**TOWN OF EDISTO BEACH**

**ACCOMMODATIONS TAX ADVISORY BOARD**

**MINUTES**

**February 7, 2013**

**4:00 p.m.**

Town of Edisto Beach

Town Hall

2414 Murray Street

Edisto Beach SC 29438

Present: Iddy Andrews, Chairperson; Jane Morrow, Vice Chair, Alex Pournelle, Charlie Vincent, Board Members.

Absent: Walton Salley (Real Estate Classes), Anne Vaughan (out of town) and Lisa White (notice not given), Board Members.

**Call to Order:** Chairperson Andrews called the meeting to order promptly at 4:00 p.m.

**Approval of Minutes:** Charlie Vincent moved to approve the minutes of November 1, 2012. Alex Pournelle seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

**New Business:**

ATAX Fund Balance: Jane Morrow moved to approve the ATAX fund balance of $270,944.95. Charlie Vincent seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

Lowcountry & Resort Islands Tourism Commission: Jane Morrow moved to approve the letter sent to the Lowcountry & Resort Islands Tourism Commission. Charlie Vincent seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

ATAX Applications:

 **Low Country Classic - $10,000.**  Leland Vaughan presented an overview of the golf tournament and gave the board members a packet of information that has recently been sent out to the twenty teams that were invited. He explained the new system of ranking the teams, and the selection of players. He stressed the quality of the teams and players that will be present at the tournament. Mr. Vaughan stated that there would be only one tournament this year, as opposed to the two separate tournaments in previous years, with approximately 100 players. Mr. Vaughan outlined the itinerary of the tournament. Chairperson Andrews asked if the non-profit status had been approved and Mr. Vaughan said it had not, but all the paperwork had been submitted. Mr. Vincent asked about the 25% advertising line item. Mr. Vaughan said it was for banners, t shirts and visors. The other 75% is for putting on the tournament and for meals for the players only. Chairperson Andrews asked for clarification on the 501(c)(3) that Mr. Vaughan had indicated on his application. Mr. Vaughan explained the First Tee is nationwide program, which gives children the opportunity to learn the game. Chairperson Andrews asked why Mr. Vaughan had requested $7,000 for two tournaments last year and $10,000 for one tournament this year. Mr. Vaughan said that was how the budget fell this year, and that he would be appreciative of any support from the ATAX board. Ms. Morrow made the motion to approve $7,000 in ATAX funds for the Low Country Classic. Mr. Pournelle seconded the motion. Mr. Vincent suggested that next year more of the money go towards advertising and promotion of the upcoming year’s tournament. Ms. Morrow amended her motion to specify a contingency on the tournament’s approval of 501(c)(3) status, which Mr. Pournelle seconded. The amended motion passed unanimously. Chairperson Andrews thanked Mr. Vaughan for all the Plantation Golf Course does for the town of Edisto Beach.

 **Edisto Beach Police Department – Beach Patrol - $22,612.** Chief Bill Coffey presented an application for funding for the Town’s beach patrol which is active from May 3 through September 2. This year Council has had first reading of an ordinance to allow beach patrol members to issue citations for ordinance violations. The Police Department will be training the beach patrol members in Town ordinances and how to issue a citation. Ms. Morrow asked Chief Coffey if he was asking for an additional ATV, and Mr. Vincent asked how many ATVs the Police Department had. Chief Coffey said he was asking with for an ATV and that currently the one that was purchased in 2005 is inoperable. Mr. Vincent noted that the Fire Department was also asking for a new ATV and asked about the dual usage of the vehicle. Chief Coffey responded that the use of the vehicles is very different, so that would not be possible in most cases. Chairperson Andrews asked if the ATV would be used in the off season. Chief Coffey stated the Police Department patrols the front beach in the winter. Ms. Morrow moved to approve the Police Department’s request for $22,612 in ATAX funds. Mr. Vincent seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

 **Edisto Beach Police Department – Wireless Digital Camera Network - $59,645.** Chief Coffey supplied the Committee with a handout supporting the fact that 70% of the Police Department’s calls come between April and September. In the off season, the Police Department spends a lot of time protecting the 2,000 +/- properties that are directly linked to tourism. From the police/safety service perspective, most of what the Police Department does is tourist-related. Chief Coffey would like to multiply his police force by implementing a wireless camera system network. There are currently two officers on duty at all times, and the budget does not allow for hiring additional officers. Chief Coffey stated a camera on the causeway would be able to capture license tags of cars coming and going from the beach. Then in the case of a burglary, the Police Department could check the video to develop a list of suspects. The cameras are tied into SLED and could possibly be used to alert the Police to suspects wanted by other departments based on their criminal history or the fact that there is an agency looking for them. Studies have shown that in public housing when the cameras were installed, crime plummets. Chairperson Andrews asked if the cameras would be mobile. Chief Coffey replied that the ones he was requesting would be fixed, most likely at Bay Creek Park and at Highway 174. Mr. Vincent asked if the request for cameras had been brought before the ATAX Committee previously. Chief Coffey replied that it had, but the present request includes additional components. Ms. Morrow asked how long the cameras would last. Chief Coffey said that the housing is waterproof, and a maintenance contract would be pursued, but the best estimate is 5 – 10 years. Chairperson Andrews noted that the Town would be responsible for the maintenance of the system if approved by Council. Ms. Morrow asked if the Chief knew of any other towns that had asked for ATAX funds for this purpose, to which the Chief answered he did not know. Mr. Vincent wondered why Colleton County was not being asked to help pay for the system. Councilman Mann, who was in attendance, answered that was something the Town Council had not been successful at in the past, and was working on improving relations with the Colleton County Delegates. Charlie Vincent moved to approve the Police Department’s request for $59,645. Alex Pournelle seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

 **SCDNR Harry Hampton, Governor’s Cup (at Edisto Marina) - $9,000.** Becca Jones, Event Director for the Governor’s Cup presented the application for the 25th Annual Governor’s Cup. The application has been amended to **$9,300** for additional police. Ms. Jones relayed that the Governor’s Cup had the reputation of being the best in the series. Mr. Vincent pointed out that the tournament takes place during high season, so it was difficult to decide if this is an appropriate use of ATAX funds, since those funds are used to attract or generate tourism business when there is a lull. Ms. Jones said that yes, it is busy in July, but with the addition of the Governor’s Cup tourists it is full. Numbers from Waterfront had been compared and showed Governor’s Cup to be the biggest week of the year. Chairperson Andrews asked how many t shirts the tournament gave away. Ms. Jones replied that between 600 and 1,000 were distributed to participants, sponsors and others involved with the tournament. Chairperson Andrews asked why the advertising budget increased $3,000. Ms. Jones responded that they wanted to do more print media this year. Mr. Vincent asked about the $1500 used to advertise in the Edisto News. Since ATAX funds are used to bring in tourism, there isn’t a justification for advertising in a local paper. Mr. Vincent made the motion to approve $5,500 for the Governor’s Cup. Alex Pournelle seconded the motion. Ms. Morrow asked about the $3,400 line item for direct mail and printing. Ms. Jones said it was for invitations and registration for DNRs Listserve members. Ms. Jones explained that the last line item for 2013 was not for contributors but for additional print advertising. Chairperson Andrews suggested that in the future, the Governor’s Cup Event Director provide the Committee with written proof of increase in occupancy rates from real estate companies and increase in sales at restaurants for the specified time period the tournament takes place. Mr. Vincent amended his motion to $7,800 to include the $2000 for advertising and $300 for additional police. Mr. Pournelle seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

 **Town of Edisto Beach Fire Department – Polaris UTV 6 Wheel Beach Vehicle - $15,500**. Chief Larry Waddle presented the application. He stated that 85% of calls received by his department are medically related. They use the 6-wheel vehicle for those calls and it is able to go on the golf course, the beach, and is present at all Town-supported events. It is critical in transporting patients quickly from different locations that are difficult to access. It provides the Fire Department a greater presence. The current UTV is currently having the engine replaced. Chief Waddle said he has no confidence in that vehicle. Chairperson Andrews asked Chief Waddle why the Department was paying to have the current UTV repaired if it was in such bad shape. Chief Waddle stated that UTV was still under warrantee. Chairperson Andrews asked if Chief Waddle would use the current UTV until it was done and then use the approved funds to purchase the new one. He said he’d use the new one and use the old one as a back-up. She also asked if there was off season use of the UTV. Chief Waddle said it was still used, but not as frequently as in the peak season. Mr. Vincent asked who paid for the existing UTV, to which the Chief replied the Volunteers. Mr. Pournelle asked who was paying for the repairs and Chief Waddle answered that the Town was paying what was not covered by the extended warrantee. Mr. Vincent said he thought this was another instance that Colleton County should be providing funds. Jane Morrow made a motion to approve $15,500 for the Edisto Beach Police Department to purchase a Polaris UTV. Charlie Vincent seconded the motion. Mr. Vincent asked if the Volunteer Fire Department could pay for this UTV since they paid for the first one. Mr. Pournelle asked when the first UTV was purchased. Mr. Vincent stated it was bought in 2009. Mr. Pournelle suggested the Fire Department look into buying a used UTV, and questioned the amount spent on accessories. Mr. Vincent said that according to a current employee of the fire department, the accessories from the current UTV would be transferred to the new UTV if possible. Mr. Vincent also stated that one of the reasons the new UTV was so expensive was that it was undercoated and had aluminum features that a lot of current beach patrols were using, so hopefully this would improve its longevity of use. Chairperson Andrews then called for a vote, and the motion passed unanimously.

Chairperson Andrews reminded the Committee that the next meeting would be May 2,2013 at 4:00 p.m. She said she would not be present, but that Jane Morrow would preside in her absence. She stressed the importance of all Committee members being present at meetings and urged everyone to mark their calendars now for May 2nd, August 1st and November 7th. She stated that if one additional person had been absent at the meeting tonight, there would not be a quorum and the meeting would have been cancelled.

Jane Morrow made the motion to adjourn. Charlie Vincent seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

*The public/media was duly notified of the ATAX meeting on Friday, February 1, 2013.*

APPROVED BY THE ATAX BOARD

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 Deborah Hargis, Municipal Clerk

 May 2, 2013