



**“Never doubt that a small group of committed citizens can change the world.
Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.”
Margaret Mead**

Island of Key Largo Federation of Homeowners Association

February 10, 2016 Annual Meeting Minutes

The meeting was called to order by the President, Dottie Moses at 7:00 PM at the Key Largo Library Community Room.

The following Directors were in attendance: Burke Cannon, Rick Hubert, David Leahy, Jim DuGranrut, Steve Gibbs, Lisa Dykes, Ann Nickerson, Laura Heinrich, Pauline Klein, Emilie Stewart, Linda Perloff, Lee Huenniger

Dottie led the Pledge of Allegiance

ELECTIONS

The following slate of officers was presented and a motion by Jim DuGranrut to accept and 2nd by Lee Huenniger. The motion carried.

President, Dottie Moses

Vice-President, Internal Affairs, Burke Cannon

Treasurer, Ann Nickerson

Secretary, Laura Heinrich,

At Large, Pauline Klein

At Large, David Leahy

At Large, Linda Perloff

At Large, Emilie Stewart

Annual Treasurers Report was given by Ann Nickerson and attached to the minutes.

SPEAKER

President Dottie Moses introduced Chamber of Commerce guests, Dennis Caltagirone and Julie Marshall, Wastewater Commissioners Steve Gibbs and Robbie Majeska and guest speaker Harold Wheeler, Director of the Tourist Development Council.

Harold Wheeler – 21 years head of Tourist Development Council remarks:

Mr. Wheeler distributed a flyer with financial information about the TDC.

The mission of the TDC is to set an overall direction for the Monroe County tourism marketing effort in a manner that will assure long term sustained growth in tourism. Representatives on the TDC are from 5 districts and include owners of lodging and tourist businesses. Mr. Wheeler has a total of 69 people advising him on proposals, plans, and expenditures from a budget of \$51.5 million. Key Largo and Tavernier are District #5 and receive 12% of TDC funds.

As a marketing organization, they ask 4 questions: Where are we now? Where do we want to go? How do we get there? What happens when we get there?

Now – focus on boating, fishing, diving, snorkeling, cultural events, history. Address what needs attention (good or bad); effects of storm season, increase in wedding business and international meetings

Want – focus on goals and specific objectives

How – Advertising (TV, small amount of print), PR agency for destination, bloggers, NY Times writers, crisis management, trade shows, consumer shows, telemarketing, film commission (Bloodline)

What happens – Research using data from the Chamber of Commerce, digital data from the website, building a visitor profile and assessing what is working and not working.

At this point the meeting was opened to questions which included:

1. Quality of life of residents impacted due to increased traffic (Tourists pay 60% of taxes in Monroe County. Only 10% of visitors come by air to KW/Marathon the rest of air traffic comes into Miami or Ft Lauderdale and drive down.)
2. Elevated train (not likely to find funding)
3. Impact/destruction of environment/coral reefs so no longer attractive (The diving industry does a good job at educating public)
4. 3.5 million tourists a year too much, county can't handle it. When is enough a enough?
5. Support of public transportation (In the past TDC funded a greyhound bus with advertising on it but found residents used it more than visitors so discontinued funding. May look at it again.)
6. Impact of single events (KL Stone Crab Festival is mostly day-trippers from Miami, Mr. Wheeler is not in favor of this event, he does not think Rowell's is a good location for large events)
7. Shift focus of advertising \$ to families vs. bars and partiers
8. The balance of increased \$ on county services required for 3.5 million additional visitors fall on taxpayers. (One half of 5th penny of bed tax goes towards Monroe County Land Authority, the other half goes into the county's general fund and seemingly not accounted for.)
9. Impact of opening of Cuba on TDC and advertising (The TDC has a plan ready to go forward with a "two nation vacation")
10. Categories for capital funds (beaches, museums, auditoriums/amphitheaters, aquariums, water parks, must be connected to water so even though funding coral restoration cannot support out plantings because it lies outside of taxing district. Capital spent as DACS and BOCC approve. 23% allocated for capital projects. Unspent amount rolled over into next year. Only 50% of project allowed to be funded and TDC will only reimburse and not pay up front.)

Presidents' Report

The Federation wrote a letter of support for a grant to fund landscaping of the bayside path which was not awarded to the county. The Federation will continue to support other sources of funding to finish the bayside path.

Dottie attended the DEO's public input meeting Feb 3 on the 3 for 1 Hotel Unit Allocation Rule and expressed the Federation's concerns for additional lodging that would increase impacts on the community such as traffic, hurricane evacuation, affordable housing, habitat destruction and parking.

The Planning Commission will vote on the proposed height increase Feb 24. Dottie will continue to express the Federation's opposition to this new rule.

Updates

Robbie Majeska reported that the county has paid the first payment towards the \$1 million Mayfield swap to the KLWTD.

The federal government has awarded another \$3 million towards wastewater of which the KLWTD will receive \$750,000 that will go towards paying down the district's debt.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

FDOT will be installing street lights along US1. Expect lanes to be closed in Key Largo from CVS to Tradewinds.

Volunteers needed for a mangrove clean up on Feb 20 at Tavernier Creek Marina.

Next meeting March 9, 2016