

ATAX Board Meeting
February 6, 2014

**TOWN OF EDISTO BEACH
ACCOMMODATIONS TAX ADVISORY BOARD
MINUTES
February 6, 2014
4:00 p.m**

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

Present: Iddy Andrews, Chairperson, Walton Salley, Molly Watkins, Lisa White, Charlie Vincent.

Absent: Jane Morrow, Vice Chairperson (business conference out of town)

Call to Order: Chairperson Andrews called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m. She informed the Committee of Alex Pournelle's intent to resign due to relocation.

Approval of Minutes: Lisa White moved to approve the minutes of November 7, 2013 as written. Walton Salley seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Old Business: Charlie Vincent moved to approve the corrected meeting dates for 2014. Those dates are: February 6, May 1, August 7 and November 6. Charlie Vincent made the motion to have Chairperson Andrews write a letter reminding Town Council of the ATAX Board's wish that Council revisit the Bay Creek Park fee schedule. Lisa White seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously.

New Business:

Election of Officers: Lisa White nominated Iddy Andrews as Chairperson of the ATAX Board. Charlie Vincent seconded the nominations. There being no additional nominations, Chairperson Andrews called for a vote and the nomination was approved unanimously. Lisa White nominated Jane Morrow to serve as Vice Chairperson of the ATAX Board. Charlie Vincent seconded the nomination. There being no additional nominations, Chairperson Andrews called for a vote and the nomination was approved unanimously.

Fund Balance: The total unencumbered fund balance as of January 31, 2014 is \$226,201.89. Charlie Vincent moved to approve the fund balance as written. Walton Salley seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously.

Fund Approval Letters: Charlie Vincent moved to approve the ATAX fund approval letters as written to the Town of Edisto Beach Fire Department, \$6,500 for Beach Wheel Chair Replacement, to the Town of Edisto Beach for additional funds for the Bay Creek Park restrooms (\$12,000) and electrical upgrades at the park (\$80,000), to the Lowcountry and Resort Islands Tourism Commission for the promotion of Edisto beach and the Lowcountry for \$14,000 and to Edisto United's 4th Annual Ultimate Chef Competition and Edisto Eats Food Festival for \$4,550. Lisa White seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

ATAX Applications:

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SCDNR Harry Hampton Governor's Cup (at Edisto Marina) - \$11,000: Becca Jones presented the application for the 26th Annual Governor's Cup Billfishing Tournament. Mrs. Jones began her presentation by pointing out the immediate commerce that the Tournament brings to the businesses on the beach. The long-term effects of "new eyes" on Edisto are also a plus. The future value of bringing more exposure to Edisto is also an important part of the Tournament. Lisa White asked Mrs. Jones how she knew that there were "new eyes" on Edisto for the Tournament when it is held during high season. Mrs. Jones informed the Board that DNR set the dates and the Tournament had to be held between the beginning of June and the end of July. Mrs. Jones said that there were new boats entered in the Tournament every year, so that supports her "new eyes" theory. The Governor's Cup is also the only Tournament that has continued to grow over the last three or four years. Chairperson Andrews suggested that the Governor's Cup employ some sort of tracking system to get concrete numbers of where Tournament visitors are coming from and how long they are staying at the beach. Walton Salley voiced her support of the Governor's Cup and the high-end clientele it brings. Lisa White asked about the date the IRS granted 501(c)3 status to Harry Hampton. Chairperson Andrews said she had been online and verified that the status was still current, even though it was granted in 1982. Mrs. Jones explained the increase in some costs (bar, cash awards, etc) was due to estimating more participants in the Tournament. Mrs. Jones explained that the Wallace Pate fund is a DNR faction that advertises for the series. The Tournament averages between 28 and 32 boats. If there are more large boats entered, due to dock space, the average is lower. No boats have been turned away. Mrs. White asked how many of the tourists estimated as being here by the Tournament were already at Edisto. She reiterated her position that ATAX funds should be used for "shoulder season" events. Mrs. Jones told the Board there was no denying the Governor's Cup is a "heads in beds" premier event. Lisa White moved to approve \$4,000 for the Governor's Cup. The motion died due to lack of a second. Walton Salley moved to approve \$11,000 for the Governor's Cup. The motion died due to lack of second. **Charlie Vincent moved to approve \$3,800** for the Governor's Cup. Lisa White seconded the motion. Mrs. Jones commented that the DNR Board is surprised when she tells them she is "jumping through hoops again" to get support from the ATAX Board. Mr. Vincent said he supports the Governor's Cup, but has issues with giving them \$11,000 for advertising. He pointed out that the P & L neglects fuel sales and other income to the Marina. Mrs. Jones informed Mr. Vincent that the Marina and the Governor's Cup are two separate entities and the Marina is just like any other business on the beach that acts as a sponsor of the Cup. There being no further discussion, Chairperson Andrews called for a vote. **The motion passed 3- 2** with Iddy Andrews and Walton Salley dissenting.

Town of Edisto Beach Police Department, 2014 Beach Patrol - \$20,000: Chief Coffey presented the ATAX application on behalf of the Police Department. The 2013 Beach Patrol had a total budget with carryover of \$30,000. The Police Department spent \$10,000 of those funds on a new UTV. The remaining funds were spent on salaries, operating expenses, training, gas and oil, t-shirts, etc. The Police Department was unsure how much to budget last year because of the hours of the Beach Patrol being extended and uncertainty of gas mileage on the new UTV. The extra fuel cost was covered with funds from the Police Department gas account. Chief Coffey distributed to the Board a copy of the Visitor Guide and Business Map that is shared by the Beach Patrol with our visitors. There were seven Beach Patrol employees trained in 2013. Duties of the Beach Patrol included putting out and taking up the life rings on each Beach Access, collecting debris and forgotten items left on the beach, and writing ordinance violation notices. Chief Coffey told the Board the main violations were unleashed dogs, glass bottles on the beach and visitors climbing or walking on the groins. Most people, when approached by the Beach Patrol, are more than willing to comply. If there is a visitor who takes issue with the Beach Patrol, a Police Officer is called. **Charlie Vincent moved to approve the Police Department's request of \$20,000** to fund the 2014 Beach Patrol. Lisa White seconded the motion. Bill Davies asked to address the Board concerning the Beach Patrol. He is concerned that the UTVs are being driven over the dunes multiple times daily by the Beach Patrol. According to the Army Corps of Engineers, this negatively

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impacts the dune. Mr. Davies would like to see the four-wheel drive vehicles off the beach, or at least minimize the number of times they are driven over or across the dunes. Chief Coffey replied that the Beach Patrol is made aware that driving on the grassy dunes is strictly prohibited and can result in termination. Mr. Davies reiterated his concern that UTVs are traversing dunes at the Beach Accesses multiple times daily. There being no further discussion, Chairperson Andrews called for a vote and **the motion passed unanimously.**

Town of Edisto Beach Fire Department, Beach Wheel Chair Storage Building - \$5,500: Fire Chief Denney Conley presented the application on behalf of the Edisto Beach Fire Department. The area where the beach wheel chairs are being stored is currently a slatted area which allows the wheel chairs to be affected by weather. Enclosing the area will protect the Town's investment in the beach wheel chairs, a program which, in 2013, had well over 300 loans. **Lisa White moved to approve the Edisto Beach Fire Department's request of \$5,500** for the beach wheel chair storage building. Molly Watkins seconded the motion, which was **approved unanimously.**

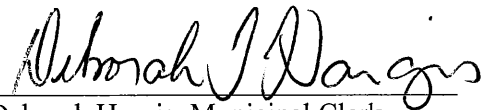
Town of Edisto Beach Fire Department, Beach Wheel Chair Parts Storage Locker – 1,057.30: Chief Conley presented the application on behalf of the Fire Department. There are currently seventeen beach wheel chairs in use, and the Fire Department is in the process of acquiring a stock of parts to keep them all in consistently working order. The storage locker would help keep the parts organized and safe. **Charlie Vincent moved to approve the Fire Department's request of \$1,057.30** for the storage locker. Walton Salley seconded the motion, which was **approved unanimously.**

Adjournment

The next ATAX Board meeting will be on May 1 at 4:00 p.m. Chairperson Andrews will be absent and Jane Morrow will preside. If anyone has suggestions on someone to fill Alex Pournelle's vacant position from the Hospitality/Lodging sector, please let Chairperson Andrews know. Charlie Vincent moved to adjourn the meeting. Walton Salley seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

The media/public was informed of the date, time and place of the meeting on January 27, 2014.

APPROVED BY THE ATAX BOARD



Deborah Hargis, Municipal Clerk

April 3, 2014