

Introductory, TVPC Meeting

At roll call at 6:00PM, the following were present: Carl Hally, Vince Perna, Sunnee Clark, Alan Kleinfeld, Nancy Moore, Kerry Hupp, and Alan Kleinfeld. Missing were Wesley Bloomfield, Committee Member, and Robin Brooks, city staff representative. Soraya McKay represented Little Dog Agency. Councilperson Dale Stuckey was also present.

Minutes of the last meeting were unanimously approved on a motion by Perna and second by Hupp.

Remarks and Updates by the Chair Hally

Chair Hally asked whether the domain name for our former website, FollyBeachSouthCarolina.org, should be renewed. He had a request to renew for \$500. Upon discussion, it was decided that the site, which still provides referrals, could be renewed very cheaply, probably under \$15. Little Dog will renew.

He noted that he had visited new and nearby McLeod Plantation is found it excellent.

Treasurer's Report

Clark reported that we have spent \$78,662 of our proposed \$180,000 budget for our fiscal year and that we are on target with expenditures. On a motion by Hupp and a second by Kleinfeld, the report was accepted. Hally noted that we will virtually stop spending as of the end of March to comply with our focus on the off-season. Then we will begin planning for the fall season advertising.

New Business: Report from the CVB

Catherine Dority and Sandy Vickers spoke about the Charleston Visitors Bureau's efforts to boost beach visits generally and Folly specifically. They discussed their recent and planned publications and media, which include:

- *Visitors Guide*, where Folly Beach has renewed its presence
- A "Beach" bookmark, which has Folly pictures
- Planned Wedding publication. Folly is the only beach that welcomes weddings on the beach. A discussion ensued about the need to reduce the parking problems and noise that weddings may create. Little Dog will enhance preventive detail on the wedding section of VisitFolly.
- Planned recreation publication (beyond golf)
- Planned videos. Little Dog will provide links to the videos done by Raycom.

They noted that there has been an increase in the web traffic for beaches and for Folly in particular. They pointed out the "see and do" pages that embed Folly in many categories. They stressed that they tailor ad content to each magazine's editorial content, e.g., if the magazine is featuring kayaking, then the ad has kayaks.

To take or not take paid advertising

Some businesses have wanted to pay for advertising on the visitfolly.com. Legally, it appears that the committee could take money, though there is some uncertainty about how earnings could be used without jeopardizing TVPC's nonprofit status. This uncertainty, coupled with a desire to maintain design control and a desire to

avoid the charge of favoritism among competitors, resulted in a consensus to reject paid advertising at this time.

A-Tax and Hospitality Taxes

Vince Perna brought several spreadsheets detailing the history of A-Tax and Hospitality tax receipts by the cities within Charleston County. For example, in 2015, Folly represented 5.06% of the market share of Accommodations Tax while Charleston represented 40%; in 2013, 4.65% to Charleston’s 39.82%. The financial numbers are so large that even a fraction represents a lot of money.

Though the TVPC’s charge is to build accommodations, i.e., “heads and beds,” Hally noted that the food and beverage hospitality tax increased greatly in 2016:

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
1	FY15			FY16			
2	<u>DATE</u>	<u>LOCAL ATAX</u>	<u>HOSPITALITY</u>	<u>DATE</u>	<u>LOCAL ATAX</u>	<u>HOSPITALITY</u>	
3							
4	JULY 14	60,344.53	76,218.62	JULY 15	68,207.69	75,258.46	
5	AUG 14	51,523.33	68,230.09	AUG 15	58,640.79	75,179.06	
6	SEPT 14	38,306.94	42,139.91	SEPT 15	39,242.90	81,312.42	
7	OCT 14	23,079.02	48,453.21	OCT 15	23,263.13	52,587.83	
8	NOV 14	11,152.35	40,937.62	NOV 15	15,449.97	32,649.75	
9	DEC 14	10,443.56	12,124.76	DEC 15	11,770.45	42,734.45	
10	JAN 15		25,209.43	JAN 15		31,253.47	
11							
12	TOTAL	194,849.73	313,313.64		216,574.93	390,975.44	
13							
14				Increase from FY15	21,725.20	77,661.80	

Of course, one assumes that if you increase “heads and beds,” you also boost sales of food and beverage.

Little Dog: Web and Other Advertising Analytics

Soraya McKay gave a handout of several pages showing improved statistics in virtually every category. A few highlights:

- Visitfolly web sessions up 127%
- Increased web visits from metro regions, often more than 100%. However, we are not seeing as much correlation as expected between metro percentage increases and the metro regions targeted by Raycom.
- The click-through rate for the Raycom ads is above average.
- Improved ranking in the Visitfolly website from Google searches
- Monthly average of 100,000 Facebook views, with 30,000 engaged.

McKay presented 3 options for advertising weddings on Folly. The committee made a number of suggestions. McKay will email final drafts for further comment.

The next meeting is scheduled for May 11, 6PM. Then, we will begin planning for the fall season and see a slide show of Folly pictures.

The committee adjourned at 7:45.

Respectfully,
Nancy Moore, Secretary