

TOWN OF KIAWAH ISLAND
State Accommodation Tax Committee Meeting
Kiawah Island Municipal Center Council Chambers
April 19, 2022; 1:00 PM

MINUTES

I. Call to Order: *Chairman Prickett called the meeting to order at 1:00 pm.*

Chairman Prickett welcomed new members Ms. Rush and Mr. Ellis to the Committee.

II. Roll Call:

Present: Dan Prickett, *Chairman*
Roger Warren
David Wohl
Steve Ellis
Jodi Rush
John Wilson
Amy Anderson
Don Semmler

Also Present: Stephanie Monroe Tillerson, *Town Administrator*
Dorota Szubert, *Town Treasurer*
Petra Reynolds, *Town Clerk*
Helen Hill, *Explore Charleston (CVB)*
Trish Pruitt, *Senior Market Director, Northwoods/Freshfields*

III. Approval of Minutes:

A. SATAX Meeting Minutes of December 10, 2021

Mr. Wohl motioned to approve the minutes of December 10, 2021. The motion was seconded by Mr. Wilson and was carried unanimously.

IV. Presentation:

A. Charleston Visitors Bureau Budget

Ms. Hill provided a PowerPoint presentation that included an overview of Explore Charleston and its mission.

A breakdown of the annual budget of \$22 million included a review of income from state accommodations taxes, a summary of accommodations tax funding by municipality, and the Town's contribution to Explore Charleston budget.

Ms. Hill stated that 87% of expenses are for marketing, group sales, media, and public relations. The presentation provided detailed examples of print, broadcast, and digital/online advertising highlighting the Kiawah lifestyle, along with group business and wedding opportunities.

Other Explore Charleston initiatives include Key Data Lodging Metrics, Air Service Recruitment, and Workforce Development.

At the request of Ms. Anderson, Ms. Lori Smith provided a more detailed discussion of the Workforce Development initiative.

V. Old Business:

None

Ms. Pruitt provided an update on the *National & Regional Influencer Event* that was approved for funding last year. She stated there had been unexpected challenges in scheduling influencers due to a lack of accommodations. To date, five trips have been booked; one was last week, with the others taking place before the end of May.

Ms. Pruitt indicated that the influencer that made her first trip to Kiawah from Palm Beach, FL enjoyed her stay, was impressed with the amenities, and was looking into planning a family trip to Kiawah in the fall. She also noted one trip would include seven influencers from across the country coming to the island as a group as a girl's weekend.

Ms. Pruitt stated the intent was to complete the project by May or June and that all the data from each influencer would be compiled and provided to the Committee. She also noted that only 75,000 to 80,000 in funding would be needed of the \$250,000 that was approved.

Further discussion included continuing to book influencers into the fall, extending the project funding into the next fiscal year, identifying and selecting influencers, and measuring influencers' impact on "heads in beds" when rooms are already booked.

VI. New Business:

A. General discussion of SATAX guidelines

Chairman Prickett stated that by law, SATAX funding must be used for tourism-related expenditures defining tourists as people that travel more the 50 miles away from their home:

1. *advertising and promotion of tourism so as to develop and increase tourist attendance through the generation of publicity*
2. *promotion of the arts and cultural events*
3. *construction, maintenance, and operation of facilities for civic and cultural activities, including construction and maintenance of access and other nearby roads and utilities for the facilities*
4. *the criminal justice system, law enforcement, fire protection, solid waste collection, and health facilities when required to serve tourists and tourist*
5. *public facilities such as restrooms, dressing rooms, parks, and parking lots*
6. *tourist shuttle transportation*
7. *control and repair of waterfront erosion*
8. *operating visitor information centers*

Committee members reviewed the application worksheet with Chairman Prickett noting the approved funding for FY 21-22 was \$1,500,00.00 and available funds of \$2,100,000.00, leaving a \$568,000 carryover that would have to be spent within two years. The funding applications for FY 22-22 total \$1,900,000.00; if all are approved, it will leave a \$482,000.00 carryover.

Committee members engage in an in-depth discussion of funds being carried over and the suggestion to have another meeting in September or October.

B. Applications for Fiscal Year 2022-2023

Project	Applicant Sponsor	2022/2023 Requested Amount
Destination Marketing & Advertising	Andell Inn	\$ 89,664
Kiawah Lifeguard Training Equipment	Charleston County Life Association	\$ 14,058
Events Promotion	Freshfields Village	\$ 30,000
Tourism Marketing & Advertising	Freshfields Village	\$ 60,000
Marketing of Kiawah Island Events & Holiday Programing	Kiawah Island Golf Resort	\$ 475,000
Beach Patrol Services	Town of Kiawah Island	\$ 467,200
Charleston County Sheriff Deputies	Town of Kiawah Island	\$ 781,608
	Totals	\$ 1,917,530

The following applications were presented by their representatives. Committee Members reviewed, asked questions, and discussed each application.

 Destination Marketing and Advertising Andell Inn Requested:	\$89,664.00
 Kiawah Lifeguard Training Equipment Charleston County Lifesaving Association Requested:	\$14,057.61
 Freshfields Events Promotion Tourism Freshfields Village / NW Freshfields, LLC Requested:	\$30,000.00
 Freshfields Marketing and Advertising Promotion Tourism Freshfields Village / NW Freshfields, LLC Requested:	\$60,000.00
 Public Access Events Kiawah Island Golf Resort Requested:	\$475,000.00
 Town of Kiawah Island Beach Patrol Town of Kiawah Island Requested:	\$467,200.00
 TOKI - Charleston County Sheriff Deputies Town of Kiawah Island Requested:	\$781,608.00
TOTAL FUNDS REQUESTED:	\$1,917,530.00

Committee Members, along with Ms. Tillerson and Ms. Szubert, engaged in an in-depth discussion of the Town's applications for Beach Patrol and Sheriff Deputies. Members expressed concern with the substantial increase in the request amounts from previous years, the percentage of the services attributed to tourism, justification of the percentage, and the need for more detailed information or explanation on the reasons for the increase.

During the discussion of SATAX revenues, Mr. Warren took the opportunity to express his concern about the enforcement of the Short-Term Rental Ordinance and the impact on some of the rental businesses. He requested that the ordinance be readdressed.

Following further in-depth discussion, Chairman Prickett proposed that the Town will present a detailed explanation of the Beach Patrol and Sheriff Deputies applications for discussion at

the next meeting. With the Town’s budget requiring the approval of SATAX funding amounts, he asked that the Committee consider voting on application recommendations.

Mr. Warren motioned to approve funding of the first five applications (Destination Marketing and Advertising, Kiawah Lifeguard Training Equipment, Freshfields Events Promotion Tourism, Freshfields Marketing, and Advertising Promotion Tourism, and Public Access Events) as presented. Mr. Semmler seconded the motion. The motion passed with a 6 to 1 vote, with Mr. Wilson voting No.

Committee Members further discussed the Town’s Beach Patrol and Sheriff Deputies applications and suggested recommendations for funding amounts.

Ms. Szubert confirmed that any remaining funding would roll over to the next year. The state requires that funds be spent within two years.

Mr. Wohl motioned to approve funding of the Town of Kiawah Island Beach Patrol application as presented. Mr. Wilson seconded the motion.

Following further discussion, the motion passed with a 5 to 2 vote. Mr. Semmler and Ms. Anderson voted No.

Mr. Warren motioned to approve funding of the Charleston County Sheriff Deputies application at \$700,000.00. Mr. Wohl seconded the motion. The motion passed with a 5 to 2 vote. Mr. Semmler and Ms. Anderson voted No.

Approved funding recommendations:

 Destination Marketing and Advertising	
Andell Inn	
Recommend Funding:	\$89,664
 Kiawah Lifeguard Training Equipment	
Charleston County Lifesaving Association	
Recommend Funding:	\$14,058
 Freshfields Events Promotion Tourism	
Freshfields Village / NW Freshfields, LLC	
Recommend Funding:	\$30,000
 Freshfields Marketing and Advertising Promotion Tourism	
Freshfields Village / NW Freshfields, LLC	
Recommend Funding:	\$60,000
 Public Access Events	
Kiawah Island Golf Resort	
Recommend Funding:	\$475,000
 Town of Kiawah Island Beach Patrol	
Town of Kiawah Island	
Recommend Funding:	\$467,200
 TOKI - Charleston County Sheriff Deputies	
Town of Kiawah Island	
Recommend Funding:	\$700,000
TOTAL FUNDS APPROVED:	\$1,835,922.00


Mr. Warren requested Chairman Prickett inform the Ways and Means Committee about the ongoing concerns the SATAX Committee has with the applications submitted by the Town for Beach Patrol and Sheriff Deputies funding and that the surplus funding is protected until the Committee determines if there are other projects to fund.

VII. Citizens Comments:
None

VIII. Adjournment:

Mr. Wohl made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 3:23 pm. The motion was seconded by Mr. Wilson and was unanimously passed.

Respectfully submitted,



Petra S. Reynolds, Town Clerk

Approved on: 9.13.2022