

Tourist Development Council Regular Meeting

Ocala/Marion County Visitor & Convention Bureau

109 W Silver Springs Blvd.

Ocala, FL 34475

Wednesday, August 20, 2025

9:00 a.m.

The regularly scheduled meeting for the Tourist Development Council was held both in person and via TEAMS.

Mr. Rus Adams read into the record, members of the public are advised that this meeting/hearing is a public proceeding, and the clerk to the board is making an audio recording of the proceedings, and all statements made during the proceedings, which recording will be a public record, subject to disclosure under the public records law of Florida. Be aware, however, that the audio recording may not satisfy the requirement for a verbatim transcript of the proceedings, described in the notice of this meeting, in the event you desire to appeal any decision adopted in this proceeding.

Roll Call

Present:

Jeff Bailey, Commissioner Ron Livsey, Councilmember Barry Mansfield, Victoria Billig, Rus Adams, Danny Gaekwad, Commissioner Carl Zalak, Christopher Fernandez

Staff:

Loretta Shaffer, Sky Wheeler, DeeDee Busbee, Bryan Day, Corry Locke, Heidi Villagomez, Coleen Robinson, Candace Shelton, Samantha Solomon

Guests:

Austin Cotter- Canyons Inc., Paresh Chhotu, Amy Agnola, John Silvey - Southern Fast Pitch, Beryl McCoay, Hayley Radich & Andi Baum – Miles, Isiah Lewis - Downs & St. Germain Research, Dana Olesky-Chief Assistant County Attorney

Notice of Publication

Notice was published on the County Website on January 29, 2025 and subsequently updated to include Teams information on March 13, 2025.

Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by Mr. Jeff Bailey, seconded by Councilmember Barry Mansfield, to adopt the minutes from the June, 26 2025 Tourist Development Council Meeting as presented. The motion was unanimously approved by the council (7-0).

Christopher Fernandez in at 9:03 am

Acknowledgment of Financials – June and July 2025

A motion was made by Mr. Danny Gaekwad, seconded by Commissioner Ron Livsey, to review and approve June and July 2025 Financials.

Mr. Rus Adams interjected and inquired as to whether there was any discussion to be had regarding the June and July 2025 Financials.

Mr. Gaekwad inquired as to if there were any items in the financial statement which were unusual as he had not reviewed the financials.

Ms. Sky Wheeler advised there were no expenditures that were unusual, noting she would be giving a more robust report once the council reviewed the Tourist Development Tax Collections later in the meeting. She further advised the Tax Collector's Office returned to their original tax reporting software therefore deposits appeared larger than average affecting the revenue.

Ms. Loretta Shaffer added that the budget was presented to the Board of County Commissioners in July and they were supportive and forwarded the budget to the September meeting.

The motion was unanimously approved by the council (8-0).

Report from Chair

Mr. Adams advised that Ms. Victoria Billing would be resigning from her position with the Tourist Development Council and that this would be the last meeting she would attend as a councilmember. Ms. Billing explained that she is enrolled in a doctorate program and works at the Appleton which created a need to modify her schedule. Mr. Adams presented her with a commemorative plaque and the Council thanked her for service. Mr. Adams requested a nomination be given for a new Vice Chair.

Ballots were distributed and the votes tallied which indicated Christopher Fernandez won the majority vote.

A motion was made by Commissioner Cark Zalak, seconded by Mr. Gaekwad, to confirm the voting and appointment of Christopher Fernandez as Vice Chairman to the Tourist Development Council Meeting as presented. The motion was unanimously approved by the council (8-0).

Mr. Adams advised that postcards were available in the Ocala/Marion County Visitors and Convention Center lobby.

Ms. Jessica Heller advised that approximately a year and a half ago postcards started being produced to promote the destination based on visitor feedback. The sales team uses a postal box display at tradeshow for attendees to mail postcards and uses the cards to write thank you notes. During National Travel and Tourism Week a public photograph contest was held in which the winner's photograph would be made into a postcard. Over six hundred votes were cast, and the winning postcard is now available.

Mr. Gaekwad inquired as to how many postcards have been printed.

Ms. Heller advised that there were initially one hundred of each design printed and more ordered based on popularity.

Mr. Gaekwad suggested incorporating Marion County accolades into verbiage on postcards and making them available at hotels.

Ms. Shaffer advised that a pillar at the gateway was hit by a motor vehicle which caused cosmetic damage requiring repairs. She further advised the lights are scheduled to be tested again and are anticipated to be fully functional by September 2, 2025.

Funding Requests

Mr. Adams transitioned to funding requests for Fiscal Year 2025 and deferred to Mr. Corry Locke.

Mr. Locke advised that there were six funding requests for the Room Night Generating Funding Events Program which is the team's brand new funding program therefore these would be the first applicants under the revised guidelines. The total funding amount requested for all six events was \$47,130.00. If all were approved there would be a deficit of \$24,568.25. However, there was a surplus in the bid fee event funding allocations of \$75,000. Funds would be transferred from Bid Fee Event Funding Program to the Room Night Generating Program leaving a balance of \$50,431.75 in the Bid Fee Event Funding Program. The revised Room Night

Generating Funding program operates as a quarterly reimbursement model and all six of the events are in the same quarter therefore all would be reimbursed at \$10 per room night.

Mr. Gaekwad inquired as to which were the new events.

Mr. Locke advised he would indicate which events were new as he reviewed each event with the Council.

Florida Swims High School Swim Meet - \$2,500 (*Room Night Generating*)

Mr. Locke presented a Room Night Generating Events Funding request for Florida Swims High School Meet, which is a repeat event in its second year. The event is presented by the Florida Swims Foundation which represents the Florida Swimming Pool Association for the State of Florida. The funding request is for \$2,500, which is a 250-room night guarantee for the dates of October 3rd and 4th to take place at Florida Aquatics Swimming and Training (FAST) with an estimated economic impact of just over \$341,000 which is a total ROI of 224%. The intended use of funds is the sanctioning fee to host the event, printing and postage, meet credentials, banners, and marketing materials. They anticipate 1,000 to 2,000 attendees who are all high school aged. The event operates as an invitational meet meaning any high school is invited to attend as long as they qualify.

Mr. Gaekwad asked Mr. Locke to clarify what the phrase 'number of room nights guaranteed' meant.

Mr. Locke advised they have presented a 250-room night guarantee based on the projected number of attendees, which means they would need to achieve that figure in order to get the full requested amount of \$2,500.00. Mr. Locke further explained that last year the event was held during Hurricane Milton, and they had decreased attendance, so the funding history reflects \$1,246.00 as they did not reach their goal of room nights guaranteed.

Mr. Gaekwad commended Mr. Locke and the sales team's follow-up processes to ensure deliverables were received.

Mr. Locke advised that Samantha Solomon on the sales team contacts individuals before, during and after events to ensure deliverables are achieved as stated in the guidelines.

Discussion ensued regarding whether to present room night generating events separately or as a group, and it was decided to present them separately.

A motion was made by Mr. Gaekwad, seconded by Mr. Bailey, to approve the recommendation for the requested Room Night Generating Event funding amount of \$2,500

for the Florida Swims High School Swim Meet to the Board of County Commissioners. The motion was unanimously approved by the council (8-0).

Ocala International Horse Show - \$14,000 (*Room Night Generating*)

The Ocala National Horse Show is another repeat event to be held at the World Equestrian Center for October 21-25th, with a requested funding amount of \$14,000.00. A 1,400-room night guarantee was associated with the \$14,000.00. The estimated economic impact is \$1,312,495 which is a total ROI of 148%. The intended use of funds is for promotional items, marketing and advertising, live streaming, judges, announcers and event specific rental items. The event is a five day horse show with Saddlebreds, Morgan Horses, Hackney Ponies and Dutch Harness. The event has taken place for the last four years at the World Equestrian Center and was first funded last year.

Mr. Gaekwad inquired as to how long the same event can be funded.

Mr. Locke advised there is no cap on the number of years an event can be funded in the current guidelines.

A motion was made by Mr. Bailey, seconded by Councilmember Barry Mansfield, to approve as presented the recommendation for the requested Room Night Generating Event funding amount of \$14,000 for the Ocala National Horse Show to the Board of County Commissioners. The motion was unanimously approved by the council (8-0).

Witch's Brew Spell-A-Thon Softball Tournament - \$15,000 (*Room Night Generating*)

The Witch's Brew Spell-A-Thon Softball Tournament is hosted by Southeastern Fastpitch, for October 24-26th at Ocala Regional and Shocker Park. The tournament anticipates 110 teams with divisions split between the two facilities. The funding request is for \$15,000 for a 1500 room night guarantee and the anticipated economic impact is \$1,228,892 which is 110% ROI. The intended use of funds is facility rental fees, event sanction fees, umpires, marking materials, softballs, event tee-shirts, security, signage and tent rentals. The tournament has been held for the last several years and is a Halloween based tournament where the girls dress in costume, and play all night. Last year the event was not funded as the funding guidelines were under review, and they did not apply in time before guidelines were halted but the event was funded in 2022 and 2023.

Mr. Gaekwad inquired as to how many members there are on one team.

Mr. Locke advised that a team needs at least ten players on the field, but they normally bring 12 to 15.

Mr. Bailey commented that the three funding requests presented are favorable as the events take place in different parts of the county.

Mr. Gaekwad inquired about the distance teams travel to attend the event.

Mr. Locke advised players travel from across the state of Florida and South Georgia.

A motion was made by Mr. Gaekwad, seconded by Ms. Victoria Billig, to approve as presented the recommendation for the requested Room Night Generating Event funding amount of \$15,000 for the Witch's Brew Spell-A-Thon Softball Tournament to the Board of County Commissioners. The motion was unanimously approved by the council (8-0).

AYF Football & Cheer Southeast Regional Championship - \$6,000 (*Room Night Generating*)

The American Youth Football Cheer and Dance Southeastern Regional to take place at Ocala Regional Sportsplex on November 14-16, 2025 with a funding request amount of \$6,000.00 which is a 600 room nights guarantee. The anticipated economic impact would be \$682, 244.00 which is a 199% ROI. The intended use of funds would be for facility rental fees, referees, banner, security, event specific rental items and marketing items. The tournament was held in Ocala in the past in 2013 and 2022 which was held at Belleview Sportsplex. The southeast region of the United States for the American Youth Football Division compete for the championship for the southeast region to be able to go on to the Superbowl. Forty football teams and twenty all age division cheerleader squads participate in the event. The cheer competition is to take place at West Port High School.

Mr. Gaekwad asked if the event was rotating after ten years.

Mr. Locke confirmed the event was rotating and he had a great relationship with the southeast regional commissioner who reached out months ago to bring the event to Ocala again. Mr. Locke advised he worked with the City of Ocala regarding available dates at Ocala regional Sportsplex.

A motion was made by Mr. Bailey, seconded by Councilmember Barry Mansfield, to approve as presented. the recommendation for the requested Room Night Generating Event funding amount of \$6,000 for the AYF Football & Cheer Southeast Regional Championship to the Board of County Commissioners. The motion was unanimously approved by the council (8-0).

Fiddlers Turkey Run - \$6,130 (*Room Night Generating*)

Mr. Locke presented the Fiddlers Turkey Run which is a barrel race to be held over Thanksgiving week, November 25-29, 2025, at World Equestrian Center with a funding amount of \$6,130.00 for a guarantee of 613 room nights. The estimated economic impact is \$531,742 which is a

127% ROI. The funds would be used for advertising, marketing, social media, show announcers, signs, live stream expenses and judges. The event was funded in 2023 and 2024. The event started in Ocala in 2002 then moved to Jacksonville and returned to Marion County in 2021.

Mr. Gaekwad asked how many people will participate in the event.

Mr. Locke advised the event anticipates 800 attendees with approximately 150-200 competitors from all over the county.

A motion was made by Mr. Gaekwad, seconded by Mr. Christopher Fernandez, to approve as presented the recommendation for the requested Room Night Generating Event funding amount of \$6,130 for the Fiddlers Turkey Run to the Board of County Commissioners. The motion was unanimously approved by the council (8-0).

AHAF Holiday Festival Arabian Horse Show - \$3,500 (*Room Night Generating*)

Mr. Locke presented the Arabian Horse Association of Florida's Holiday Festival to take place on November 26-29, 2025, at World Equestrian Center for the funding amount request of \$3,500 for 350 guaranteed room nights. The estimated economic impact is \$355,856 with a ROI of 146%. The funds would be used for AV equipment rental, advertising, social media, printed materials and event related equipment rental. The event has occurred previously but has never been funded.

Mr. Gaekwad inquired as to how many horses participated in the event.

Mr. Locke advised that total attendance is expected to be 2,300. Mr. Locke advised he would include the number of competitors in addition to the total number of competitors for future TDC meetings. He confirmed the number of competitors for the event was anticipated to be 550.

A motion was made by Mr. Gaekwad, seconded by Councilmember Barry Mansfield, to approve as presented. the recommendation for the requested Room Night Generating Event funding amount of \$3,500 for the AHAF Holiday Festival Arabian Horse Show to the Board of County Commissioners. The motion was unanimously approved by the council (8-0).

Mr. Mansfield commented that the six funding requests would generate 4,700 room nights in the fourth quarter, which is a big boost for the end of the year.

Mr. Gaekwad commented that unique shows should be added to marketing materials to advertise and showcase the events using video clips.

Mr. Adams verified that there is an events calendar listed on the website which includes both funded and non-funded events.

Ms. Wheeler confirmed and added that there is an optional monthly e-newsletter for customers that highlights events.

Ms. Wheeler revisited Mr. Gaekwad's question regarding the number of participants for the Fiddler's Turkey Run event and advised the number of participants was 720.

Marketing Assistance Funding Program

Ms. Wheeler explained that this was time of year when Marketing Assistance Funding applicants are reviewed and she provided two options for review as the program has grown significantly. Ms. Wheeler reminded the Council that the program was designed in conjunction with the rebrand of Florida's Natural Wonder as the OMCVCB brand to help gain leverage and equity in the brand as quickly as possible while also amplifying the local vendors that provide tourism products in Marion County to create more year-round tourism. This is not event-based funding which goes through Mr. Locke's team. Only local businesses can apply for this funding which is intended for the OMCVCB team to help those businesses utilize their skills to leverage their brand to market outside of Marion County and grow their economic impact as well as the County's economic impact overall. Candace Shelton manages the program but was unable to attend the meeting and will present in future. The program is robust, requiring all applicants to attend a funding workshop to ensure they are eligible to be a member of the applicant pool, and are required to submit required materials within the established timeframe. The TDC makes a recommendation, then staff further confirms that the applicant qualifies through the contracting period and getting the Certificates of Insurance, as many are smaller businesses that Ms. Shelton works heavily with to ensure she is extending herself as a resource to help applicants be successful, then it will go in front of the Board of County Commissioners. The applicants must submit all marketing materials to the OMCVCB before it can launch so that the marketing team can approve it for brand standards. Once approved the applicant can launch the campaign, report on it and be reimbursed. There have been several applicants this year. Ms. Wheeler then presented the two options for funding. This type of funding does step down, after two years down to 80% of max, then after 5 years applicants need to take a cycle off before they can reapply for businesses to see the value of marketing outside of Marion County.

Mr. Gaekwad expressed to the council that he appreciated the step-down type of funding to encourage new business as opposed to established businesses.

Commissioner Carl Zalak out at 9:40am

Councilmember Mansfield reminded the council that a few months prior the board extensively reviewed this step-down funding program along with the Room Night Generating Funding Program using specific refund amounts for corresponding quarters.

Commissioner Carl Zalak in at 9:45am

Commissioner Zalak asked for verification of his notion that Room Night Generating funding had been eliminated for the 1st quarter.

Ms. Wheeler advised that the opportunity to secure Bid Fees in the 1st quarter had been eliminated and Room Night Generating funding opportunities were reduced significantly for the 1st quarter.

Discussion ensued with Mr. Gaekwad concluding that funds needed to be used wisely.

Ms. Wheeler advised that the program had seventeen 1st year applicants, four 2nd year applicants and three 3rd year applicants. The total funding requested was \$109,500.00 and the program was budgeted for fiscal year 26 at \$75,000.00. The reappropriations process allowed savings in fiscal year 2025 funds to be added so if council desires they would be able to fulfill funding of the entire \$109,500.00, that was Option B. This would allow partners the \$5,000.00 reimbursable amount as every year there are partners that cannot fulfill the requirements and the full \$75,000.00 has never been extended. Option A would be to reduce the funding on a percentage basis, so that everyone gets moved down the same amount and the team sticks with the budgeted \$75,000.00. September 30th is the last day for partners to submit all of their funding. This way in October staff can provide what exactly was extended out of fiscal year 2025.

Discussion ensued regarding the options presented and verifying that the program is geared towards year-round small business marketing.

Mr. Bailey presented a motion to keep the funding at \$75,000.00 which was not seconded.

Commissioner Zalak advised that the Council should be notified quarterly with updates in should adjustments be needed.

Ms. Wheeler advised that the participants must have contracts submitted by November 14th so by the January TDC meeting staff would be able to give a full report on the possibilities and reimbursements. The resolution approved by the board regarding all of the funding programs compels staff to review annually and make adjustments to budget and guidelines as needed. Ms. Wheeler further advised that staff has looked at opportunities regarding ways to move some participants of this program into something that is more suited to the business line that they are in to help them be successful.

Ms. Dana Olesky noted that Mr. Gaekwad would need to abstain from voting on items regarding the Marketing Assistance Funding Program.

A motion was made by Commissioner Carl Zalak, seconded by Councilmember Barry Mansfield, to approve \$109,500.00 in funding for the proposed Marketing Assistance Funding Program for the fiscal year 2025/26 to the Board of County Commissioners. The motion was approved by the council (6-1). Mr. Danny Gaekwad abstained from voting and submitted FORM 8B MEMORANDUM OF VOTING CONFLICT FOR COUNTY, MUNICIPAL, AND OTHER LOCAL PUBLIC OFFICERS.

Mr. Gaekwad advised he was unaware of the funding requests associated with his businesses and recused himself from voting. He added that he has never requested any funding from the TDC since being a part of the community and has spent over a hundred million dollars on different projects.

A motion was made by Commissioner Carl Zalak, seconded by Councilmember Barry Mansfield, to approve all Marketing Assistance Funding Program Recipients as presented under Option B at \$109,500.00 for the fiscal year 2025/26 to the Board of County Commissioners. The motion was approved by the council (6-1). Mr. Danny Gaekwad abstained from voting and submitted FORM 8B MEMORANDUM OF VOTING CONFLICT FOR COUNTY, MUNICIPAL, AND OTHER LOCAL PUBLIC OFFICERS.

Staff Updates

Room Night Generating Event Funding Guidelines

Mr. Locke advised that recently they met with the County Attorney's Office as an opportunity to enhance customer service as customers were having difficulty submitting reimbursement items before the 60-day deadline and a decision was made to extend that to 90 days.

A motion was made by Mr. Bailey, seconded by Ms. Billig, to recommend the Room Night Generating Event Funding Guidelines to the Board of County Commissioners. The motion was approved by the council (8-0).

Mr. Locke also clarified for record that the phrase 'Statement of Payment Policies' was added to the Guidelines.

Mr. Jeff Bailey out at 10:04am

PRESENTATION: Quarterly Economic Impact/Visitor Tracking Report – April – June Data

Mr. Isiah Lewis with Downs & St. Germain Research presented the April through June 2025 Visitor Tracking and Economic Impact Study. The study objectives remained the same through the visitor journey and changes would be made after the start of the new fiscal year which he would have more details on in the next TDC meeting. The methodology shows 571 visitors in

that time period at the listed partner and event involvement: Appleton Museum of Art, KP Hole, Silver Springs State Park, HDG Hotels, Hampton Inn and Suites, Circle Square, Ft. King, Florida Horse Park, Rock the County Ocala, Santos Bike Shop, WEC and FAST. In the Executive Summary, the tourism snapshot's general trends, the TDT collections increased by 7.7% and those actual collection dates were in March through May. The occupancy showed a bit of a softening this quarter but showed continued growth in room rates which lead economic impact of indirect spending to have a smaller decline than with visitation overall. A bigger decrease was seen in visitation being capped because of the room nights being a bit higher which lead to direct spending decrease. The advertising recall and influence showed sizeable increases in those who noticed advertising and those who were influenced compared to the previous year.

Mr. Jeff Bailey in at 10:06am

Mr. Lewis continued noting the length of stay increased from 3.4 nights in 2024 to 3.7 nights in 2025. April through June saw a significant increase in those who requested or downloaded the visitor's guide up 8% from the previous year at 16%. The economic impact showed nearly a 13% decrease in visitors with occupancy down 7.2% which is broken down between hotels and vacation rentals, room rate increased to \$122.71 which is up 2.3% year over year leading to a smaller decrease in RevPAR of 5.1%. Total room nights came in at 272,700, TDT collections at \$1.7 million, hotel units were at 5,223 and vacation units at 280.

Mr. Gaekwad noted that occupancy was very low..

Mr. Lewis advised combined STR and key data metrics were used to provide that information and it was split up between vacation rentals and hotels. Key data's vacation rental occupancy April through June was 49% and hotels was 55%.

Mr. Gaekwad asked MR. Lewis to clarify if the increases in the number of units and occupancy associated with short term rentals impacted the data.

Mr. Lewis advised that as units increased there would be an accompanying decrease in occupancy. Mr. Lewis explained that national trends also show a tightening of pockets as people are feeling uncertain about the economy which lead to less travel.

Mr. Gaekwad asked what other destinations Downs and St. Germain works.

Mr. Lewis advised Downs and St. Germain works with all of southwest Florida, Tallahassee, the panhandle, a few destinations on the West Coast and all of central Florida including Polk and Pasco counties, Maine and Vermont.

Mr. Gaekwad asked whether Downs and St. Germain works with Citrus County.

Mr. Lewis responded that Downs and St. Germain does not work with Citrus County as it is a larger destination. The trend is seen nationally across data collected by Downs and St. Germain and across other marketing research companies showing a decrease in tourism generally starting to happen in the last April to June which may also happening in July to September. Nationwide, people are traveling less and have tighter budgets. They are still spending on hotels, but less in other categories. The three years coming out of COVID saw an increase in Florida travel.

Mr. Gaekwad advised that hurricanes should be considered in the data.

Mr. Lewis advised the hurricanes impacted earlier quarters with increased visitation.

Mr. Danny Gaekwad out at 10:12am

Commissioner Zalak asked if income and horse business makes Marion County less susceptible to decreased travel due to spending patterns.

Mr. Lewis advised that lower incomes are traveling less nationwide whereas business travel has remained fairly flat and wealthy class is still traveling. Mr. Lewis noted that one could assume that those individuals attending horse-related events were wealthier and that may contribute to why Marion County has seen less of a decrease.

Commissioner Zalak inquired as to a data set showing horse travel trends over time.

Mr. Lewis advised he affirmed he would be able to provide that data.

Mr. Danny Gaekwad in at 10:14am

Mr. Mansfield added that at a recent conference he learned that demographic above 50 are still traveling, travel overall down and internationally down a great deal especially in Canada.

Mr. Adams asked if business travel was impacted by COVID and if so has it recovered from COVID.

Mr. Lewis advised he would need to conduct further research and provide that data but would assume that to be the case

Mr. Lewis moved into the visitor tracking portion of presentation advising that 2 in 5 visitors to the area plan their trip a month or less in advance and on average planned their trip 73 days in advance which is longer than other quarters.

Mr. Danny Gaekwad out at 10:17am

Mr. Lewis continued noting the top two trip planning sources were talking to family and friends which was 52% and up 7% year over year and using search sites which is up 10% year over year. The top reasons for visiting were as follows: 1 in 3 visitors were visiting friends/relatives, 1 in 6 attended horse shows and visit the springs area, 13% come to relax/unwind, 10% for dining out and 10% to visit downtown. There were sizeable increases in those who recalled advertising, 1 in 3, and those who were influenced by advertising, 1 in 5. The sources of advertising were social media and online advertising at 1 in 5 and television making a 6% increase and magazine/newspaper articles making a 9% increase year over year. The regions of traveler origin remained flat with a small increase in those visiting from international destinations. Visitors' top states of origin were familiar with Florida, Georgia, New York and Texas but new to the top 5 is Ohio which is up 2% year over year. The top markets of origin are Orlando, Tampa, Jacksonville, Gainesville and Atlanta. Travel party size increased slightly to 2.9 and 1 in 3 visitors traveled with a child or someone under the age of 18. The typical traveler profile median age is 50 and has a household income of \$91,700 per year which is a sizeable increase up from \$79,300 in 2024. One in 3 visitors were new which is up 6% year over year and 1 in 5 visitors have visited 10 plus times which is slightly down. 86% of visitors drove into the area which is up 5% year over year and 12% came from Orlando International Airport.

Mr. Ron Livsey out at 10:20am

As the economy tightens the driving will increase and flights will go down as a nationwide trend. Visitor behavior shows that the typical visitor spent 3.7 nights which is up from 3.4 in 2024. 4 out of 5 visitors only visited the destination during their trip which is up 5% year over year. The top accommodations showed a slight increase in those staying in hotels/motels up 3% year to year to 48% due to there being a slight decrease in those visiting just for the day being down 2% year over year. The top activities include: 2 in 3 visitors dined out which is up significantly by 18% year over year, followed by visiting friends and family at nearly half then visiting downtown, visiting spring areas, relax and unwind, shopping and horse events. Mr. Lewis then presented a slide comparing the visitors' activities versus reason for visiting breaking it down into a quadrant analysis. Canoeing, kayaking, tubing, spas, sporting events were not done as frequently this quarter but exceeded expectations. The quadrant of Done Often and Exceeds Expectations are the horse-related events, visit area springs and nature. The travel parties spent \$314 a day, which is slightly down year over year, as an increased room rate will flatten parties spending and the reason there was an increase on the overall trip spending. Almost all visitors said their visit met or exceeded their expectations, 45% advised the trip exceeded expectations which was up 3% year over year. 92% advised they would recommend visiting the area to a friend which is up 1% year over year and 95% state they will return to the area with nearly ½ saying they will definitely return which is down 13% year over year.

Mr. Danny Gaekwad in at 10:25am

Mr. Ron Livsey in at 10:25am

Mr. Lewis presented a slide with area descriptors and stated "We used to live here, and Ocala has grown a lot since then, but it is still very pretty and hasn't gotten too crowded. I would say also that the restaurants have gotten much better too". He further stated "So people that used to live here feel the area is doing really well. There is an old feel to the place that is unique! The parks and nature trails are something to see. Even if its just for a small vacation I would say spend a few days here". He noted "there are lots of rolling green pastures with white fences, beautiful horses and fancy huge barns. Also, there are many natural Springs in Ocala that are beyond magical" so areas highlighted are being loved by visitors.

Mr. Gaekwad asked Mr. Lewis who handles Citrus County.

Mr. Lewis advised he would need to research that information.

Mr. Gaekwad noted he had just bought the Plantation Resort in Crystal River and it is being remodeled as a Margaritaville with a new golf course.

Commissioner Zalak advised the Council he has had about a half dozen community meetings sharing the Insider's Guide and trying to create hosts out of the community members as data shows a vast majority of people are coming to visit friends and family. He added that residents don't know how to vacation in their backyard but if they get a travel guide or download an app then they are visiting tourist attractions. He expressed the need to build ambassadorship to help build the economy. The retirement communities are excited for grandchildren to come with their new knowledge of the area.

Mr. Adams commented that he saw a post on Facebook of a new resident looking for things to do with a 17-year-old and people are looking for places to take their children.

Media Plan FY 2025-2026

Hayley Radich, Account Supervisor, and Andi Baum, Senior Media Planner, both with Miles Partnership introduced themselves to share their fiscal year 2025-2026 media plan. The objectives of the plan are to generate broad awareness of Ocala/Marion County as a world class destination, widely recognized as Florida's Natural Wonder and the Horse Capital of the World. They want Engagement to capture traveler interest by demonstrating why Ocala/Marion County is the right place for people to visit and explore and really promoting visitation by influencing travelers to choose Ocala/Marion County by spotlighting hidden gems and niche tourism opportunities. There are multiple ways to achieve this and Ms. Radich focused on leisure first by advising they plan to drive qualified traffic to the Ocala/Marion website, increase

overall visitation and tourism spending, extend average length of stay, grow market share in key drive markets and expand reach in fly markets, promote “Marion Insider’s Guide” series and increase video views and engagement rates across platforms. Moving on to meeting and sports, they would like to increase group travel demand, drive growth in annual room nights tied to meetings, events and tournaments, increase the volume and quality of RFPs submitted for group travel, meetings and sports events, attract conferences and meetings, especially during low occupancy periods, attract multi-year sports tournaments and signature events, and new for this year, grow awareness of Marion County as a unique and scenic wedding destination. They use research and data to support their recommendations to provide some innovative tactics to support a successful media plan. Ms. Radich advised the Budget is \$1.625 million which is broken into 2 parts. \$1.5 million for media buys and an additional \$125,000 for Visit Florida Co-op which will run in November this year. The timing is October 1, 2025 to September 30, 2026.

Mr. Jeff Bailey out at 10:33am

Mr. Barry Mansfield out at 10:33am

The audience is focused on travel intenders whom are those who have traveled to or have shown a propensity to travel to Ocala/Marion County and have behaviors or interests like outdoor enthusiasts, family activities, leisure travelers, sports enthusiasts, interest in unique experiences and meeting/event/sports/wedding planners. Their primary market is the state of Florida excluding Ocala/Marion County and secondary markets of Atlanta and New York. Last year they tested Chicago, Hartford, Savannah, and Philadelphia which proved as successful and will be utilized this year. This year they will be adding Minneapolis/St. Paul.

Mr. Gaekwad inquired to chair if there were any other motions to be heard as he needed to leave.

Mr. Adams advised there would be no more voting but added that there was a vacant seat on the TDC.

Mr. Danny Gaekwad out at 10:35am

Ms. Loretta Shaffer advised that the BOCC had opened the seat once Victoria Billig submitted her resignation and they had appointed Bobby Walker with the Canyons.

Ms. Radich continued reviewing the Media Approach. They plan a consistent presence at effective media levels and leverage visually eye-catching placements with the OMCVCB marketing team do an incredible job with all the creative assets, ensure space to story-tell, inspire and educate, amplify past proven tactics and test new partners. In reviewing the

Awareness, Engagement and Conversation funnel the tactics consist of billboards in out of home, podcasts, premium CTV, YouTube, online video, display, native, geofencing, Tripadvisor, social and search.

Ms. Baum continued with a deep dive into the strategy of the tactics. Traditional Out-of-Home billboards, which is an upper funnel awareness driving tactic so they are large eye-catching formats also one of the last un-skippable mediums available. We are recommending leveraging existing billboards, have contracted the ones we found to be premium and have secured another location as a Buc-ees are coming to the market and are billboard heavy type advertisers so we wanted to secure a couple more boards on I-75. Panel #7150N-0 is on I-75 and 42nd Street, a left hand read for north bound traffic, which is a value as you are driving for a longer distance, looking at the cards coming towards you and it's in your line of sight. Panel #2781B is a board that was already secured, northbound traffic near The Villages and Wildwood's shopping centers. Panel #8305 reaches south bound traffic, it's a strong right hand read near Irvine. The last one is Panel #1387 on I-75 north of 326, near Love's Travel Stop, on the left-hand side reaching south bound traffic heading into Ocala. Ms. Baum added that with 143 million out-of-state travelers, billboards put us front and center for exploring visitors.

Ms. Baum then explained the Carvertise rideshare strategy. It will be utilized in Orlando with 16 cars driving throughout the town for 12 weeks with 8 event swarms. More people use Ubers when going to attractions or the airport. The swarms are to be surrounded around sports or entertainment events with people that congregate outside the venue. Digital Out-of-Home which has digital screens in airports and on digital boards throughout the state of Florida. The approach is different this year as last year we had urban panels in New York City and Atlanta so the focus strategy and dollars to be more efficient with span and impressions and focus on the state of Florida, so we are doing Orlando and Tampa airports and Florida billboards network which has 2.2 million impressions.

Ms. Baum then moved on to Print advising some publications we want to continue to leverage, and we have included some additional publications so that we can meet our meeting planners' target. Flamingo magazine is the number one lifestyle magazine in Florida, and we would like to leverage 2 full page ads in the spring and fall, 3 exclusive e-Newsletters so we are reaching those opt-in subscribers and with added value we have digital banners for three months. We also have Sports Planning Guide which is an annual magazine which we would like to run a 2-page spread, advertorial content, sponsored destination on the website and some additional added value which include video and content on the website for the entire year. New to the plan this year is Meeting Mentor which is with Conference Direct which reaches globally over 24,000 meeting professionals and they are responsible for managing over 13,000 meetings, conventions, and events. BizBash which is a meeting trade publication which reaches 1.5 US

and Canadian meeting event professionals. Ms. Baum recommended a full-page ad which included banners linking ocalamarion.com.

Ms. Baum then moved into the Digital portion of presentation. They have secured a co-op with Visit Florida's gold package which includes 3 video commercials that run across six platforms, Peacock, Hulu, Prime, Disney+, Max and Netflix for 4 weeks generating 5.9 million impressions. Ms. Radich added that the buy-in was \$125,000 and that Visit Florida also contributes \$125,000. Ms. Baum explained that new this year they have added a content creator program for influencer marketing. The program is run through Odyssey Studios to drive awareness and engagement in tourism interest by leveraging storytelling that connects with our audience across platforms and formats as 75% of travelers rely on social media for travel inspiration. Creators will build connections with their audience through natural posts and curated commercials that we can leverage with owned and operated properties after the program ends. The recommendation is to have two influencers, one more known for travel and their exciting content, the other would be more of a production creator of high-quality videos with a high following count. The media placements can be amplified after the influencers post on their page by putting onto our Facebook and running on CTV. Ms. Radich added that they have a bank of creators, who will already have the brand guidelines and audience targeting information, and will work with the OMCVCB team to find the proper demographics and audience reach. Local creators can be connected with the Odyssey program. Odyssey will handle contract negotiations, casting, management, and booking itinerary for influencers to come to Ocala. Ms. Baum then moved onto the iHeart podcast and explained the platform is the number one publisher of podcasts and is podcast specific, compared to Spotify and Pandora, in which 15 to 30 second commercials will be added in.

Commissioner Zalak inquired as to how programming is targeted.

Ms. Baum advised it is geotargeted to the states and DNAs Ms. Radich listed earlier as well as setting age demographic, income, travel/tourism intenders, event goers, active lifestyle and outdoors. They can also provide back reporting as to what types of audiences engage with ads as there are companion banners while listening to podcast and a listing of podcasts in which ads ran on with what the listener is also podcasting. The algorithms are sophisticated to the point of being able to drill down within a state as to where target audience is.

Commissioner Zalak inquired if it's possible to target specific audiences.

Ms. Baum advised they can wide list podcasts although they cannot guarantee specific podcasts without buying it directly. iHeart has genres with millions of data touch points that we can leverage for audience insights.

Commissioner Zalak inquired if regional Facebook horse pages were being targeted.

Ms. Baum and Ms. Radich advised that they are not targeted but they use Meta, which they would present momentarily.

Ms. Baum then moved onto Ad Genuity, which is programmatic meaning it follows the target audience user as to where they are spending time online as opposed to website direct. The programmatic media mix includes Premium CTV, YouTube, Online Video with Teads, KERV high impact video and Display, they are tried and true and they have been run year after year. YouTube is the number 2 global platform just behind Facebook, 62% of internet users access YouTube daily. They would like to leverage the infeed, which is a 15 or 30 second ad before, in the middle or after your content, continue using the YouTube shorts which is the Marion Insider's Guide and there is no cap on seasonally refreshing content. Ms. Baum then covered the Rich Media/Interactive Banners, which is an interactive based programmatic that drives engagement and website traffic by leveraging predictive audience modeling and immersive creative formats. The ad takes over screen while surfing the internet, similar to the page grabber unit that was run last year, with an interactive map on a laptop/tablet or interactive banner ads on other devices, always tracking back to your website. Ms. Baum explained geofencing conferences to reach event attendees and decision-makers who attend conferences by placing a digital fence around the conferences and layer on audience targeting in the vicinity omitting cleaning crew and staff. After leaving the facility they can continue to target for 30 days. They can additionally build a look alike audience from the attendees with digital tactics. Ms. Baum then reiterated the continued digital partners for 2026 of Tripadvisor, Kerv which is an interactive video, Teads which is an in-read video when scrolling on a page, Nativo and Premium CTV. Ms. Baum then covered social media advising to continue with Meta and Pinterest informing that Meta is the number one social platform and most visited website outside of Google. They will employ traffic and engagement to prospect people to send to the website, leads campaigns where people are enticed to complete a form and use inspiration more with Pinterest to promote pins. Pinterest is a planning platform with 70% of users planning for future experiences and the number one platform for weddings. Lastly, Ms. Baum added that Google is the number one most visited website daily which we want to be there when people are searching for things to do in Florida, Ocala, Orlando and Marion County. In addition to the search, they can layer on interest targeting with Meta also using sophisticated algorithms to find the top performing audience. Ms. Radich explained that they are working on selecting one of three data/attribution partners. A data partner can measure how marketing drives real world visitation and spending, uses mobility, spending, booking and survey data to track traveler behavior, show ROI by linking campaigns to measurable tourism outcomes, provides insights to optimize targeting and messaging and supports the strategic planning with trends, forecasts and performance tracking. They will be providing data monthly with digital reporting metrics and have provided a flowchart showing spending and timing for each tactic.

Commission Zalak inquired as to how Ocala/Marion County performs against other destinations with the same spend year after year.

Ms. Radich advised that the general reporting numbers from the different tactics show that Ocala/Marion County performs very well. They always have positive reports and exceed benchmarks across the board. The creative specifically performs exceedingly well. They also adjust tactics as they see fatigue in campaigns.

Sales Update

Mr. Locke provided a sales update advising there are two new business items, one being the American Youth Football that he presented on earlier and the second being the American Early Learning Coalition Annual Board Meeting which will take place at the World Equestrian Center on April 19-24, 2026 and they may be the first Meeting Rewards funding recipient. Mr. Locke then reviewed the first lead of the Florida Interscholastic Cycling League Mountain Biking Event, an organization at the Florida Sports Annual Summit in June, to be held February 20-22, 2026 with about 200 room nights, at Santos Trailhead and looking to do a larger portion of the event where they have vendors and other family friendly activities at the Florida Horse Park. The Florida Propane Gas Association Spring Meeting is to take place April 1-2, 2026, for about 60 room nights. We currently host a May training every year and are working with their event planner for this new opportunity. There is a RFP that closed today for that event. The team has submitted a bid for The Big East Conference and Diving Championships for two years, February 18-21, 2026 and February 22-25, 2027 which would be just over a thousand room nights each year. Staff had a site visit at FAST with the Big East Commissioner in September to ensure the venue is what they need. Mr. Locke presented the NAIN Swimming and Diving National Championships in March which has a 3 year bid for 800 room nights per year. He was working with FAST in pursuing the opportunity as there may be some date conflicts. Mr. Locke advised that an ongoing lead of the State Emergency Response Commission RFP, he is working with an event planner whom they do other events together, and they are awaiting decision on award. Regarding lost business, Mr. Locke advised that the smaller Florida Society Children of the American Revolution State Conference was awarded to Gainesville. Mr. Locke advised that he and Bryan Day will be attending Connect Marketplace next week in Miami where he will be doing the sports track and Mr. Day will be doing the association track. He added there were meetings booked for Connect Marketplace and it is one of the bigger tradeshow in the industry. Mr. Locke added that there will be a Tourism and Hospitality Roundtable on September 10 at 11:30 am to 1 pm and a formal invitation was just released requesting a RSVP to account for lunches.

Mr. Ron Livsey out at 11:08am

TDT Collections/STR and Key Data Update

Ms. Sky Wheeler provided an overview of the TDT collections data and Tammy McCann's, from the tax collector's office, report as she could not attend. There is a note on the document indicative of the 4 months denoted in red in which the tax collector's office was switching their payment platform causing a lag in April and rectification during May – June and which will continue for the rest of the fiscal year. Ms. Wheeler indicated that for the collection period of June which reflected May's revenues collections were \$471,551.15 that was up just over \$69,000.00 and 17.14% year over year, for the reporting period of July which covered June revenues the collections equaled \$923,559.18 that was up \$472,974.16 for 104.9% year over year so focusing on the months is not going to make a lot of sense. Ms. Wheeler then focused on the year and year to date was 29.19% ahead of last year and which surpassed last year's complete fiscal total.

Mr. Ron. Livsey in at 11:11am

We are at \$112,220.39 or 6.89% ahead of last year with two months of reporting remaining. This also ties back to what Mr. Lewis reported regarding the revenue being accrued in a month and at the end of the month it is reported, that is when the tax collector reports it to the OMCVCB and typically the following month it is remitted and that is when it is reflected on the revenue status report. Ms. Wheeler then advised Ms. McCann's update was that short-term rental registrations have increased since significantly since starting with the data scraping platform, Deckard. West Florida was the payment platform that was utilized previously which the Tax Collector's Office has returned to using. Deckard provides the data and reaches out via the mailing system that was implemented to get compliance whereas the funds come through the West Florida portal.

Ms. Victoria Billig out at 11:12am

West Florida had 535 accounts registered with the tax office before the process as of February 26, 2025, as of the last TDC meeting Deckard had identified registrants of 677 which was June 24th. Since June 24th there were 119 more registrants. Since utilizing Deckard for compliance hundreds of properties have been identified that they are still actively seeking registrations on. As a process reminder Deckard auto-sends letters from the tax collector's office from Mr. Albright. 855 first warning letters were sent in March, in which they gained some compliance, 743 second warning letters and there were 641 final letters. Ms. McCann can provide examples again at the next meeting. The final letter talked about the authority the tax collector has to take action as a result of non-compliance. Ms. Wheeler noted the positive partnership with the tax collector's office as Ms. McCann does refer individuals to the OMCVCB to understand the benefit of bed tax, what that does for them as a business in Marion County

and the value that they provide to the tourism industry. Ms. Shelton engages with those individuals and helps them understand what their opportunities are. At the September meeting, the tax collector's office will give a larger and more robust update as it related to the efforts they have undertaken in this process.

Ms. Wheeler provided an updated STR and Key Data updated copy as of yesterday she had received the Visit Florida and Marion County specific data from STR. In the month of June occupancy was at 52.8%, which was down 9.6% year after year and it was noted that last year there was the Rock The County concert and this year it was in May. Ms. Wheeler additionally noted that last year in June there were several swim meets that were moved to July this year. Events were not lost but months shifted to meet needs of the organization. The average daily rate was \$112.15 which was up 5.7% from last year and RevPAR was \$59.16 which was down 14.8% from last year.

Ms. Victoria Billig in at 11:15am

For the running 12 months occupancy was up 3.5%, EDR was up 5.8% and RevPAR was up 9.4%. As it relates to the State occupancy was up 68.7% which was down .4%, average daily rate was \$177.48 which is up 3% from last year and RevPAR was \$121.89 which 2.6% from last year. Ms. Wheeler then covered the short-term rentals relaying what is reported into Key Data which is the platform we have and we are always looking to match those numbers up however, we may switch to the platform that is the best at providing that data in the future. Short term rentals occupancy was 44.6% which is up 7% from last year, the average daily rate was \$126 which was a decrease in \$21.00 from last year and RevPAR was \$45 which was a decrease of \$5.00 from last year. The nights available were 5,397 which is a decrease of 5% from last year which was 5,672. The potential rationale maybe last June we had a large county music festival taking place in the northern part of the county where there is not a lot of traditional lodging, so we likely saw some short-term rentals come online then that has no reason to be online this year. For the running 12 months occupancy was flat at 47%, ADR was down 6%, RevPAR was down 7% and nights available increased 6%. Ms. Wheeler then moved into the July figures advising that Marion County occupancy was 53%, which was up .3%, average daily rate was \$114.39 which was up 3.1% year over year and RevPAR was \$63.60 which was up 3.4% from last year. For the running 12 months occupancy was up 4.3%, ADR was up 6.4% and RevPAR was up 11%. In the State for July occupancy was 67.3% which decreased 1.2%, average daily rate was \$170.57 which was up 1.7% from last year and RevPAR was \$114.72 which was up .4%. Ms. Wheeler then moved into the short-term rental Key Data for July advising that occupancy was 44.8% which was an increase of 7% from last year, average daily rate was \$126 which was a decrease of \$29 from last year, RevPAR was \$46.00 which was a decrease \$8 from last year and nights available was 5,731 which was a decrease of 3% from last year which was 5,929. For the

running 12 months occupancy was up 2% for short-term rentals, average daily rate was down 7% and RevPAR was down 7% while rates available increased 4%.

Five Year Trend (Expenditures and Revenues) FY 2020-2025

Ms. Wheeler was asked to provide a trend that indicated what revenues, expenditures and the reserves for tourism initiatives amounts were like annual over the last five years. The data is available in every TDC agenda packet as the revenues and expenditures are monthly and then close out at the end of the fiscal year is period 13 which shows the entirety. Ms. Wheeler explained that revenues continued to steadily increase, expenditures increase as well but not as the same rate and the reserve for tourism initiatives show a large drop from 2023 to 2024 due to funding balance of the South Gateway and the turf conversion at Rotary. Once fiscal year 2025 is completed it will be a shrunk number also as we did a lot of great work with the reserved funds, but we also did a lot of savings with expenditures and money would come back into that as well. There was also a supplemental document provided in packet as well as there was an interest in seeing personal versus operating expenditures.

TDC Events Calendar

Ms. Wheeler advised there is a calendar provided in the packet.

Notation of Record

Ms. Shaffer thanked Ms. Victoria Billig for helping develop the Arts and Cultural aspects and being a significantly strong TDC member. Ms. Shaffer then congratulated Mr. Fernandez on becoming the Vice-Chair and developing a TPO and will have a lot to contribute with the cycling. Ms. Shaffer shared there was over 400 million in media equivalency in the April to June quarter alone that was obtained through PR and over a quarter million in total reach. Ms. Shaffer highlighted a letter received from a gentleman in The Villages which is in the notation of record that was sent to FDOT congratulating the Council for their hard work and the significance of the Gateway. Ms. Shaffer added that next month's meeting would be on a Thursday.

Old Business

Mr. Adams called for any old business and none was brought forth.

New Business

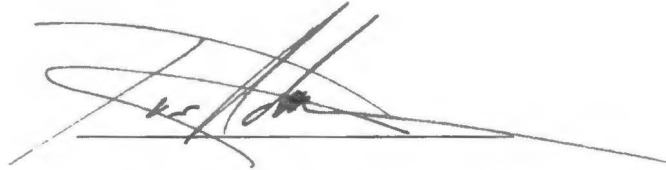
Mr. Adams called for any new business.

Public Comment

Mr. Adams called for any public comment and none was brought forth.

Mr. Adams stated that the next TDC meeting will be on Thursday, September 25, 2025, at 9am.

The meeting adjourned at 11:23 A.M.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Rus Adams', written over a horizontal line.

Rus Adams, Chairman

FORM 8B MEMORANDUM OF VOTING CONFLICT FOR COUNTY, MUNICIPAL, AND OTHER LOCAL PUBLIC OFFICERS

LAST NAME—FIRST NAME—MIDDLE NAME Gaekwad, Divijay		NAME OF BOARD, COUNCIL, COMMISSION, AUTHORITY, OR COMMITTEE TDC	
MAILING ADDRESS 11980 SE 22nd Ave RD		THE BOARD, COUNCIL, COMMISSION, AUTHORITY OR COMMITTEE ON WHICH I SERVE IS A UNIT OF:	
CITY Ocala	COUNTY Marion	☐ CITY ☒ COUNTY ☐ OTHER LOCAL AGENCY	
DATE ON WHICH VOTE OCCURRED August 20, 2025		NAME OF POLITICAL SUBDIVISION: MARION COUNTY	
		MY POSITION IS: ☐ ELECTIVE ☒ APPOINTIVE	

WHO MUST FILE FORM 8B

This form is for use by any person serving at the county, city, or other local level of government on an appointed or elected board, council, commission, authority, or committee. It applies to members of advisory and non-advisory bodies who are presented with a voting conflict of interest under Section 112.3143, Florida Statutes.

Your responsibilities under the law when faced with voting on a measure in which you have a conflict of interest will vary greatly depending on whether you hold an elective or appointive position. For this reason, please pay close attention to the instructions on this form before completing and filing the form.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLIANCE WITH SECTION 112.3143, FLORIDA STATUTES

A person holding elective or appointive county, municipal, or other local public office **MUST ABSTAIN** from voting on a measure which would inure to his or her special private gain or loss. Each elected or appointed local officer also **MUST ABSTAIN** from knowingly voting on a measure which would inure to the special gain or loss of a principal (other than a government agency) by whom he or she is retained (including the parent, subsidiary, or sibling organization of a principal by which he or she is retained); to the special private gain or loss of a relative; or to the special private gain or loss of a business associate. Commissioners of community redevelopment agencies (CRAs) under Sec. 163.356 or 163.357, F.S., and officers of independent special tax districts elected on a one-acre, one-vote basis are not prohibited from voting in that capacity.

For purposes of this law, a "relative" includes only the officer's father, mother, son, daughter, husband, wife, brother, sister, father-in-law, mother-in-law, son-in-law, and daughter-in-law. A "business associate" means any person or entity engaged in or carrying on a business enterprise with the officer as a partner, joint venturer, coowner of property, or corporate shareholder (where the shares of the corporation are not listed on any national or regional stock exchange).

* * * * *

ELECTED OFFICERS:

In addition to abstaining from voting in the situations described above, you must disclose the conflict:

PRIOR TO THE VOTE BEING TAKEN by publicly stating to the assembly the nature of your interest in the measure on which you are abstaining from voting; *and*

WITHIN 15 DAYS AFTER THE VOTE OCCURS by completing and filing this form with the person responsible for recording the minutes of the meeting, who should incorporate the form in the minutes.

* * * * *

APPOINTED OFFICERS:

Although you must abstain from voting in the situations described above, you are not prohibited by Section 112.3143 from otherwise participating in these matters. However, you must disclose the nature of the conflict before making any attempt to influence the decision, whether orally or in writing and whether made by you or at your direction.

IF YOU INTEND TO MAKE ANY ATTEMPT TO INFLUENCE THE DECISION PRIOR TO THE MEETING AT WHICH THE VOTE WILL BE TAKEN:

- You must complete and file this form (before making any attempt to influence the decision) with the person responsible for recording the minutes of the meeting, who will incorporate the form in the minutes. (Continued on page 2)

APPOINTED OFFICERS (continued)

- A copy of the form must be provided immediately to the other members of the agency.
- The form must be read publicly at the next meeting after the form is filed.

IF YOU MAKE NO ATTEMPT TO INFLUENCE THE DECISION EXCEPT BY DISCUSSION AT THE MEETING:

- You must disclose orally the nature of your conflict in the measure before participating.
- You must complete the form and file it within 15 days after the vote occurs with the person responsible for recording the minutes of the meeting, who must incorporate the form in the minutes. A copy of the form must be provided immediately to the other members of the agency, and the form must be read publicly at the next meeting after the form is filed.

DISCLOSURE OF LOCAL OFFICER'S INTEREST

I, Digvijay Gaekwad, hereby disclose that on August, 20 25:

(a) A measure came or will come before my agency which (check one or more)

- ☐ inured to my special private gain or loss;
- ☐ inured to the special gain or loss of my business associate, _____;
- ☐ inured to the special gain or loss of my relative, _____;
- ☐ inured to the special gain or loss of _____, by whom I am retained; or
- ☐ inured to the special gain or loss of _____, which is the parent subsidiary, or sibling organization or subsidiary of a principal which has retained me.

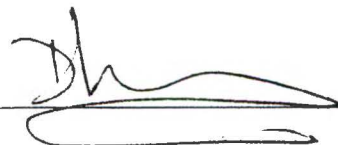
(b) The measure before my agency and the nature of my conflicting interest in the measure is as follows:

If disclosure of specific information would violate confidentiality or privilege pursuant to law or rules governing attorneys, a public officer, who is also an attorney, may comply with the disclosure requirements of this section by disclosing the nature of the interest in such a way as to provide the public with notice of the conflict.

Date Filed

8/20/25

Signature



NOTICE: UNDER PROVISIONS OF FLORIDA STATUTES §112.317, A FAILURE TO MAKE ANY REQUIRED DISCLOSURE CONSTITUTES GROUNDS FOR AND MAY BE PUNISHED BY ONE OR MORE OF THE FOLLOWING: IMPEACHMENT, REMOVAL OR SUSPENSION FROM OFFICE OR EMPLOYMENT, DEMOTION, REDUCTION IN SALARY, REPRIMAND, OR A CIVIL PENALTY NOT TO EXCEED \$10,000.

FORM 8B MEMORANDUM OF VOTING CONFLICT FOR COUNTY, MUNICIPAL, AND OTHER LOCAL PUBLIC OFFICERS

LAST NAME—FIRST NAME—MIDDLE NAME Gaekwad, Divvijay	NAME OF BOARD, COUNCIL, COMMISSION, AUTHORITY, OR COMMITTEE TDC
MAILING ADDRESS 11980 SE 22nd Ave RD	THE BOARD, COUNCIL, COMMISSION, AUTHORITY OR COMMITTEE ON WHICH I SERVE IS A UNIT OF: ☐ CITY ☒ COUNTY ☐ OTHER LOCAL AGENCY
CITY COUNTY Ocala Marion	NAME OF POLITICAL SUBDIVISION: MARION COUNTY
DATE ON WHICH VOTE OCCURRED August 20, 2025	MY POSITION IS: ☐ ELECTIVE ☒ APPOINTIVE

WHO MUST FILE FORM 8B

This form is for use by any person serving at the county, city, or other local level of government on an appointed or elected board, council, commission, authority, or committee. It applies to members of advisory and non-advisory bodies who are presented with a voting conflict of interest under Section 112.3143, Florida Statutes.

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For purposes of this law, a "relative" includes only the officer's father, mother, son, daughter, husband, wife, brother, sister, father-in-law, mother-in-law, son-in-law, and daughter-in-law. A "business associate" means any person or entity engaged in or carrying on a business enterprise with the officer as a partner, joint venturer, coowner of property, or corporate shareholder (where the shares of the corporation are not listed on any national or regional stock exchange).

* * * * *

ELECTED OFFICERS:

In addition to abstaining from voting in the situations described above, you must disclose the conflict:

PRIOR TO THE VOTE BEING TAKEN by publicly stating to the assembly the nature of your interest in the measure on which you are abstaining from voting; *and*

WITHIN 15 DAYS AFTER THE VOTE OCCURS by completing and filing this form with the person responsible for recording the minutes of the meeting, who should incorporate the form in the minutes.

* * * * *

APPOINTED OFFICERS:

Although you must abstain from voting in the situations described above, you are not prohibited by Section 112.3143 from otherwise participating in these matters. However, you must disclose the nature of the conflict before making any attempt to influence the decision, whether orally or in writing and whether made by you or at your direction.

IF YOU INTEND TO MAKE ANY ATTEMPT TO INFLUENCE THE DECISION PRIOR TO THE MEETING AT WHICH THE VOTE WILL BE TAKEN:

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APPOINTED OFFICERS (continued)

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DISCLOSURE OF LOCAL OFFICER'S INTEREST

I, Digvijay Baekund, hereby disclose that on August, 20 25:

(a) A measure came or will come before my agency which (check one or more)

- ☐ inured to my special private gain or loss;
- ☐ inured to the special gain or loss of my business associate, _____;
- ☐ inured to the special gain or loss of my relative, _____;
- ☐ inured to the special gain or loss of _____, by whom I am retained; or
- ☐ inured to the special gain or loss of _____, which is the parent subsidiary, or sibling organization or subsidiary of a principal which has retained me.

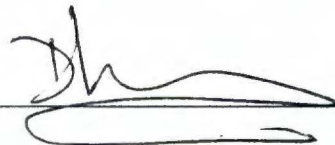
(b) The measure before my agency and the nature of my conflicting interest in the measure is as follows:

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8/20/25

Signature



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