

pursuant to Section 125.0104(5)(a)3, Florida Statutes, and Section 102-119(3)d, of the Brevard County Code of Ordinances; and each of the tourist oriented cultural and special events have as one of its main purposes the attraction of tourists, and the entity and the Space Coast Office of Tourism both intend to ensure marketing and promotion of these events to tourists. Additionally, the Board authorized the Tourist Development Office Director to negotiate and sign all necessary grant agreements, Budget Change Requests, and related documents to support the grants upon County Attorney and Risk Management approval; and authorized the County Manager to execute necessary Budget Change Requests.

**Result:** Approved

**Mover:** Kristine Zonka

**Seconded:** Tom Goodson

**Ayes:** Pritchett, Goodson, and Zonka

**Nay:** Tobia, and Feltner

**J.4. Approval, Re: Tourist Development Council FY 2022-2023 Major Event Grant Program Recommendations**

Peter Cranis, Tourism Development Office Director, stated this is for two major event grant awards; one for the Cocoa Beach Air Show; the second for the Thunder on Cocoa Beach Boat Races; and the amounts were \$87,852 for the air show and \$53,790 for the boat races.

Rich Hensel stated on behalf of the County Commissioners, the Tourist Development Council (TDC), and the cultural committees, they thank the Board for all of its support over the past 13 years; Thunder on Cocoa Beach Boat Races event has seen an annual increase of out-of-town visitors, and has made this event so successful; without the continued community support, they would not be here; with the increase of cost of goods, their P1, which is their sanctioned body and television partner, increases and everything else in this current economy, they respectfully ask for the Board's continued support; and \$87,000 is consistent with all of their other major events in the community, so they are requesting the same.

Commissioner Goodson inquired if Mr. Hensel said \$200 is what each person would spend for each event.

Mr. Hensel replied affirmatively, with their economic impact study.

Commissioner Goodson asked how Mr. Hensel arrived at that number.

Mr. Hensel responded they have different stages, but what they have done with the TDC, and everything they have worked off of for the last 15 years, their numbers have gradually increased, so that is where they have the \$200, from the past, 2022.

Commissioner Zonka advised she was looking at their application, and she noticed they have listed on there that they are a non-profit.

Mr. Hensel replied they have a non-profit, which is Freedom Fighters.

Commissioner Zonka asked if the Freedom Fighters is his non-profit.

Mr. Hensel responded it is not their non-profit, it is the non-profit that they chose to be part of this program.

Commissioner Zonka pointed out he applied for it under the Thunder on Cocoa Beach Boat Races; she asked if Mr. Hensel remembers what organization he applied for it under; and she stated she found his application, and Thunder on Cocoa Beach is the title of the event and the organization is Space Coast Super Boats, LLC, and he did not apply for it under the non-profit.

Mr. Hensel explained he does not have the answer to that.

Kerry Bartlett stated Space Coast Super Boaters founded, and operates the boat race; the Freedom Fighters is their chosen charity for the past few years; and this year they have given Freedom Fighters over \$10,000 for them running the merchandizing, VIP, and the ticket sales.

Commissioner Zonka stated she saw them, and asked if that is the same organization as the people who wrote the recommendation letter.

Mr. Bartlett responded he believes they wrote a recommendation letter, the hoteliers have written recommendation letters; and he asked if she is referring to the one that is in the application.

Commissioner Zonka replied affirmatively.

Mr. Bartlett stated he believes they did write one.

Commissioner Zonka commented she believes it was from Jenny Pruett.

Mr. Bartlett replied yes, she runs Freedom Fighters.

Commissioner Zonka asked if she was related to Kevin Pruett who is on his organizations' board.

Mr. Bartlett responded affirmatively.

Commissioner Tobia asked if the Board is going to be voting on these individually, or how the Board wants to handle that.

Chair Pritchett replied that makes more sense.

Commissioner Tobia inquired if the Board wants to start with this one.

Chair Pritchett responded she certainly does.

Commissioner Tobia asked in their application they mentioned in 2021 over the three days that there was an estimated visitor expense of somewhere in the neighborhood, and they did a good job of breaking it up, of \$14 million.

Mr. Bartlett asked if he means the estimated economic impact, then yes.

Commissioner Tobia stated this is a couple of years old; and he asked out of curiosity, what Mr. Bartlett would expect it to be this year.

Mr. Bartlett noted this year they saw a tremendous increase in the number of not only national visitors but international; in 2021, they did not have the international teams because they were stuck overseas; in 2022 they had those; they had an additional nine teams; and they are

expecting another additional eight for 2023, so they had that additional international business that they did not have prior.

Commissioner Tobia asked if it was a 50 percent increase.

Mr. Bartlett replied probably a 30 percent increase.

Commissioner Tobia stated he does not know where everyone else on the Commission is with this, but he would like this to go back to the TDC; he thinks there are some numbers that the TDC received when voting on this that are drastically different than what is being heard from this applicant; there is an extra zero involved, 30 percent to 300 percent; and he thinks the Board should give the TDC a chance to vote on this given that they have accurate numbers.

Commissioner Zonka advised she has a real issue, whether intentional or not, they represented themselves as a non-profit, but the application is Thunder on Cocoa Beach, it is not under the non-profit.

Mr. Bartlett explained they never presented themselves as a non-profit.

Commissioner Zonka pointed out it is on the application, it says type of organization is a non-profit as part of the application; and they have to understand, she is looking at a letter that says they are a Freedom Fighter, which is their organization.

Mr. Bartlett stated no.

Commissioner Zonka stated because Jenny Pruett is related to one of their board members; and that is where she is confused, it gets a little muddy.

Mr. Bartlett commented she started a non-profit a number of years ago that fights human trafficking; and numerous years before, they provided money for other non-profits.

Commissioner Zonka stated there is no way for the Board to see that because they did not apply as a non-profit; at least with the air show she can pull the 990's to see they are actually donating to charity like they represent; with theirs, she cannot see that; she is not comfortable with these large events on principal; but she does not know where the rest of the Board is; she would have liked to have had a more comprehensive budget; and she knows they explain it, but she is not comfortable with the way that it sits now.

Chair Pritchett advised she is comfortable with sending it back to the TDC to do a little more work on it, and to come back with some data.

Commissioner Zonka asked if Chair Pritchett wants them to do that if they do not have the votes, does she want them to go through the process; she stated if they have the votes, then she would say to send it back; but that would depend on the desire of the Board; and she does not want them to waste their time.

Chair Pritchett advised she had a little bit more comfort with this one than the next one; she does know a lot of their proceeds, they do make donations to charities, so she just knows that about their reputation; but it is up to the rest of the Board; and she would feel comfortable sending this back and getting a little more tighter numbers and giving it one more round.

Commissioner Tobia stated his hat is off to the two new Commissioners who are holding their cards tight; he thought that was a compromise sending it back; to be clear, he is not going to

vote for it no matter what comes of it; and he just did not want to see an affirmative because some of these numbers were not a fair representation of, and it is not the applicant's fault, he had no issues with the numbers they provided, just the numbers from the board who made the decision on that were a little inaccurate.

Chair Pritchett noted this is kind of going on in Commissioner Goodson's area, and she knows the Board is working on getting a little bit more diversity so that all of the Districts have a little bit more equity, so his plea on this is going to mean a lot; she kind of found comfort in it; but again, it is kind of what the rest of the Board wants to do.

Commissioner Goodson explained since he has been called the Original Gangster (OG) today, and since Feltner comes before Goodson, could he ask Commissioner Feltner to answer his questions.

Chair Pritchett stated she would not mind a bit, but he does not have a light on.

Commissioner Goodson pointed out Commissioner Feltner needs to turn his light on.

Commissioner Feltner expressed his appreciation to Commissioner Goodson for helping him out; and he stated he does not have a problem sending it back to the TDC, letting them tighten this up, and the Board can review this again.

Commissioner Goodson stated he agrees, because the \$200 confuses him; and he asked when the event is.

Mr. Bartlett responded May 18-21, 2023.

Commissioner Goodson stated then he has plenty of time to answer the questions of the Board; and he asked if that is correct.

Mr. Bartlett replied affirmatively.

Commissioner Zonka stated she would like to encourage Mr. Bartlett that he may have to resubmit the application since it is inaccurate either under the non-profit he said he was running the event through, or to change his status to an LLC as part of his application.

Mr. Bartlett stated he would have to look at it.

Commissioner Zonka stated she is sure it was an error, but she would fix that.

Mr. Bartlett advised it had not been brought to their attention until now; they are not grant writers or anything like that; they put on a tremendous event, a 14-year old event that the County, Cities of Cape Canaveral and Cocoa Beach, and Port Canaveral enjoy; and they will do whatever they have to do to satisfy the Board.

Chair Pritchett stated the amount of people they draw and the way they manage their budget was impressive to her; she expressed her appreciation to Commissioner Zonka for paying attention to these dollars; and she asked them to get everything straightened out and to where the Board will feel comfortable.

Mr. Hensel noted their events will bring in over \$100,000 this year.

The Board authorized the request of the TDC FY 2022-2023 Major Event Grant Program recommendations' for Thunder on Cocoa Beach Boat Races to go back to the TDC for it to work on the numbers and to bring it back to the Board.

**Result:** Continued

**Mover:** Tom Goodson

**Seconded:** Rob Feltner

**Ayes:** Pritchett, Goodson, Tobia, Feltner, and Zonka

Chair Pritchett stated she is going to move to the next Item, the Cocoa Beach Air Show.

Kyle Smith, representing the Cocoa Beach Air Show, introduced himself to the Board.

Commissioner Zonka asked if he is part of the foundation and the air show.

Mr. Smith replied affirmatively.

Commissioner Zonka asked if this is the only event the foundation runs through it.

Mr. Smith responded yes.

Commissioner Zonka stated so, the foundation runs no event except the Cocoa Beach Air Show through it.

Mr. Smith pointed out this is the only show that it operates.

Commissioner Zonka asked if this organization exists only for the Cocoa Beach Air Show.

Mr. Smith replied yes.

Commissioner Zonka stated in his letters of support, he has letters from Orange County, New York; and she asked if he received any funding from them.

Mr. Smith replied no.

Commissioner Zonka asked if the City of Cocoa Beach provided \$5,000.

Mr. Smith responded something like that, yes.

Commissioner Zonka asked if there is funding from City of Sanford.

Mr. Smith replied no, not through the City of Sanford, but they do have some funding from their county.

Commissioner Zonka stated Mr. Smith probably does not do the 990's, it is probably Mr. Lilly that does; she went through them, and from 2013 through 2019, because the County has been here before and she has been pretty vocal for her non-support of it, due to the pitch, at least in the past from Mr. Lilly was, and a Commissioner that was friends with him was, they do a lot of charity work; when they pulled the 990's, there was not a lot of charity work for those years; and she noticed on the 990, he does not have a compensation level for himself like he did before, because in 2018 he showed a compensation of \$86,067, same in 2016 and 2017. She noted she sees how that was shifted because as a board member he was compensating himself; he is not here to ask the question to, so she will ask Mr. Smith; and she asked in this

existing budget, looking at the budget for the application, is there compensation for Mr. Lilly or Lilly Productions in there.

Mr. Smith advised in this budget, no.

Commissioner Zonka stated there is no way for the Board to know that, because he or she cannot see his books; and she asked if there are any charitable activities this year so far.

Mr. Smith replied yes, they have the Cajun Scholarship in perpetuity with Florida Institute of Technology (FIT).

Commissioner Zonka stated that is probably all of the questions she has right now; she thinks these events are great for the County, and she will just say these are well-established events that do not need a government subsidy to operate; she does not think it is a wise use for the County's tourism tax dollars; she thinks the Board should focus more on events that bring major things to the City or the County; the Board has no way of knowing how they are spending the money; and she does not want to increase someone's profit margin because the TDC has the money available. She pointed out she never liked these large event monies because she thinks they do not help enough people; it is not personal; she apologized for putting Mr. Smith on the spot; but she advised she is not going to support this.

Commissioner Goodson stated Mr. Smith mentioned a scholarship at FIT; and he asked how much the scholarship is.

Mr. Smith advised it is in perpetuity, and he believes about \$35,000; and they just awarded their fourth scholarship yesterday.

Commissioner Goodson asked if they have awarded \$35,000 four times.

Mr. Smith responded it is \$35,000 total in the scholarship, and it continues to grow.

Commissioner Goodson asked if they have funded that this budget year, so they do not have to take that out of this.

Mr. Smith replied it is secure, yes; and he stated that is with FIT.

Commissioner Zonka stated she believes she saw the Facebook advertising funding those Cajun Scholarships; her husband has been a donator to that scholarship, because he has always been supportive of anyone who does that; again, it is not personal; for her it is just a matter of principal; the Board does not have open access to their books; and this is large amounts of dollars that could better benefit other organizations trying to get their events off of the ground.

Chair Pritchett asked if the County ever gets a breakdown of the budget afterwards, how much they spent in the revenues they had coming in.

Mr. Cranis replied yes, they do have a budget detail from 2021 that they can pull out.

Chair Pritchett inquired if after this event will they turn in their financials with the revenues and expenses.

Mr. Cranis responded the grant is based on reimbursement, so they have to submit all of their expenses in order to get reimbursed for those.

Chair Pritchett asked if the County receives all of them with the revenues and everything, and if they turn in a full financial statement for this project.

Mr. Smith advised he does not know how thorough that financial statement is, but as far as the reimbursement, as Mr. Cranis mentioned, they can do everything and have proof of any type of expenditures that are part of the grant.

Chair Pritchett stated she is thinking if this path is continued down and the County does this, it may not be a bad idea for large grants that the County gives, so the Board feels good of how it places the tax dollars; if the County continues to do these, maybe it should be like, if it is a great event the Board will support it for 'x' amount of years and then diminish it off, so hopefully people are able to do a productive event; and if it is not productive, maybe to reevaluate. She commented she thinks Commissioner Zonka is probably right to maybe put it out there for other events going on; she does not know how much is left for those events; she knows the County had a good year in bringing in the tax dollars; but that does not necessarily mean it should give it out in a hurry; and she does know air shows bring in some good visitors, and certainly entertain the ones who are there. She explained she voted against this in the TDC, and she will tell him why; they draw the same amount of people as the airboat show did, so she thought it was a little interesting that it was such a large amount; she does not know how to rewrite this for the TDC; but maybe, people who are doing a little bit better on their budget should not be penalized by giving them less; and she would probably be willing to approve this for the same amount as the Board approved for the airboat show, that is her comfort level right now.

Commissioner Zonka stated the 990's are from 25 or 26 pages; from 2013 to 2018 there were no charitable activities for that organization; this organization's sole purpose is to basically do the airshows; she asked what is the Board not seeing; she stated she thinks it just looks slimy; and she is not going to vote to support someone's profit margin.

Commissioner Feltner commented he was thinking about these two events leading up to this meeting, and having worked in a hotel for a long time, it is a cyclical thing with tourists, so there is a season, there is a shoulder season, there is a summer season with families coming to Brevard County from Orlando, and this is the weekend after Easter; that traditionally has not been a great weekend for travel, because everybody is back in school, Spring Break is over with, the kids are not out of school down here, and when talking about the tourism development tax, he thinks the sole purpose of it originally is to put heads in beds; and he does think people come here for the airshow.

Chair Pritchett reiterated she would probably support it for the same amount as the airboat show, but she wants to see financial statements after to see the revenue and expenses they have; she thinks she wants to start seeing these when the Board gives large grant funds.

Commissioner Zonka pointed out this event is going to happen whether or not the County subsidizes it or not, the Board just has to decide whether or not it is deserving of that subsidy; it is a successful event or they would not be doing it; this event is not done out of the goodness of someone's heart, everyone makes a living off of these events; if this was not an established event, they would have a better chance of getting support, at least from this Commissioner; she reiterated she is not going to support someone's big profits; and she stated the Board should use that money for new events it is trying to bring here, not events that already generate the tourism Commissioner Feltner was talking about.

Chair Pritchett asked if the Board would be comfortable bringing it back until it receives financials.

Commissioner Zonka stated Chair Pritchett may be, but she is not.

Commissioner Goodson advised he is not going to support this; he is sorry, but the Board just has too many questions that Mr. Smith cannot get back to the Board with; there are going to be other issues in the County that the Board can hopefully direct the money in the right direction to help the County; and he reiterated he will not be supporting it.

The Board denied Tourist Development Council's request to approve funding for FY 2022-2023 Major Event Grant Program application, in the amount of \$87,852.20, for the Cocoa Beach Air Show.

**Result:** Denied

**Mover:** Kristine Zonka

**Second:** Tom Goodson

**Ayes:** Pritchett, Goodson, Tobia, Feltner, and Zonka

**J.5. Letter of Support for Charter Communication's Application to Receive State Grants Through Florida's Broadband Opportunity Program**

Chair Pritchett stated she had a call from Spectrum; they are trying to get a grant from the State to help finance putting broadband lines throughout the County in areas where people cannot afford it; other companies can also apply for this; but she just put a letter, if the Board supports it, to send it to the State to help Spectrum receive funds.

The Board granted permission for the Chair to send a Letter of Support to the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity for Charter Communication's for applications to receive State grants through Florida's Broadband Opportunity Program.

**Result:** Approved

**Mover:** John Tobia

**Second:** Rob Feltner

**Ayes:** Pritchett, Goodson, Tobia, Feltner, and Zonka

**K. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Rick Heffelfinger stated it was a good meeting tonight; he usually does not compliment the Board; it showed people did some research, which he likes; but he does not understand why the Board wants to poo poo over his boat show. He went on to add giving them money, maybe they are not using it right and do not need it. He asked the question whether he thought the Board's jobs were full-time or part-time; after doing some research, he has come to the conclusion they are part-time, because he knows looking at financial disclosures, there is not just one person who have other jobs; maybe he is just a little naïve, but that is just the way it is; he has not seen the new Commissioners stuff; he knows he or she are all part-time; and he is not going to hold he or she that tight to it, but there is a lot of important stuff that goes on. He stated he had started to ask the question whether the Board Members are fiscally conservative; he is really worried they are going to bust the cap; that scares the crap out of him with this inflation stuff; he thinks the Board has to find a way to hold that line better; maybe the County cannot afford all of the services; and maybe it has to throttle back, and he would like to see some ideas when some of this stuff comes up. He continued saving the money from the Tourist Development Council, maybe it can be used for something else, he does not know; he has questions about accountability, and if that is a Republican value; being accountable means the Board Members are available to answer questions from its constituents, even if the questions, in his or her opinion, is some tin hat conspiracy theory; last year there was some tin hat