

**Minutes of the
Special Events Committee
Friday, August 12, 2016
9:00 a.m.**

- I. Call to Order - Mr. Sonnen called the meeting to order at 9:05 am.

- II. Recurring Agenda
 - a. The proposed agenda for August 12, 2016 was accepted
 - b. Mrs. Campbell discussed her plan and idea for weekly events

- III. New Business
 - a) Mr. Sonnen requested that the committee focus and agree on events for 2017.

 - b) Favor House representatives requested permission to participate in the October Gallery Night
 - i. Mr. Sonnen explained that DIB would no longer be hosting Gallery Night after September
 - ii. Mr. Zimmern provided contact information for Mr. Carro
 - iii. Mrs. Dees extended offer to help promote via DIB website and Facebook page and to help inform merchants.

 - c) The Committee agreed on the following focus for events
 - i. 1st Qtr. -- Arts and Gallery's
 - ii. 2nd Qtr. -- History
 - iii. 3rd Qtr. Restaurants
 - iv. 4th Qtr. Retail

 - d) Mrs. Campbell requested that the Special Events Committee be given a budget
 - e) Mr. Zimmern recommended that the Special Events Board accept and award event grant proposals from within the DIB District and divide the 2017 budget four ways to accommodate for each of the quarter areas of focus. This will work similar to the Foo-Foo and Impact 100 Grants.
 - f) The committee will create an application, guidelines and selection criteria for grant submittals.
 - g) DIB will help brand and market the grant process.
 - h) The Special Events Committee will review grant submittals and select top choices to submit for final approval to DIB Board.
 - i) Mrs. Summerlin requested permission for the Seanger Theater to host a second line at the September Gallery Night and the committee agreed this would be a wonderful addition to the event.

- IV. Adjournment the meeting was adjourned at 10:55 a.m.

NOTE: The Special Events holds its regular meetings on the second Friday of each month at 9:00a.m. The meetings are held in the Public Meeting Room #1 of the Bowden Building, 120 Church Street, Pensacola, Florida 32502.

**VISIT PENSACOLA
GRANT PROGRAM GUIDELINES**
(revised 4/15/16)

Visit Pensacola Event/Experience Grant Program

A. INTRODUCTION

The Escambia County Tourist Development Council (TDC) was created pursuant to the State of Florida Local Option Tourist Development Act and Escambia County Ordinance Chapter 90, Article II, Section 90-31 – 90-64. The TDC guides the Escambia County Board of County Commissioners in the administering of funds collected from a local option tourist development tax (commonly known as the “bed tax” or TDT) on occupied transient lodging sales, i.e. hotels/motels, campgrounds and condominiums. The funds are designated to promote Escambia County as a preferred visitor destination with emphasis on the shoulder season of late August through May. Visit Pensacola allocates funds from its annual budget to a grant program for local groups and organizations that coordinate events or visitor experiences with a demonstrated history of visitor impact or significant potential to draw visitors to the area.

Each application will be evaluated against established criteria and historic precedent. The number and extent of these grants will be dependent upon the availability of designated funds and specific allocations. Ideally, the funds allocated by Visit Pensacola will eventually be returned through an increase in transient lodging sales and the tourist development tax generated from those sales and increased spending in the community that positively affects local sales tax revenues.

B. DEFINITIONS

A “Event” shall be defined as an organized concert, exhibition, festival, fair, conference or celebration which is conducted according to a prearranged schedule and in which general public interest and demand is manifested. For the purpose of this grant program, the public should extend beyond Escambia County to those living outside Escambia County who would consider visiting the destination and staying overnight to observe or participate.

An “Experience” shall be defined as a “tourism related product or experience” that is unique in nature, will enhance the visitors visit in Escambia County and meets elements of Visit Pensacola’s Strategic Plan. (attached). These experiences can be interactive, participatory or part of our historical/cultural fabric.

A “Program” means either an “event” or “experience”

C. STATEMENT OF POLICIES

1. TDT funds expended for the event/experience need to meet the allowable uses as defined by the governing state statute. *(Tourism grant funds that are expended for an activity, service, venue, or event, the activity, service, venue, or event shall have as one of its main purposes the attraction of tourists as evidenced by the promotion of the activity, service, venue, or event to tourists. Florida State Statutes 125.0104 section 5(A)2.)*
2. Grant funds are intended to supplement the sponsoring organization's budget and not be the sole source of funding.

3. Grant applications will be on a semi-annual basis (October/March) however the time between the award and the event/product start date cannot be under 90 days in order to maximize advertising to potential visitors to the county. Grant requests are on a yearly basis and are not guaranteed from year to year.
4. Paid lodging secured or promoted for the event/product must be located within Escambia County.
5. Funding shall be provided as reimbursement for approved actual expenditures upon completion of the event/experience with the exception provided by the mini-grant. Proof of payment must be provided. Proof of payment may be submitted in the form of a "paid" vendor credit card receipt or a check. If a check is used, a copy of both the front and back of canceled check must be provided. Written confirmation from vendor that expenditure has been paid in full is necessary if only a copy of the front of the cleared check is provided.
6. To be eligible for final payment, a completed Post-Program Report must be submitted within 60 days of the program end. The report must include tracking statistics regarding out-of-town visitors and their overall impact on the local economy, particularly on transient lodging facilities and occupancy. Failure to submit a complete Post-Event Report will result in disqualification for support and could place future eligibility in question. If the event occurs near the end of the fiscal year, request for reimbursement must be received by September 30.
7. Any funds granted will be subject to audit including Escambia County budget office and the Clerk of the Court office.
8. To qualify for reimbursement, proof of liability insurance must be provided by the host organization in the amount of \$1 million.
9. Visit Pensacola may choose to lend assistance or administer grant funds approved in the form of advertising, public relations, promotions or research programs through its respective agency of record on behalf of the applicant.
10. Recognition of Visit Pensacola must be included where appropriate on all printed material and the organization's Web site and referred to in public relations activities. A camera-ready logo will be provided. All printed materials with the Visit Pensacola logo must be presented with the Post Event Report. Failure to include the logo can be cause for disallowing reimbursement of that portion of the grant.
11. Funding is intended to support marketing and promotional efforts, venue/site rentals and costs associated with visiting artists, attractions/experiences and/or exhibits. Allowable expenses (direct customer acquisition costs) shall include the following: *Promotion, marketing and programming expenses, paid advertising that reaches (75-miles) beyond Escambia County with potential to drive overnight visitation, media buys, production and technical expenses and travel expenses including lodging. Specific examples of marketing include broadcast (radio/television), digital (web-based), social media, print (newspaper/magazine), email and printing.*

12. Funding is not intended to support administrative costs or non-public events. Unallowable expenses: *General and administrative expenses including salaries or supplements to salaries, building, renovating and/or remodeling expenses, prize money, scholarships, awards, permanent equipment purchases, debts incurred prior to grant requests, programs which solicit advertising or sponsorships, hospitality or social functions and advertising that only reaches within of Escambia County and its residents.*
13. Applicants should be aware that Visit Pensacola via its research company may also survey lodging partners and event attendees to obtain visitation data.
14. Events receiving TDT grants from other entities (ACE, Pensacola Sports, Escambia County) are not eligible to receive a grant through Visit Pensacola.

D. FUNDING ELIGIBILITY

The Intent of the Grant Program is to provide funding assistance for events/experiences that attract overnight visitors to Escambia County impacting the commercial lodging industry, hotels/motels, campgrounds, condominiums as well as restaurants, retail establishments and other businesses. To be considered for funding, the following criteria have been established:

1. Each application must include a signed Certification and Compliance page
2. The event/experience must have the potential to bring or have a documented past history of bringing out-of-town visitors.
3. Applicant must provide a marketing/promotions plan and provide a detailed program budget.
4. The program must use commercial lodging establishments within Escambia County.
5. Must provide liability insurance coverage

E. VISITOR TRACKING

In order to assess the impact of each event on the Pensacola-Escambia County transient lodging industry, Visit Pensacola wants to emphasize the importance of tracking the number of overnight visitors attending the event/experience. We will work directly with our research company (Majority Opinion) to intercept visitors at each event to ascertain a variety of data including party size, length of stay, reason for visit, awareness of the event, spending and other data.

In addition, it is suggested that you implement the following to help track visitors to your event:

- Room Block & Pick-Up Reports from Lodging Properties (primary method): Work with local lodging properties (hotel/motel, condo and campground) to set up rate codes for your event. By promoting those properties in your marketing you will help drive overnight business to the destination thus helping to generate more spending in the community.
- Visitor Tracking Information: Specific data can be tracked to be used for future marketing (zip code, email address, street address, social media address). You can gather this at the program, during a purchase process or through other technology applications.

F. CRITERIA FOR EVALUATION OF APPLICATIONS

Applications will be scored in three (3) categories with a maximum score of one hundred (100) points per applicant. If you are applying for more than one event, a separate application and distinct separate budget are required.

Total Point Scale

100 – 90 points- could receive up to 100% of requested funds

89 – 80 points- could receive up to 90% of requested funds

79 – 70 points- could receive up to 80% of requested funds

69 – 60 points- could receive up to 70% of requested funds

59 – 50 points- could receive up to 60% of requested funds

49 – 40 points- could receive up to 50% of requested funds

If you receive less than 40 points you are not eligible for any requested funds

G. CONCLUSION

Applicants are asked not to contact members of the Visit Pensacola Grant Committee/Board of Directors. Staff may be called upon by any one of these groups or staff at any time during the review process. Please submit the attached application form to:

H. CERTIFICATION AND COMPLIANCE STATEMENT

APPLICANT:

I hereby certify that the information contained in this application is true and correct to the best of my knowledge and that I have read the Policies and Procedures of the Visit Pensacola Event Grants Program and will abide by all legal, financial, and reporting requirements as a condition of receiving grant funds from Visit Pensacola. Signatures must be **original in blue ink**.

Name: _____

Organization: _____

(Signature): _____ (Date) _____

Please return the original application to:

**Visit Pensacola
Attention: Grant Program
1401 E. Gregory St.
Pensacola, FL 32502**

Visit Pensacola Special Event Grant Program

TOURISM DEVELOPMENT EVALUATION PORTION – MAX 50 POINTS

- Anticipated # of out-of-town overnight visitors & how will it be measured?
- Anticipated # of attendees & how will it be measured?
- Anticipated # of Room Nights & how will it be measured?
- Room Night History of event/experience (if applicable); Include support from participating lodging properties
- Has a hotel(s) partner been secured? If so, please list and provide a confirmation letter from hotel.
- Will your event/experience work cooperatively with other tourism entities in the community to create a longer stay in the destination? If yes, please provide a support letter from that organization(s).
- Has venue/facility been secured? If so, please list:
- Is site located within Escambia County?
- Does this event/experience contribute to the overall appeal of Pensacola/Escambia County as a preferred visitor destination?
- Targeted Audience (demographics)
- Targeted Origin Markets (must be at least 75 miles from Escambia County)
- Has a comprehensive marketing plan for the event/experience.
- Time of Year for the Event
- Describe how your event is unique to the destination and/or region.

PROGRAM INFORMATION EVALUATION PORTION – MAX 25 POINTS

- How does the event support your organization's mission?
- Include the event/experience budget.
- Describe how grant funds would be used.
- Describe how you evaluate the outcome of the program.
- Describe how you plan to document overnight hotel stays.
- Is this a multi-day or single day event/experience?
- Is this a ticketed event/experience?

FINANCIAL INFORMATION EVALUATION PORTION – MAX 25 POINTS

- Have you received a marketing support grant in the past? If yes, include amount, name of event and year received
- Community Support – List any city, county, TDC, or other cash contributions from public entities for this event. (Include amount and source)
- List any in-kind support from the community that has been committed for this event. (ie: donated facilities, volunteer/staff support, city/county services, etc.)
- Outline any sponsorship support that has been secured for this event.



VISIT PENSACOLA POST-PROGRAM REPORT

Event / Product Grant Information		
Name of Event:		
Contact/Title:		
Address:		
City:	State:	Zip:
Telephone #: ()	Awarded Grant Amount: \$	
Email:		
Make Check Payable To: (Please Note – Organization must be same as organization that was awarded grant.) Tax I.D. or Social Security #: (This information is required)		

To be reimbursed, please submit the following:

- 1) An invoice from your organization to Visit Pensacola for payment of awarded grant amount.
- 2) Valid invoice(s) for allowable expenses. Only submit receipts amounting to the grant awarded.
- 3) Copy of proof of payments such as cleared check record showing front and back of checks, or detailed credit card receipts.
- 4) Number of visitors calculated with backup documentation
- 5) Number of room nights tracked with backup documentation
- 6) Copies of marketing or advertising materials, websites showing Visit Pensacola logo.

EXPENSES TO BE REIMBURSED

Itemized expenses to be reimbursed by the Visit Pensacola Grant funds must be allowable and match submitted invoices. Use additional pages if necessary.

Expense Item	Amount

NUMBER OF VISITORS

Provide back up (letter/communication) from the lodging properties participating with your event. Unknown or untracked is not acceptable and request for reimbursement will not be processed.

MEDIA / MARKETING

Provide summary of media exposure received (local, regional and national/ print/ television and radio) as well as examples of promotional materials (brochures, posters, programs, etc.). Please add additional sheets if needed.

I certify that the above information is true and accurate to the best of my knowledge.

(Name) _____ (Date) _____

FUNDING CATEGORIES

Challenge Grant (\$50,001 up to \$100,000)

This grant is for larger events that demonstrate the ability to bring outside funding to the table. The number of challenge grants will be limited to no more than two per year.

- *Level 1: Up to \$100,000 will be matched on a 1:1 basis with no more than 20% coming from in-kind contributions*
- *Level 2: Up to \$75,000 will be matched on applicant contributions ranging between 50% and 99% match with no more than 20% coming from in-kind contributions.*
- Must show budget allocations, business plan and a detailed marketing plan
- Preferably large multi-day events, two or more days
- Preferably in multiple venues
- Strong promotion of lodging and local businesses and documents packaging of these elements
- Secures sponsors throughout the community
- Can quantify success through room nights (retail sales and press coverage may also boost potential for funding)
- Event is unique to the community and the Gulf Coast region
- Events that showcase attributes of Escambia County
 - Arts Community
 - Eco-tourism Community
 - Culture / Heritage/ Culinary Community
- Provides exceptional opportunity for regional or national exposure supporting the Visit Pensacola brand story

Large Event/Experience: (10,001 to \$50,000)

- Must show budget allocations, business plan and a detailed marketing plan
- Preferably large multi-day events, two or more days
- Preferably in multiple venues
- Strong promotion of lodging and local businesses and documents packaging of these elements
- Secures sponsors throughout the community
- Can quantify success through room nights (retail sales and press coverage may also boost potential for funding)
- Event is unique to the community and the Gulf Coast region
- Events that showcase attributes of Escambia County
 - Arts Community
 - Eco-tourism Community
 - Culture / Heritage/ Culinary Community
- Provides exceptional opportunity for regional or national exposure supporting the Visit Pensacola brand story

Small Event/Experience: (\$2,000 to \$10,000)

- Must show budget allocations, business plan and a detailed marketing plan
- Single day or half-day event
- Single Venue
- Drives overnight lodging and enhances the visitor experience
- Events that showcase attributes of Escambia County
 - Arts Community
 - Eco-tourism Community
 - Culture / Heritage/ Culinary Community
- Provides exceptional opportunity for regional or national exposure supporting the Visit Pensacola brand story

Newly Created Events/Experience: (up to \$5,000)

- Must show budget allocations, business plan and a detailed marketing plan
- Single day or half-day event using a Single Venue
- Drives overnight lodging and enhances the visitor experience
- Can quantify success through:
 - Detailed research of event
 - Business/Event Plan
 - Marketing Plan
 - Secured location or Anticipated Feasible Location
 - Anticipated Budget
 - Dedicated Sponsors

Micro-Grant (up to \$2,000)

Available for small community organizations looking at starting or enhancing a tourism related program, event or experience. Up to 75% of needed funds awarded on the front-end; remaining 25% awarded after all back-up have been provided.