

TOWN OF EDISTO BEACH
ACCOMMODATIONS TAX ADVISORY BOARD MEETING
February 6, 2025
3:00 p.m.

MINUTES

Town of Edisto Beach
Town Hall
2414 Murray Street
Edisto Beach, SC 29438

Present: Chair Leslie Varner Hurley, Judith Blancett, Tyler Von Neida, Mike Hobson, Brandon Johnson, Marie Bost, and Tommy Sandel (*Quorum of Committee*)

Staff Present: Town Administrator Mark Aakhus, Special Event Coordinator Phyllis McElveen, Chief of Police Daniel Seyle, and Municipal Clerk Donna Iskra

Call to Order

Chair Varner Hurley called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m.

Nomination and Appointment of Chair; and Nomination and Appointment of Vice Chair

- A. Nominations from the floor for Chair: Ms. Bost made a motion to re-appoint Ms. Varner Hurley as Chair. The motion was seconded by Mr. Hobson, which was approved unanimously.
- B. Nominations on the floor for Vice Chair: Ms. Varner Hurley made a motion to re-appoint Mr. Hobson as Vice Chair. The motion was seconded by Ms. Bost, which was approved unanimously.

Approval of Minutes

Ms. Bost moved to approve the minutes of the August 1, 2024, and November 7, 2024, ATAX Meetings. This motion was seconded by Ms. Varner Hurley and unanimously approved.

New Business

ATAX Fund Balance Report

Following discussion, Mr. Hobson made a motion to approve the ATAX Fund Balance Report. Ms. Bost seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously.

ATAX Project Balance Report

Following discussion, Ms. Bost made a motion to approve the ATAX Project Balance Report. Ms. Varner Hurley seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously.

ATAX Applications

1. **Town of Edisto Beach: Replace Ropes and Posts at Beach Access Points (\$22,500)**
 - Mr. Aakhus presented an ATAX application for the purchase of replacement posts and ropes for beach access points, in the amount of \$22,500. This project involves replacing worn and dirty marine ropes and posts at the beach access points to

enhance durability and aesthetic appeal. The current ropes have not been replaced in many years. Objectives include purchasing approximately 5,000 feet of marine rope at an estimated cost of \$3.89 per foot and replacement posts as needed. This amount of rope should accommodate approximately 20 beach accesses. The amount requested will cover the entire cost of the project. Ms. Bost made a motion to recommend to Town Council the approval of ATAX funds in the amount of \$22,500 for the replacement ropes and posts. Ms. Varner Hurley seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously.

2. Town of Edisto Beach: EBFD Radio Acquisition (\$52,946.53)

- Mr. Aakhus presented an ATAX application for the acquisition of additional radios to meet current needs and ensure the department meets the requirements for the upcoming International Organization for Standardization (ISO) inspection in the fall of 2025. The majority of emergency calls the Edisto Beach Fire Department responds to during the peak summer months are tourist-related and on or around the beaches, and these calls are predominantly medical aid and public service calls. The emergency calls are greatly enhanced by proper and efficient radio communications. The amount requested will cover the entire cost of the acquisition. Mr. Von Neida made a motion to recommend to Town Council the approval of ATAX Funds in the amount of \$52,943.53 for the acquisition of the radios. Mr. Jackson seconded the motion.
 - Yeas: Ms. Varner Hurley, Mr. Von Neida, Ms. Blanchett, Mr. Jackson, Mr. Sandel, and Ms. Bost
 - Nays: Mr. Hobson
 - Motion Approved

3. Town of Edisto Beach: Police Officer (\$168,153.)

- Police Chief Daniel Seyle presented an ATAX application to continue to employ a full-time Police Officer. Employment of an additional Police Officer will allow the Town of Edisto Beach to be patrolled and protected throughout the peak tourism seasons. As the number of visitors continues to grow, we require additional officers to enforce laws and ordinances in order to keep our crime rate low and community safe for residents and visitors. The additional Police Officer will also alleviate high stress to current Police Officers by providing support. The amount requested will cover the entire cost of the Police Office for a two-year period, from June 2025 – June 2027. Mr. Jackson made a motion to recommend to Town Council the approval of ATAX funds in the amount of \$168,153. to employ a full-time Police Officer for a two-year period. Ms. Bost seconded the motion.
 - Yeas: Ms. Varner Hurley, Mr. Von Neida, Ms. Blancett, Mr. Jackson, Mr. Sandel, and Ms. Bost
 - Nays: Mr. Hobson
 - Motion Approved

4. Town of Edisto Beach: Beach Patrol

- Police Chief Daniel Seyle presented to the ATAX Board a request in the amount of \$78,600 over a two-year period for the Beach Patrol, which is 100% tourism-related public service. Beach Patrol acts as ambassadors to the visitors on the beach. The summer months are challenging for the Police Department, and beach patrol continues to be a great asset as they ensure visitors are following the Town's

ordinances while out on the beach. The Beach Patrol will be a resource for safety information and codes compliance. Beach patrol ensures the visitors to our town have a safe and enjoyable time while visiting. The funds requested will also be used to purchase a replacement UTV (\$12,500), uniforms, body cameras, and other miscellaneous items. Ms. Varner Hurley made a motion to recommend to Town Council to approve ATAX funds in the amount of \$78,600. Mr. Hobson seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously.

5. Town of Edisto Beach, Cookin' on the Creek BBQ Festival

- Ms. Phyllis McElveen, Special Projects Coordinator for the Town of Edisto Beach, was present to request \$15,000 for the Town of Edisto Beach Cookin' on the Creek BBQ Festival to be held on October 10-11, 2025, at Bay Creek Park. Ms. McElveen noted the festival promotes tourism, celebrates community and culture, and provides economic growth, while enhancing Edisto Beach's reputation. The festival has a target attendance of 1,500 guests, with 70% being out-of-town visitors who travel more than 50 miles. Ms. McElveen stated the festival promotes local businesses, boosts local lodging, and promotes Off-Season Tourism. Following discussion, Mr. Hobson made a motion to recommend to Town Council to approve ATAX funds in the amount of \$15,000. Ms. Bost seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously.

6. Edisto Art Guild Annual Spring Play presented by the Edisto Players

- Ms. Lisa Harrell, President of the Edisto Art Guild, Inc. was present to request \$2125. For the Annual Spring Play presented by the Edisto Players, March 20, 21, 22, and 23, 2025. The Edisto Players are a local community theater production that has been supporting and promoting arts in the community since 1992. The funds requested will be used for advertising, ad designs, flyers, tickets, and banners. Tourists who travel to Edisto for the play will need a place to stay and likely patronize our local restaurants and rentals. Mr. Von Neida made a motion to recommend to Town Council to approve ATAX funds in the amount of \$2125. Ms. Varner Hurley seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously.

Adjournment

There being no further business to discuss, Ms. Varner Hurley made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Bost seconded this motion, which was approved unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 3:25 p.m.

APPROVED BY THE ATAX BOARD



Donna Iskra, Municipal Clerk
April 4, 2025