



Tourist Development Council (TDC) Meeting Minutes
Greater Fort Lauderdale Convention and Visitors Bureau
May 14, 2025, 9:30 am

MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE: Mayor Beam Furr, Tim Petrillo, Mayor Dean Trantalis, Bob Weiser, Andreas Ioannou, Mayor Josh Levy, Commissioner Melissa Dunn, Camasha Cevieux

NOT PRESENT: Lisa Lutoff-Perlo, Ramola Motwani

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Beam Furr called the meeting to order at 9:28 am.
Attendance was taken and a quorum was established.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion to approve the minutes from the meeting of the TDC on February 20, 2025 was made by Tim Petrillo and seconded by Camasha Cevieux. The minutes were approved without objection.

3. TOURIST DEVELOPMENT TAX REPORT | Randall Luechauer, Manager Tourist Development Tax Section

The GFLCVB portion of the March 2025 reporting period collections totaled \$10,131,107.71, a decrease of 3.7% (\$394,557.75) when compared to collections for the same month last year. The GFLCVB portion of FY 2025 revenue collected through the March 2025 reporting period totaled \$49,072,522.26 an increase of 0.7% (\$364,675.21) when compared to collections for the same period last year.

The top ten hotel March 2025 revenue decreased an average of 4.1% when compared to the same month last year and represented 19.0% of total revenue collected during the month.

Revenue from all hotels totaled \$11,473,569.51 and represented 75.5% of total revenue collected during the month. Non-hotel revenue totaled \$3,720,861.85 and represented 24.5% of total revenue collected during the month.

FY 2025 hotel revenue collected through the March 2025 reporting period totaled \$54,730,599.45 and represented 74.4% of total revenue collected. Non-hotel revenue collected through the March 2025 reporting period totaled \$18,864,153.10 and represented 25.6% of total revenue collected.

The collection expense for March 2025 was \$95,027.94. The GFLCVB's portion was \$64,767.70 which represents 0.6% of the GFLCVB's monthly reporting period revenue. To date in FY 2025, GFLCVB expenses total \$235,549.58 which represents 0.5% of the GFLCVB reporting period revenue collected through April 30, 2025.

4. CHAIR'S REPORT | Mayor Beam Furr

Mayor Furr stated that the County Commission at this time has asked that every department in the county do a 5% budget cut. Until the State legislature approves a budget, there is too much uncertainty to determine the county's budgetary direction.

5. PRESIDENT'S REPORT | Stacy Ritter, CDME, President/CEO, Visit Lauderdale

a) Market/Data Briefing | Ted Botimer, VP of Research, Strategy, & Revenue Management, Visit Lauderdale

President Ritter introduced Ted Botimer, VP of Research, Strategy, & Revenue Management to brief us on Marketing data. Dr. Botimer stated that according to studies on the economy there is about a 43% chance of recession. The current impact of tariffs will add \$2800 in costs to the consumer for the year. Revenue per available rooms was down 3% to 4%. Canadian travel is currently down about 20%. Advanced Canadian bookings are down 70% from June to September.

President Ritter stated that Visit Lauderdale has submitted two budgets to county administration as requested, one that is flat from the current fiscal year and one that has a 5% budget cut. We are not sure which one will be accepted. House Bill 7033, which is the House Bill that redirects the tourist development tax dollars also eliminates funding for tourism and dissolves Tourist Development Council's in the State of Florida. The legislature is currently meeting in special session to debate and pass a budget.

President Ritter believes this is the time to spend more on promoting our destination. Competition is fiercer around the world, but you need to remind people that travel is a positive thing in their lives and stay top of mind.

Visit Lauderdale is planning a campaign for the first time since September 2022. This may require a budget supplement and it is hoped that the TDC and the hospitality community would be supportive.

IPW is only a year away. President Ritter wants the beach cities to know that VL will be coming to speak to them about financial support for IPW as we would like each of the 8 beach cities to be featured through an activation of their choosing.

World Travel and Tourism Council put out a report this week saying the US is going to lose about \$12.5 billion in international tourism for the year because of the uncertainty and volatility of world dynamics. This is a 22 1/2% decline in spending since the peak, which was in 2019. US travelers will probably choose to stay closer to home. This is a great opportunity for VL to shift spending from less internationally to more domestically as we go through the summer months.

President Ritter noted that there is a report in front of the members of the TDC from Tracy Vaughan, Sr. VP of Global Trade at Visit Lauderdale on her trip to India as requested by the TDC. Dine Out Fort Lauderdale starts on August 1st. This year, VL will be doing a more upscale luxury minded program with lunch starting at \$35 and dinner up to \$75. The luxury market is still sustaining its numbers where the mid-market and the econo-market are not.

President Ritter stated that the Broward County Auditor has been in our office auditing sports and special events. President Ritter acknowledged that she sits on the board of the Museum of Discovery and Science and that VL did provide money to the Visit Lauderdale Science Festival. The auditors requested the relationship be made known to the TDC. President Ritter stated there is no state statute nor any county ordinance that prohibits her from serving on it or that considers it a conflict of interest. She did receive permission from the County Administrator to serve on the board. Discussion ensued.

6. Broward County Cultural Appointment | Stacy Ritter, CDME, President/CEO, Visit Lauderdale

This item has been deferred to the next TDC Meeting in August.

7. Spark and FIFA Marketing | Cameron Blank, Brand Director, Spark

Ms. Blank discussed the FIFA partnership and finds that without spending any money we could still have travelers coming here. Rather than sharing the spotlight with FIFA and Miami the bigger opportunity for growing awareness for Visit Lauderdale to influence travel is to create our own moment. Ms. Blank presented strategies for how to do that at various budget levels.

1. Media driven approach to intercept sports enthusiasts during key travel planning moments.
 2. Public Relation moments to uniquely position our destination on a global stage
 3. Strategic partnership that is not FIFA.
- Discussion ensued.

8. Tourism Sponsorship Applications | Stacy Ritter, CDME, President/CEO, Visit Lauderdale

a) FIFA World Cup 2026

The Greater Miami Sports Commission, dba FIFA World Cup 2026 TM Miami Host Committee has requested \$2.5m for their event FIFA World Cup 2026, from June 11-July 19, 2026. President Ritter reported that Visit Lauderdale's internal review group recommends \$ 249,000. FIFA 2026 will host seven games in South Florida inclusive of the Bronze Final. Alina Hudak, President and CEO for the 2026 FIFA World Cup Miami Host Committee presented details of this event. Games will be held at Hard Rock Stadium and various venues throughout South Florida. South Florida is expected to see over 1,000,000 visitors during the 33-day event, with Broward County generating a projected 100,000 room nights and nearly \$1,000,000 in tourism tax. This item will go before the County Commission for additional money in June. Discussion ensued.

Mayor Josh Levy has made a motion to recommend a \$249,900 sponsorship Mayor Dean Trantalis seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

b) 2026 College Football National Championship Game

The South Florida CFPNCG Host Committee is requesting \$1m for their event being held at Hard Rock Stadium on January 19, 2026. President Ritter reported that Visit Lauderdale's internal review group recommends \$ 249,900. Jack Seiler, Orange Bowl Chairperson presented details of this event. Hosting these events provides year-long media exposure, which is an invaluable marketing opportunity for South Florida. Over 30 million viewers tune into the game, and 100,000 visitors descend on the host community for the game and festivities. This item will go before the County Commission for additional money in June. Tim Petrillo recused himself from voting due to a conflict of interest (see form 8b below). from voting on this. Discussion ensued.

Mayor Josh Levy has made a motion to recommend a \$249,900 sponsorship Mayor Dean Trantalis seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously with one abstention.

c) Orange Blossom Classic

The Orange Blossom Football Classic Association has requested \$50,000 for their events from August 26, 2025- August 31, 2025. President Ritter reported that Visit Lauderdale's internal review group recommends \$ 50,000. The Orange Bowl Classic is held on the county line and previous data shows Broward County receives two thirds of the room nights associated with the event being held at Hard Rock Stadium. For the first time they are moving the Battle of Bands competition from UM to NSU making a large footprint in Broward County. This year the Howard University match up with FAMU is expected to be a big draw for entertaining meeting professionals from Washington, DC. Discussion ensued.

Commissioner Melissa Dunn has made a motion to recommend a \$50,000 sponsorship Camasha Cevieux seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

9. Public comments Motion to Adjourn

Jake Wurzak who owns four hotels in Broward County: Dalmar, Renaissance Ft. Lauderdale Cruise Port, Doubletree Deerfield Beach and the Element wanted to impress upon the importance of the Convention Center performance to the Fort Lauderdale hospitality market. He is not seeing the booking pace that is going to be beneficial to any of the existing hotels including the Omni as well. Mr. Wurzak stated there is a need to have more convention center and group business. He prepared a list of questions. President Ritter wanted them to be sent to her. Discussion ensued.

Mayor Trantalis made a motion to adjourn the meeting and the motion was seconded by Mayor Levy. The meeting was adjourned at 11:25am.