brock introduced Josué Cruz, representing the 2026 Beaches Oktoberfest event. Mr. Cruz described it as a two-day beer-hall experience at the SeaWalk Pavilion, highlighting its status as the state's largest Oktoberfest and its expected draw of out-of-town visitors.

Motion (Howland / 2nd White): Approve Beaches Oktoberfest, Inc. to receive a special event grant for $50,000 from the Tourist Development Council FY 25-26 Event Grants account for the 2026 Beaches Oktoberfest. – **approved unanimously**.

2026 The Pro Billiards Series - Jacksonville **Bonnie Dyches**
Before introducing Bonnie Dyches to give an overview of the event, the Chair passed the gavel to Vice Chair Howland and declared he would be abstaining from the vote and discussion due to the fact the Predator Group donated several billiards tables to the organization Chair Carrico works for as Vice President at the Boys and Girls Club Northeast Florida.

Ms. Dyches, representing the Predator Group for the 2026 Bro Billiards Series Jacksonville event, described the "All Star Finale" of the Pro Billiard Series to be held at the Hyatt Hotel in Downtown Jacksonville during December, noting its five-year contract through 2029. She shared that the series would feature fifty-seven professional players from around the globe and hundreds of amateur competitors over seven days, with free admission for spectators. The roster will be dominated by players from Asia, Europe, and Africa, with only a handful of American pros, underscoring the event's global stature. Additionally, a dedicated area will showcase local nonprofits, allowing them to promote their services to attendees. Ms. Dyches hopes that this event aims to establish Jacksonville as the "capital of billiards."

Motion (White / 2nd Thompson): Approve Predator Group to receive a special event grant for $50,000 from the Tourist Development Council FY 25-26 Event Grants account for the 2026 The Pro Billiard Series - Jacksonville.

Aye: Chan, Howland, LeNoble, Thompson, White (5)
Nay: (0)
Abstain: Carrico (1) ***Motion Carries.***

Vice Chair Howland passed the gavel back to Chair Carrico.

2027 Spartan Race Jacksonville Weekend **Cherie Bortnick**
Ms. Brock introduced Cherie Bortnick, representing Spartan Race, to give an overview of her grant request. Ms. Bortnick noted that the Spartan Race Weekend would return to Jacksonville in February at Diamond D Ranch for the sixth year. She described the event's format, five-kilometer race, ten-kilometer race, and youth courses, plus a trail run, and emphasized its role as the first East-Coast race of the season, drawing participants from the colder northern states. She highlighted the race's community-focused elements, such as partnerships with military first-responders and youth programs.

Motion (Howland / 2nd White): Approve Spartan Race, Inc. to receive a special event grant for $80,000 from the Tourist Development Council FY 25-26 Event Grants account for the 2027 Jacksonville Spartan Weekend. – **approved unanimously**.

2027 Springing the Blues Festival **Mitch Harbeson**
Ms. Brock introduced Mitch Harberson, representing the 2027 Springing the Blues Festival, and he provided an overview of his grant request. Mr. Harberson shared that Springing the Blues, a long-standing event at Jacksonville Beach is celebrating its 35th year and requested an $80,000 grant. The event was highlighted for its impact on the community, including its "Blues in the Schools" program and its role in establishing Jacksonville Beach as a desirable destination.

Motion (Howland / 2nd White): Approve Jax Beach Festivals, Inc. to receive a special event grant for $80,000 from the Tourist Development Council FY 25-26 Event Grants account for the 2027 Springing the Blues Festival. – **approved unanimously**.

2026 Stars & Stripes Spectacular Baseball Tournament **Kenedy Grayson**
Ms. Brock welcomed Kenedy Grayson, representing Walk off Charities and the 2026 Stars & Stripes event, and she gave an overview of the grant request. It was stated that this is a new grant applicant seeking funding for their

event, helping at-risk youth find meaningful ways to play baseball all while leading up to a celebration of Independence Day. Ms. Grayson requested $30,000 in TDC support. She explained that the event will run over the July weekend at multiple locations, including Fort Family Regional Park, JP Small Park, Wingate Park, Jack Russell Park, and the UNF/JU campuses, utilizing a tiered age-division structure from 9-year-olds up to 19-year-olds. The event is designed to attract out-of-town families during a low-needs period, thereby boosting hotel occupancy and local commerce. The tournament will host approximately sixty teams, generate hotel stays and restaurant traffic, and feature a free veterans job fair on the fourth of July to combine youth sports, tourism, and workforce development.

Motion (Howland / 2nd Jenkins): Approve Walk Off Charities to receive a special event grant for $30,000 from the Tourist Development Council FY 25-26 Event Grants account for the 2026 Stars & Stripes Spectacular Baseball Tournament. – **approved unanimously**.

VI. Visit Jacksonville FY 26-27 Budget Presentation — Michael Corrigan

The Chair reminded the board at the last TDC meeting, they approved the TDC FY 26-27 budget, including the money allocated for Visit Jacksonville to operate. He shared that the approval of Visit Jacksonville's detailed budget at this meeting shows how they will spend the portion of that budget, which is $9,364,783. This excludes the $1M for Sports Tourism Contract. The Chair allowed Mr. Corrigan to present the Visit Jacksonville detailed budget for Fiscal Year 26-27. Mr. Corrigan explained that the budget reflects a similar structure to the previous year with a five percent increase to maintain service levels due to rising costs.

Motion (Howland / 2nd White): Approve the Visit Jacksonville FY 26-27 budget as presented. – **approved unanimously**.

VII. Visit Jacksonville Update — Michael Corrigan

FY 25-26 Budget Reallocation

Mr. Corrigan presented a budget reallocation request for FY 25-26, with a net change of zero dollars. This reallocation aims to activate salary savings and support ongoing programs.

Motion (Howland / 2nd White): Approve the FY 25-26 Budget Reallocation as presented. – **approved unanimously**.

Programs and Activities Update

Mr. Corrigan continued with a programs and activities update following the budget-reallocation request, noting that a full-day Tourism Summit will be held on June 18 at the Florida Blues Conference Center with roughly one hundred registrants and a session led by Brett Nolan, coordinated by Carol Brock, on the TDC event grant process. He shared with council members that the anticipated short-term lodging tax had not been enacted this year. Senate Bill 1134 (a DEI-focused bill) may affect future tourism funding, prompting ongoing review by legal counsel on how to proceed. Mr. Corrigan highlighted that the downtown sports complex will undergo shutdown and reconstruction, impacting on venues such as the amphitheater, Metro Park, and the flex field, while the baseball stadium remains open. He urged the TDC to focus on partnership building during the 2027-2028 stadium construction window. Mr. Corrigan shared that the recent Ironman triathlon was praised for its community impact despite traffic concerns from neighboring St. John's County, with Visit Jacksonville securing a three-year commitment, planning route adjustments, and promoting record-fast swim times and a near-perfect completion rate as marketing assets. Finally, Mr. Corrigan introduced three key staff members, Sydney Lindblad (National Sports Manager), Lauren Hickox (Marketing Manager), and Elsa McGuire (UNF intern), who will support upcoming marketing initiatives.

VIII. Equestrian Center Budget Increase — Carol Brock/CM White

Ms. Brock presented to the board a FY 25-26 budget increase for the Equestrian Center contract with the TDC. The Equestrian Center approached the TDC requesting an increase in their budget due to booking several new shows and bringing back some older shows. Ms. Brock shared that the increase proposed would move $12,767.50 from the "Tourist Development Special Revenue Fund" line item into the "Promotion of the Equestrian Center" account for the Equestrian Center/H.O.R.S.E. grants program. The reallocation would leave an even $20,000 in the Tourist Development Special Revenue Fund, which could be used to support event grants. Ms. Brock stated that the Equestrian Center account is a rollover account, so whatever money is not spent on the current FY will roll over into the next.

Motion (Howland / 2nd Thompson): Approve the Equestrian Center Budget Increase as presented. – **approved unanimously**.

IX. Financial Report — Phillip Peterson

Council Auditor Phillip Peterson presented the financial report. TDC tax revenues for the 12 months ending May 2026 were $10,825,267.18, a 1.11% increase over the 12 months ending May 2025. Revenue from the start of FY

25-26 to date, eight months ending in May 2026, was $7,217,643.86, down 0.70% compared to the start of FY 24-25 to date, eight months ending in May 2025. Revenue for May 2026 was $999,532.91, up 1.90% from the same month in 2025. Actual collections for the fiscal year to date were under the average monthly budgeted amount by $180,292.23. Mr. Peterson noted that this gap is trending to close and will hopefully be back to the average budgeted amount depending on the attraction of more people staying in hotels in Duval County.

Mr. Peterson reviewed the budgetary balances as of April 30, 2026 remaining in the TDC's contractual and operating accounts, they are: Destination Services - $1,508.52; Marketing - $0; Convention/Group Sales - $0; Convention Grants, Sponsorships, and Promotions - $321,389.04; Planning and Research - $77,827; Event Grants - $470,000; Development Account - $2,121,077.63; Contingency Account - $956,061; Equestrian Center Promotion - $7,831.05; Remaining to be Spent in Accordance with the TDC Plan – TDC Operations - $ 564,331; TDC Administration - $147,198.45; and the Special Revenue Fund - $32,767.50.

Mr. Peterson also stated that if revenues came in on budget, the projected year end fund balance would be ~$4.3 million, but this number is expected to change.

X. New Business **Chair Carrico**

There was no new business before the board.

XI. Closing Comments and Adjournment **Chair Carrico**

The meeting concluded with acknowledgments and thanks to outgoing board member Councilman White for his service. The chairman expressed his gratitude for the opportunity the serve as Chair of the TDC during his tenure as City Council President, congratulating Council Vice President Nick Howland on stepping into the role by the next TDC board meeting. In closing, Chair Carrico shared his enthusiasm for future collaborations and the continued growth of tourism in Jacksonville.

Seeing no further business, Chair Carrico adjourned the meeting at 11:09 a.m.

Meeting Minutes respectfully submitted by Brett Nolan, TDC Administrator.

These minutes were approved at the TDC Regular Board meeting on June 11, 2026.