



## **Tourist Development Council**

**November 13, 2024, at 2:00 PM**

**Brevard County Government Center, Viera**

The Tourist Development Council met on November 13, 2024, at 2:00 PM, at the Brevard County Government Center, Viera. Members present were Vice Chair Tom Hermansen, Julie Braga, Wayne Soard, Dilesh Patidar, Alex Litras, Mayor Andrea Young, and Mayor Rob Medina. Members absent were Chair Jason Steele and Keith Winsten. Staff present were Alexander Essee, County Attorney's Office and Peter Cranis, John Giantonio, Laura Beebe, Angela Essing, and Juawana Brooks from the Tourism Development Office.

Guests present were Catherine Esrock, Brevard Culture Alliance; Theresa Grimison, CEO, The Community Foundation for Brevard County; Eileen Sepp, candidate from Palm Bay City Council; Gaell Francois, Brevard County Budget Office; and Dave Berman, Florida Today.

### **Roll Call**

### **Approval of Minutes**

**Action: Young moved to approve the October 13, 2024, Tourist Development Council Minutes. Braga seconded the motion. The motion was approved, unanimously 6-0.**

### **Budget Report**

Cranis updated the committee on the final FY 2023-24 TDT report: we landed at \$25.25 million. Noted that August was up 8% and September was up 14.5 % compared to previous years. Since 2020, we have had three consecutive years of double-digit growth with TDT, and this year was the first year that we didn't grow, just basically maintained.

As we're beginning the new fiscal year, we are seeing some strength coming out of the October STR report, looking like that month will be up and possibly the same with November.

### **Marketing Budget - Fund 1441**

The final budget report for Promotions/Advertising - Fund 1441 shows we are under budget by approximately \$900,000. There was \$250,000 allocated for Palm Bay Sacrifice Park Project and we are holding the funds for the project. The remaining amount was planned.

### **Capital Facilities Budget - Fund 1443**

Cranis highlighted some remaining projects, and the amount they will receive.

- Lori Wilson Park – finished the project.
- US Law Enforcement Foundation – received their first \$1 million of allocated \$5 million, will have another \$1 million this fiscal year.
- Merritt Island National Wildlife Center - received approximately \$265,000 and that project is completed.
- Cocoa Village Playhouse - received approximately \$250,000 which finished our obligation for that project.
- Valiant Air Command Museum – received approximately \$924,000 and that finishes our obligation for that project.
- Other Capital Projects – over \$7.3 million (including the Brightline Station and Veterans Memorial Park Amphitheater).
- Viera Park Debt Payment – made payment of \$563,000 – 5 more years of payments.

Capital Reserves - \$2 million.

Mayor Medina arrived.

**BCA Contract** - Catherine Esrock, Director of Brevard Culture Alliance

Esrock presented Brevard Culture Alliance proposal below:

Brevard Cultural Alliance, Proposal to Tourist Development Council, FY 2024-25

As the designated Local Arts Agency for our region, Brevard Cultural Alliance ensures the current and ongoing growth of art and culture through our mission to build and sustain a vibrant and dynamic arts and cultural sector integral to Brevard County's quality of life.

Art is an essential element to a thriving community. With the arts generating over \$123 million annually and employing more than 1,500 individuals, BCA works to fuel our arts-powered economy. Recognizing the influence of the arts on our lives and collective health, we support the wellbeing of our artists and audiences; develop our arts ecosystem; and advance arts education, forming the next generations of innovators and creatives.

For the 2024-25 fiscal year, Brevard Cultural Alliance will provide the following programs benefitting Brevard County:

**Dynamic Place-making**

BCA's Art in Public Places (APP) program curates rotating exhibitions of artwork by local artists for display in public buildings across the county, such as the Viera Government Complex, City Halls, and Melbourne International Airport. Artworks may be purchased directly off the walls through BCA. APP benefits host locations by beautifying the workplace, artists by exposure to the public leading to artwork sales, and the public through direct interaction with local art.

- APP retains more than 900 pieces of art and is currently featured at 25 locations with more than 600,000 individuals – both locals and tourists – engaging with artwork annually.
- 14 local businesses including professional firms, hotels, and restaurants.
- 11 government locations; eight with services provided in-kind by BCA.
- 2024-25 Goals: BCA will work to add three new locations to APP.

### **Inspiring Next Generations**

Through our committed and long-standing partnerships with Brevard Public Schools (BPS), Brevard Schools Foundation (BSF) and community organizations, BCA's education programming not only enhances participants' artistic skills, learning engagement, and academic achievement but also teaches transferable 21st century skills, focusing on strengthening creativity and innovation. The Next Generation Artist Residencies program and Arts Clubs fuel the pipeline of creative workforce talent, helping to create a region that appeals to visitors and attracts investment across the spectrum.

- More than 2,000 students are directly impacted by BCA education programs annually.
- BCA supports six arts clubs with representation in more than one-third of BPS middle schools.
- 2024-25 Goals: Raise at least \$25,000 to support educational programming.

### **Connecting the Dots**

BCA champions artists and cultural organizations, furthering high-quality artistic experiences and opportunities in our region by:

- Promoting cultural and special events such as visual and performing arts including theatre, concerts, recitals, opera, dance, art exhibitions, festivals, and other related activities.
- Providing accessible directories featuring artists, venues, events, and organizations.

- Creating connections between artists, businesses, government, and members of the public to build a stronger sense of community and lead to new and innovative initiatives.
- Seeking services and benefits for members, including co-working and meeting space, collaborative events, video, photography, and podcasting studios, and more.
- 2024-25 Goals: Reorganize membership program and increase and diversify benefits of membership.
- Engaging Forward
- BCA remains as an experienced advisor, dedicated partner, and resource provider for Brevard County and its municipalities for arts and culture. Plans and goals for 2024-2025 include:
  - Continued robust representation of leaders from arts and cultural organizations on the BCA board.
  - Delivering at least 10 speaking engagements on the topic of, or on supporting, cultural arts in Brevard County.
  - Serving on at least three organizational boards or committees within Brevard County to increase interconnectedness and awareness between art and culture, business, and tourism, to include
    - Economic Development Commission Reporting Board, Executive Committee for the Space Coast Science Center
  - 2024-2025 Goal: One additional seat.
  - Producing at least 10 episodes of our podcast, True Colors on the Space Coast, with the goal to shine a spotlight on emerging local artists belonging to minority communities. True Colors has produced four seasons with 32 total episodes and more than 12,800 views on Facebook and YouTube.
  - Continued production and distribution of our weekly newsletter, MuseNews.
  - Continued maintenance and publication of local cultural events website event calendar.
  - Providing ongoing counsel and access, and at least four workshops or information sessions to educate and encourage Brevard County cultural organizations to apply for state, federal, and foundation-based grants.

- Tabling at four public or tourism events to promote artists and member organizations.
- Assisting Palm Bay's Recreation Department in adding fine artists to their Multicultural Festival.
- Sourcing local art for a Satellite Beach project to add vinyl wraps to FDOT utility boxes.
- 2024-25 Goal: Work with County Commissioners to assist in facilitating an art and culture project for each district with the Commissioner's guidance.

To make these programs, initiatives, and partnerships possible, BCA is requesting \$202,000 for the 2024-2025 fiscal year. In addition to our own revenue streams, support from community organizations, and individual citizens, investment from Brevard County and the Tourism Development Council will enable us to achieve these goals and more.

The arts enlighten our lives with beauty, emotion, and understanding; they cultivate a sense of identity and belonging, foster creativity and innovation, and promote social interaction – all necessary to a vibrant region attracting investment from visitors, residents, and industry.

With Brevard Cultural Alliance as a beacon, we can ensure continued arts and cultural vibrancy in Brevard County. Together, we shine brighter.

BCA is requesting \$202,000 for FY 2024-2025 to help with continued success of the program.

Hermansen had a few questions about the BCA expense breakdown. Would like more explanation on why BCA asking for \$202,000.

Esrock explained that it's a combination of direct costs, materials, supplies and having the professional staffing for the BCA. We're requesting the continued funding for the same breakdown amount as previous years.

Hermansen described that last year BCA funding in the amount of \$202,000. The Culture Grants funding was \$530,000 and two major events funded at \$75,000.

Cranis explained that for this year, at the November 12, 2024 Board of County Commissioners meeting, we brought the Marketing Support Program that the TDC had recommended for 24 Culture and 20 Sports Events that were awarded \$805,000 for approval. The Board of County Commissioners tabled it for now and requested that the new Board of County Commissioners have a workshop to go through all those events and make some determinations. The new Board of County Commissioners gets seated on November 19, 2024, and their first meeting will be on December 3, 2024, and we will wait to see what they decide. There was \$600,000 allocated from the Cultural Fund and \$240,000 from the Sport Program which was a part of the Marketing Budget with total available funds of \$840,000 for the Marketing Support Program.

As far as what's remaining in the Culture Grant Funds - about \$250,000 for this fiscal year to allocate.

Hermansen asked, what is remaining in the Cultural Fund? Cranis responded we are able to allocate \$202,000 for BCA. Cranis explained that the funds for the Marketing Support Program come from two different Funds for total availability of \$840,000. Also, the Board of County Commissioners awarded \$300,000 for Lifeguards, so if we award BCA the \$202,000, there will be less than \$50,000 in that account.

Mayor Young stated the Culture aspect of the TDC has changed compared to when she first started being on the committee. One thing that was proposed was BCA would have programs and projects for local artists and have their own source of income to help provide grants to the local community. Has the BCA done anything to secure your own and not rely on grant funds?

Esrock stated that's what BCA is working towards. She explained that she has been the director for BCA since January 2024. Things have taken a little time to get programs in motion, but that is our goal especially with our membership program with great benefits for BCA. We are working at putting together some events this upcoming year that will help generate funds and awareness about BCA. Currently we're at the building stage.

Mayor Young asked, since BCA was awarded \$202,000 last fiscal year why is BCA requesting \$225,000 right?

Esrock explained BCA is only requesting the same \$202,000 again this fiscal year.

Mayor Medina wanted more explanation about the BCA assisting Palm Bay Recreational Dept in the fine arts for their Multi-Cultural Festival - does that include any artists creating a mural? Can you define more about what BCA plans to do for the festival?

Esrock answered that is not in the plans, but we can coordinate together to help make it in our plans. The Palm Bay Recreational Dept was interested in having traditional visual artists displaying art for sale - especially in the indoor gymnasium - and creating artwork in addition to the dancers, singers, and craft fair.

Mayor Medina stated that Palm Bay Recreational Dept gymnasium has a nice wall to display artwork. Have you considered any help from disabled veteran artists. He explained that there are funds available for disabled veterans. Asked if BCA partnering with Dept of Veteran Affairs.

Esrock explained that is one of the initiative programs BCA has for this fiscal year working with disabled artists, veterans, etc. Answered, we have not partnered with Department of Veteran Affairs, but we are willing to investigate a partnership in the future.

Braga asked has BCA already been awarded \$202,000.

Cranis answered that the BCA received \$202,000 last fiscal year.

There is discussion among the board members on the requested amount from BCA.

Cranis clarified that the BCA is making their first request for funds this fiscal year. The Culture Fund has \$250,000 total available.

Action: Braga moved to award Brevard Culture Alliance \$202,000 FY24-25. Mayor Medina seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously 7-0.

Braga complimented Tourist Development Council on keeping programs like BCA for the community.

Hermansen discussed how the Cultural Community supported the TDT referendum when it was first up for a vote many years ago.

### **Public Comment**

Vice Chair Hermansen asked for public comment.

Mayor Rob Medina wanted to update the TDC that the Palm Bay City Council received a presentation from the BMX Bicycle industry, and they are looking to build a facility in Palm Bay. It was suggested that they should work closely with Peter Cranis. As a point of information, the bike industry brings in heads in beds.

Cranis explained that Terry Parks is our Sport Commissioner and he's been in contact with BMX. I think the sports grant may be a good path for them to apply for some type of help. The Capital Budget will be not having much funding available due to the current allocations.

Giantonio stated that Cranis and I were notified today that a representative from FIFA (Fédération Internationale de Football Association) will be visiting Eastern Florida College as a potential site for the 2026 World Cup, where teams may conduct training. Exciting to see where we can grow from this.

Cranis stated this is our last meeting of the calendar year. The new calendar for the TDC will start on January 22, 2025. He will be reaching out individually to each committee member where they are with their terms and who appointed them.

Meeting adjourned at 2:43 PM.