

Special ATAX Board Meeting
April 3, 2014

TOWN OF EDISTO BEACH
SPECIAL ACCOMMODATIONS TAX ADVISORY BOARD
MINUTES
April 3, 2014
4:00 p.m.

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

Present: Iddy Andrews, Chairperson, Molly Watkins, Lisa White, Charlie Vincent, Jane Morrow, Matthew Kizer.

Absent: Walton Salley, (appointment)

Call to Order: Chairperson Andrews called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m. and welcomed new member, Matthew Kizer to the ATAX Board.

Approval of Minutes: Molly Watkins moved to approve the minutes of the February 6, 2014 minutes as written. Charlie Vincent seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Chairperson Andrews read a statement which follows:

At our Feb. 6 meeting we recommended funding for the Governor's Cups Chair, and on that subject and as ATAX Chair, I would like to go on record as expressing concern regarding Town Council's action at the February 13, 2014 meeting on this matter. At that meeting a motion was made, seconded, and passed as follows, "Smyer moved to approve \$10,000 for the Governor's Cup and that the fees for Bay Creek Park be paid from that amount." Under the SC Code of Laws Section 6-4-10, ATAX dollars are to be "used only for advertising and promotion of tourism to develop and increase tourist attendance through the generation of publicity." In my opinion, I do not believe that the payment rental fees for the park fall into the category of advertising and promotion.

New Business:

Presentation by Town Administrator Iris Hill: Administrator Hill thanked the ATAX Board for their service to the Town of Edisto Beach. The Tourism Expenditure Review Committee (TERC) has been in contact with Administration questioning whether or not enough ATAX funds were expended last year. TERC looks at how much money is brought in and compares it to the amount distributed. There were two large projects which had funding approved but the funds were not spent (the camera system and the Bay Creek Park restrooms). Financial Analyst Maxine Burton will be tracking ATAX funds so the Town can more accurately keep up with incoming and outgoing funds. Chairperson Andrews asked that a representative of TERC meet with the ATAX Board and, if possible, Town Council, to talk about using ATAX dollars beyond the two year extension. Chairperson Andrews would like clarification on the possibility of accruing funds for long-term projects such as beach renourishment or water quality improvement and whether ATAX funds can be used for such projects, and if extensions on the two-year limit are possible.

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ATAX Fund Balance: The beginning balance is \$241,029.31 with approved projects totaling \$48,880.58 for an unencumbered total of \$192,148.73. Funds that have already been approved for the restrooms and electrical upgrades to Bay Creek Park have been moved to the Bay Creek Park Fund. Matthew Kizer asked Deborah Hargis to ask if a report could be sent from the state showing how much Edisto Beach had paid in ATAX funds and how much the state had paid back to Edisto Beach for the past two years. Jane Morrow moved to approve the ATAX Fund Balance, seconded by Lisa White. The motion passed unanimously.

May meeting attendance: Molly Watkins and Iddy Andrews will not be present for the May 1, 2014 regularly scheduled ATAX meeting. The remainder of the Board will be present and Jane Morrow will act as Chairperson.

ATAX Applications:

Chairperson Andrews explained the reason for the special meeting of the ATAX Board. The Fire and Police Departments asked Council's opinion on the proposed projects at the Council retreat on February 20, 2014 to make sure Council thought the projects were worthwhile. The retreat was after the last ATAX meeting. Council gave their approval to staff to pursue the projects. The ATAX Board agreed to the special meeting to hear the requests. Chairperson Andrews thanked the Board for their willingness to attend the meeting.

Town of Edisto Beach Fire Department and Police Department – Rapid Response Marine Rescue Team - \$53,434.39. Fire Chief Denney Conley presented the application. There is a need for a more timely response to water emergencies. Currently, the Town of Edisto Beach authorities must wait for assistance from Charleston or Colleton Counties. Most events are over before those authorities can arrive. Chief Conley has extensive experience with marine rescue and feels he can implement and operate the program successfully. There has been extensive research in the cost of the vehicle, which would be used in the ocean, creeks and rivers. Proper training and safety gear will be provided for all involved. Maintenance and service costs of the vehicle will be covered by the Volunteer Fire Department. The Board and Chief Conley reviewed the budget for the vehicle and associated costs. Chief Coffey reminded the ATAX Board that a Rapid Response Marine Rescue Team has been proposed and approved by the ATAX Board previously. He feels the current proposal is much more comprehensive than the previous one. Matthew Kizer asked if the 21-foot vehicle would be for rescue only, or if patrolling would be part its duties. Chief Conley replied that it would start out as rescue only, and with time, other duties could be possible. Chief Conley said the response area is one mile off shore from the State Park to the creek. Typically the vehicle would be manned by two or three people, depending on availability of trained personnel and the number of people to be rescued. Jane Morrow moved to approve the request of \$53,434.39. Molly Watkins seconded the motion, **which passed unanimously.**

Town of Edisto Beach Police Department – Bicycle Patrol Unit - \$3,000 – Chief Coffey presented the application. He stated that a bicycle officer would provide increased interaction with the public, help enhance public safety and be able to access remote areas of the bike paths. One of our officers is already trained as a bicycle officer, and other officers have shown interest in being trained. Chief Coffey told the Board that if there was a call requiring two officers that the bicycle patrol officer would put the bike on

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the rack on the patrol car, which would be parked nearby, and join the first officer at the call. The proposed budget includes funds for loaner bicycle lights that could be given to those in need. They would be asked to return them when they were finished. Chief Coffey stated the loaner program would demonstrate concern for safety. Molly Watkins moved to approve the request of \$3,000. Jane Morrow seconded the motion, **which passed unanimously.**

Adjournment:

Charlie Vincent moved to adjourn the meeting. Lisa White seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

The media/public was informed of the date, time and place of the meeting on March 31, 2014.

APPROVED BY THE ATAX BOARD

Deborah Hargis, Municipal Clerk
May 1, 2014