

**ACCOMMODATIONS TAX ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES  
February 18, 2020**

Chairman Sam Britt called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m. Other committee members present were Jean Wilson, Mike Tripka, Ellen Shumaker, Christy Parker, Joseph Kropiewnicki, and Nathan Pringle. Staff in attendance was as follows: Natalie Majorkiewicz, Treasury Manager and Kristy Carge, Treasury Supervisor.

Roll Call and Confirmation of Quorum

All committee members present, zero absent, quorum met. Newly appointed member, Nathan Pringle was in attendance to observe the meeting and abstained from voting waiting orientation.

Adoption of Agenda

Chairman moved to adopt the Agenda.

**Tripka motioned to adopt agenda as stated. Britt seconded. The motion carried with 6 in favor and 1 abstention.**

Adoption Minutes:

Chairman moved to adopt the minutes.

**Wilson motioned to adopt minutes as stated. Britt seconded. The motion carried with 6 in favor and 1 abstention.**

Financial Report: Natalie Majorkiewicz, Treasury Manager

The total funds available for distributions are **\$801,518**. Revenue is down **\$25,415 or 30%** compared to same quarter in the previous year. The reduction is due to the State submitting only one month of funds instead of the entire quarter. We have 2 applicants for this quarter with \$21,652 for requests.

Celebrate Bluffton, Inc: "Discover Bluffton" revision of Grant No. 2018-L014 for reformatting of Bluffton Buddy App - \$7,132:

Sabrina Cox, Executive Director of Celebrate Bluffton gave an overview of proposed revision. Cox explained after seeing changes in the mobile app market, they determined it was time to update the look and use of the app. She further explained expanding the app-based "Bluffton Buddy" to a web-based "Discover Lowcountry" offering multiple tours increased marketing. The new version allows audio and full transcript from phone, mobile device or computer. The introduction of QR Codes linked to each site/tour is meant to ease the use for the tourist, these can be found both in the brochure and online. She added hopes of having a plaque at each tour site with the designated QR code for access as well. Anticipated marketing sources include the use of the brochure, the website and social media. Wilson asked if this was already a functioning app. Cox explained this has not been rolled out for live use yet and is currently only in beta test phase. Scripts are currently being made for the addition of two new sites. Newly added website links can be used to learn more about a specific site. A go-live date is expected summer 2020. Shumaker asked how this will be marketed to the public. Cox stated through festivals and brochures. Tripka suggested partnering with the DMO or other groups to increase presence and marketing. Parker asked what sustainability plans are in place for continued use. Cox explained the format is planned for sponsorships under the "Things to Do" tab. Money earned from this would help with the next round of brochures. Britt asked with the rebranding if this will broaden to

more than just Bluffton. Cox concurred but explained that the current focus is on Bluffton. Britt asked if the new format will be able capture tourist statistics. Cox said there are some analytics in place to gather certain information through the website platform.

**Britt motioned to grant \$7,132 as presented in the Staff Report breakdown. Wilson seconded. The motion carried unanimously.**

May River Theatre, Inc.: Production and Advertising Costs - \$14,520

Jennifer Green, President of the May River Theatre, Inc. provided an overview. She stated all performers provide this free of charge and only the technical staff are paid for services. Due to renovations to Town Hall and the theater performances have been on hold. No shows were held in 2018 and 2 shows were put on in 2019. She explained they are currently working on building back their patron base and have 3 shows slated for 2020. The funds requested from ATAC are for royalties and advertising costs for the first 2 shows of the year, "The Plaza Suite" and "Spelling Bee". Green anticipates the theater being financially independent after the 2 shows. Wilson asked how/where advertising is done. Green stated it is primarily through the local magazines: Hilton Head Monthly, CB2, Bluffton Breeze, The Bluffton Sun, as well articles in the Island Packet. Social media, website and posters are also utilized. There are 8 performances of each show put on by group. Attendees are comprised of both local and out town/out of state. Tickets sales are monitored by Vendini (a theater ticketing website), tracking data from credit cards sales and email lists. Green also stated that they have once again began selling season tickets.

**Kropiewnicki motioned to grant \$14,520 as presented in the Staff Report breakdown. Britt seconded. The motion carried unanimously.**

Meeting adjourned at 6:43 p.m.