DUVAL COUNTY TOURIST DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, September 3, 2026, 10:00 a.m.
City Hall - Lynwood Roberts Room

TDC Members: City Council President Howland (Chair) – *Excused Absence*, City Council Vice President J. Carlucci (Vice Chair) – *Excused Absence*, City Council Past President Carrico (Acting Chair), Dennis Chan, Michael Jenkins, Jitan Kuverji, Shawn LeNoble, Dennis Thompson, Mark VanLoh

TDC Staff: Carol Brock (Executive Director), Brett Nolan (Administrator), Trista Carraher (Council Auditor's Office), Daren Anderson (Office of General Counsel)

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

The Chair called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. and attendees introduced themselves for the record.

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

Caitlín Doherty, MOCA Jacksonville Executive Director

Ms. Doherty thanked the TDC for its continued support of MOCA and cultural tourism, highlighting the strong return on those investments. Recent TDC awards have helped MOCA significantly exceed attendance goals, attract tens of thousands of visitors, generate substantial hotel stays, and contribute millions of dollars in estimated economic impact. She also noted the success of the Frank Stella sculpture, funded through a $500,000 TDC investment, which has been enjoyed by more than 11,500 people and continues to see growing visitation.

Carnell Oliver

Mr. Oliver spoke about an R&B Hall of Fame initiative and opportunities for tourism development in the LaVilla corridor of downtown. He referenced federal civil rights law in discussing land acquisition and advocated for greater access to development opportunities for Black Americans in the area. He also noted that he had submitted a proposed policy amendment to the Mayor's Office and Office of General Counsel related to funding eligibility for independent agencies, framing the proposal in the context of the historical impact of enslavement.

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

The minutes of the June 11, 2026 Regular TDC meeting were **approved unanimously as distributed**.

IV. Ranked Tourism Strategic Plan Advisory Committee Recs — **Dennis Thompson**

Chair Carrico shared that Mr. Thompson would provide an update on the Tourism Strategic Plan. Mr. Thompson began his update by reiterating the Tourism Strategic Plan's four pillars: *Showcase Jacksonville as a Destination for Visitors, Awarding Grants for Entertainment and Cultural Events, Amplifying Sports-related Events and Tourism,* and *Championing Tourism-focused Infrastructure Enhancements*. He reminded the board about that the advisory committee identified twelve recommendations, with the top three being: *strengthening the region's brand with a consistent identity*, *capitalizing on emerging opportunities like the 2028 stadium, culinary and medical tourism, authentic experiences, the zoo, and water taxi*, and *refining event funding to support smaller and emerging events, streamlining grants, and new sponsorship approaches*. He shared that Visit Jacksonville has already made progress on brand identity with Michael Corgan to provide further details.

V. Visit Jacksonville — **Michael Corrigan**

Before moving on to the Visit Jacksonville presentation, the Chair asked Ms. Brock to provide an update on the Sports Tourism contract.

FY 26 – 27 Sports Tourism Contract

Ms. Brock requested approval to renew the sports tourism contract with a $1 million allocation for Fiscal Year 26 – 27. The contract will expire September 30, 2026 and will be renewed for one year with two one-year renewal options. The services detailed in the contract will remain the same.

Motion (VanLoh / 2nd LeNoble): Approve the FY 26 – 27 Sports Tourism Contract as presented. – **approved unanimously**.

FY 26 – 27 Annual Plan

Acting Chair Carrico then moved to the Visit Jacksonville agenda items, and Michael Corrigan, CEO of Visit Jacksonville, presented the FY 26 – 27 Annual Plan.

Mr. Corrigan explained that the FY 26 – 27 Annual Plan would center on five strategic pillars consisting of Foodie, Surfing, Music, Meetings, and Industry Initiatives, supported by three functional departments: Marketing & Communications, Outreach & Engagement, and Sales & Service. The five strategic pillars were outlined as:

Foodie — *Establish Jacksonville's culinary identity by amplifying local chefs, neighborhoods and food trails*;
Surfing — *Own the "Florida's surf town" narrative built on our beaches and surf culture*;
Music — *Build national recognition of Jacksonville's music heritage and live-music scene*;
Meetings: We Got You — *Position Jacksonville as the meetings destination that removes friction and over-delivers*;
Industry Initiatives — *Strengthen the tourism industry and Visit Jax's reputation through partners and advocacy*.

The plan included 122 total deliverables, including 71 new ideas. Of those, Marketing & Communications accounted for 52 deliverables, 37 of which were new; Outreach & Engagement accounted for 37 deliverables, 17 of which were new; and Sales & Service accounted for 33 deliverables, 17 of which were new.

Specific initiatives include a "foodie's cravings" web tool, coffee and donut socials, a mobile visitor center at food festivals, new learn-to-surf and board stories video content, research for live beach surf cams, and a fiftieth-anniversary celebration for Kona's Skateboard Park. For music, plans include a "Sounds of Jax" local artist playlist series and self-guided music history tours. For meetings, a new campaign, "My Jax," with avatar videos and a meeting planner section on the app, is being launched, along with tourism ambassador training in hotels and venues. Industry initiatives include a self-service partner content hub and the second annual tourism summit.

Following the presentation of the annual plan, Mr. Corrigan requested an amendment be approved to exclude deliverables affected by state DEI legislation (Senate Bill 1134) during the plan's annual scoring metrics.

Motion (VanLoh / 2nd Thompson): Amend the FY 26 – 27 Annual Plan to exclude any deliverable that could be affected by the state-mandated DEI prohibitions outlines in Senate Bill 1134 be excluded from Visit Jacksonville's annual evaluation performance score. – **approved unanimously**.

Motion (LeNoble / 2nd Chan): Approve the amended FY 26 – 27 Annual Plan as presented. – **approved unanimously**.

FY 26 – 27 Travel Plan
Mr. Corrigan continued by presenting the FY 26 – 27 Travel Plan, which is required annually as part of the budget process. He stated the plan may change slightly based on staff turnover and return on investments, among other factors. Mr. Corrigan shared that any changes to the travel plan would be approved by the TDC Executive Director.

Motion (Chan / 2nd LeNoble): Approve the FY 26 – 27 Travel Plan as presented. – **approved unanimously**.

FY 26 – 27 Media Plan
Mr. Corrigan presented the FY 26 - 27 Media Plan, outlining planned advertising efforts for both leisure and sales/meetings. He noted that the proposed media spending aligns with the approved FY 26 - 27 budget. Katie Mitura, Chief Marketing Officer, addressed a question raised by Mr. Kuverji regarding a co-op with Expedia, confirming that the co-op was successful in driving bookings and that additional funds were also allocated to general advertising.

Motion (LeNoble / 2nd Thompson): Approve the FY 26 – 27 Media Plan as presented. – **approved unanimously**.

FY 26 – 27 Adjusted Budget
To conclude the FY 26 – 27 presentation, Mr. Corrigan presented the FY 26 – 27 Adjusted Budget for Visit Jacksonville. He shared that the adjusted budget aligns the previously approved draft budget with the annual plan, travel plan, and media plan. Mr. Corrigan stated that the totals remaining the same, however, they are adjusted based on the finalized plans just presented and approved by the board.

Motion (LeNoble / 2nd Thompson): Approve the FY 26 – 27 Adjusted Budget as presented. – **approved unanimously**.

FY 25 – 26 Budget Reallocation Request
Mr. Corrigan presented a FY 25 – 26 budget reallocation request, which involves moving $9,000 from professional development to sales missions and client events, and $4,000 from out-of-county travel to professional development for new staff.

Motion (VanLoh / 2nd Chan): Approve the amended FY 25 – 26 Budget Reallocation Request as presented. – **approved unanimously**.

Brand Identity/Unified Marketing Plan Approval
Mr. Corrigan requested approval for the second $50,000 of a $100,000 investment for the brand identity and unified marketing campaign, which was originally approved in April 2025. The initial $50,000 was released at that time, with the remaining funds contingent upon a progress report to the TDC. Mr. Corrigan shared an update on the project's progress and requested that the remaining $50,000 be released. The project has evolved to include rebranding Visit Jacksonville's logo and collaborating with other Jacksonville civic organizations on a unified approach to marketing the city. This aligns with the top recommendation of the tourism strategic plan to strengthen the regional brand.

Motion (LeNoble / 2nd Thompson): Approve the Brand Identity/Unified Marketing Plan as presented. – **approved unanimously.**

FY 25 – 26 3rd Quarter Report + Upcoming Highlights
Mr. Corrigan began by introducing members of the Visit Jacksonville team, including Katie Quackenbush, National Sales Manager; Kaitlyn Henderson, Marketing Manager; Luke Bickerstaff, Travel Trade Manager; and Laurie Degon, a longtime member of the Visit Jacksonville staff.

He then transitioned to the FY 25 – 26 Quarter 3 Report and highlighted several successful events and initiatives. The inaugural Visit Jacksonville Tourism Summit brought together more than 100 attendees for educational sessions and panel discussions focused on the hospitality industry and its economic impact. The event received outside sponsorship support and generated immediate interest in returning the following year. Mr. Corrigan also discussed a community meeting held at the Jacksonville Zoo and Gardens that focused on upcoming attractions and developments, including projects at the zoo, fairgrounds, and Chipshot Bar & Restaurant. Additional community meetings are planned, including one featuring Mark VanLoh to discuss the new airport concourse and other developments expected over the next six months.

Jacksonville's inaugural Ironman event was also highlighted as a success and is expected to return next year. The event will move to Sunday to better take advantage of river conditions for the swim, while the bicycle route is anticipated to extend west into Clay County and utilize the toll road to help address traffic concerns.

Additional marketing and sales initiatives included a pie-making class and food tasting event in Washington, D.C., featuring Jacksonville chefs Natasha Burton and Celestia Mobley and targeting media and meeting professionals. Visit Jacksonville also introduced a new conference display featuring an avatar of salesperson Bob Doring, which has helped attract attention from new audiences. Mr. Corrigan added that the recently launched partner program has been well received and noted continued outreach to local restaurants and updates related to CIA and DIA initiatives.

Following the report, Chair Carrico asked about recent discussion surrounding the R&B Hall of Fame. Mr. Corrigan explained that Visit Jacksonville had been involved in preliminary conversations regarding the possibility of bringing a Hall of Fame ceremony and potentially a permanent presence to Jacksonville, noting that discussions were still in the early stages.

Mr. Kuverji also asked about reports of a proposed 50,000-seat entertainment venue in Jacksonville. Mr. Corrigan stated that he was limited in what he could disclose due to a nondisclosure agreement but confirmed that the privately backed project had initially been discussed as a 25,000-seat venue and had since expanded to approximately 50,000 seats.

VI. FY 26 – 27 Revised TDC Budget — Acting Chair Carrico

Ms. Brock presented the FY 26 – 27 Revised TDC Budget and directed members to the adjusted figures included in the meeting packet. She explained that total revenue increased by $24,424, primarily from additional interest income and a transfer from fund balance, with corresponding administrative expense adjustments made to keep the budget balanced. Changes included a three percent salary increase, additional pension and employee benefit

costs, higher internal charges and insurance premiums, and a reduction in indirect costs. Ms. Brock noted that the revisions were made by the budget office following the April meeting and did not affect program funding.

Ms. Brock also advised the board of a pending $519,409 transfer made during the City Council budget finance hearings from the TDC contingency account to support the Gator Bowl and Florida State/University of Florida baseball game.

Motion (LeNoble / 2nd Chan): Approve the FY 26 – 27 Revised TDC Budget as presented. – **approved unanimously.**

VII. Financial Report **Trista Carraher**

Assistant Council Auditor Trista Carraher presented the financial report. TDC tax revenues for the 12 months ending August 2026 were $11,012,679.79, a 1.55% increase over the 12 months ending August 2025. Revenue from the start of FY 25-26 to date, eleven months ending in August 2026, was $10,209,661.60, up 1.36% compared to the start of FY 24-25 to date, eleven months ending in August 2025. Revenue for August 2026 was $1,044,492.80, up 11.35% from the same month in 2025. Actual collections for the fiscal year to date were under the average monthly budgeted amount by $42,744.44. Ms. Carraher 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.

Ms. Carraher reviewed the budgetary balances as of July 31, 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 - $282,238.54; Planning and Research - $77,827; Event Grants - $200,977.45; Development Account - $2,121,077.63; Contingency Account - $956,061; Equestrian Center Promotion - $21,714.60; Remaining to be Spent in Accordance with the TDC Plan – TDC Operations - $ 564,331; TDC Administration - $64,498.38; and the Special Revenue Fund - $20,000.

Ms. Carraher 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.

Ms. Brock added that the 2027 Springing the Blues event will be retired and the grant funds were unencumbered and Walk-off Charities 2026 Stars and Stripes Spectacular will likely not receive their full $30,000 grant, with only half being paid out. These amounts will be returned to the event grant line. She also reminded the council that 15% of the annual operating budget is set aside in the Fund Balance for emergencies.

VIII. New Business **Acting Chair Carrico**

Ms. Brock presented a flyer that will be included in property tax bills in November, informing Duval County property owners about requirements for short-term or vacation rentals. The flyer will direct them to a website for more information.

Mr. Kuverji raised concerns about the landscaping and lighting on city roads, citing damaged streetlights and overgrown vegetation. He noted that FDOT finds it difficult to maintain Jacksonville due to its size and the amount of waste removed from roads. He urged for better regulation of the work being done.

Mr. LeNoble raised concerns regarding federal per diem rates for Jacksonville hotels, noting that the city is currently grouped under standard CONUS rates that do not adequately reflect higher lodging costs in certain areas. He stated that this particularly affects beach hotels, as well as properties near military installations, Mayo Clinic, and the airport, and pointed to Daytona as an example of a market with separate rates for different areas (Daytona and Daytona Beach). Mr. Corrigan agreed that Jacksonville's status as a destination warrants consideration of a higher rate and said Visit Jacksonville would work with hotel partners and the legislative delegation to explore advocating for a separate per diem rate for the area.

IX. Closing Comments and Adjournment **Acting Chair Carrico**

The Chair reminded the Board that the next meeting would be held on Thursday, October 22, 2026, at 10:00 a.m. in the Lynwood Roberts Room at City Hall. The meeting will be the first of two grant consideration cycles for FY 26 – 27.

Seeing no further business, Chair Carrico adjourned the meeting at 10:58 a.m.

Meeting Minutes respectfully submitted by Brett Nolan, TDC Administrator.

These minutes were approved at the TDC Regular Board meeting on October 22, 2026.