



TOURISM ADVISORY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING

CITY OF BAY CITY

Monday, June 24, 2024 at 4:00 PM
COUNCIL CHAMBERS | 1901 5th Street

Vision Statement

Through a united and collaborative effort, we seek to grow the City of Bay City with a diverse culture that is proud to call Bay City home. We envision a thriving family-centered community where citizens are involved in the future development of our city. We desire our citizens to work, play, worship, and shop in the community in which we live. Visitors are welcomed and encouraged to enjoy the friendly environment and amenities the citizens and business owners have created together.

AGENDA

CALL TO ORDER

ACCEPT MEETING MINUTES

- [1.](#) April 2024 Tourism Advisory Council Regular Meeting Minutes

PUBLIC COMMENTS

TOURISM MANAGERS REPORT

REGULAR ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION AND/OR APPROVAL

2. Form the 2024 Día De Los Muertos Planning Committee
3. Form the Matagorda County Arts Committee
- [4.](#) Discuss Wings of Matagorda County (Next Project)
5. Discuss repainting the damaged portion of the "Birds of a Feather" mural.
6. Discuss sealing all Matagorda County public murals that were funded with HOT money.
7. Discuss any upcoming Matagorda County ArtWalks projects.

8. Discuss the Tourism Strategic Planning Session.
9. Discuss Proposed Budget

ADJOURNMENT

CERTIFICATION OF POSTING

This is to certify that the above notice of a Regular Called Tourism Advisory Council Meeting was posted on the front window of the City Hall of the City of Bay City, Texas at least one week prior to the meeting. Any questions concerning the above items, please contact City Manager at (979) 245-2137.

AGENDA NOTICES:

Bay City Tourism Council:

The Bay City Tourism Council serves as an advisory body to City Council and the Mayor. Therefore, although the Bay City Tourism Council does not fall under the purview of the Texas Open Meetings Act, its meetings shall be open to members of the public.

Attendance by Other Elected or Appointed Officials:

It is anticipated that members of other city board, commissions and/or committees may attend the meeting in numbers that may constitute a quorum of the other city boards, commissions and/or committees. Notice is hereby given that the meeting, to the extent required by law, is also noticed as a meeting of the other boards, commissions and/or committees of the City, whose members may be in attendance. The members of the boards, commissions and/or committees may participate in discussions on the same items listed on the agenda, which occur at the meeting, but no action will be taken by such in attendance unless such item and action is specifically provided for on an agenda for that board, commission or committee subject to the Texas Open Meetings Act.

The facility is wheelchair accessible and accessible parking spaces available. Request for accommodations or interpretive services must be made 48 hours prior to the meeting. Please contact the City Secretary's Office at 979-245-5311 or email, jthompson@cityofbaycity.org for further information.

Patrick Darve Smith

Tourism Board Manager



CITY OF BAY CITY

Tourism Board Regular Meeting

MINUTES

Lillie Norris

APRIL 01, 2024

4:00 PM

**COUNCIL
CHAMBERS | 1901
5th Street**

**1901 5TH STREET
BAY CITY TX, 77414**

CALL TO ORDER

Meeting called to order at 4:02 pm.

Members present: Darve Smith (Tourism Manager); Becca Sitz (City Council); Jessica Shepard; Nicasio Perez; DC Dunham; Whitney Milberger

Guests: Amanda Garcia; Octavio Perez

REGULAR ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION AND/OR APPROVAL

1. Sponsorship Application - Full Moon Food Truck Festival

Reviewed the Full Moon Food Truck Festival sponsorship request of \$3000 and agreed to offer up to \$3000 pending the post-event form and qualifying receipts.

2. Matagorda County ArtWalks: Brushstrokes & Books

Discussed forming a series of Art events titled, "Matagorda County ArtWalks." Each ArtWalk would be subtitled according to when and where it is held. The first of the series will be April 27, 2024 at the Bay City Public Library and will be subtitled, "A Library of Artists."

The ArtWalk planning team currently consists of Darve Smith, Samantha Denbow, and Amanda Garcia.

3. Wings of Matagorda County

Mainstreet Salon (Scissors)
Bay City Floral (Flowers)
MC Birding Nature Center (Butterfly & Dragonfly)
Matagorda Outfitters (Fish)

Discussed The Wings of Matagorda County Art Project. The concept is to create a series of murals with wings that are intended to be a backdrop for tourists to pose with. We have also created an online map that will show tourists the location of each

mural. The purpose of the project is to increase public art in Matagorda county and attract tourists with an activity of taking and posting images via social media.

Four locations are currently in the works. Mainstreet Salon (Scissors); Bay City Floral (Flowers); MC Birding Nature Center (Butterfly & Dragonfly); Matagorda Outfitters (Fish).

4. Proposed Traffic Circle Artwork: Texas Statue

Discussed the possibility of adding an art display in the center of the traffic circle. Darve has contacted TxDOT and is waiting for their response of what needs to be done to obtain permits, etc.

A proposal was presented for a statue with the state of Texas sitting on a pedestal, but the council would like to see more options, especially those that would better represent Matagorda County.

5. Request For Proposal: Matagorda County Visitors Guide

The RFP for creating a Matagorda County Visitors Guide was presented to the council for suggestions before it is to be distributed for proposals. A few changes were discussed and will be implemented before the RFP is distributed.

TOURISM MANAGERS REPORT

6. Tourism Information Kiosk: Door Lock

We are waiting on a call back from Bart to set up a meeting to inspect the Kiosk door to see what it would take to install a lock which can be programmed to unlock during daylight hours and lock after dark.

7. Tourism Strategic Planning - May 8, 2024: Location Suggestions

A Tourism Strategic Planning Session is planned for May 8, 2024 and the council was asked to provide input for a location. The council discussed a few locations. The consensus was that it needed to be somewhere we would not be interrupted and provide the use of any technology that might be needed by the facilitator. The Civic Center and USO building were suggested. It was also stated that it was previously held at a local Hotel.

8. HOT Funds Training: THLA

Discussed that THLA will be sending someone to conduct a training session on Hotel Occupancy Tax. The training is set to take place on May 8, 2024 in conjunction with the strategic planning.

9. New Tourism Advisory Council Members

Octavio Fernandez (BC Hotel Industry)
 Celeste Cash (Historic Downtown Bay City)
 Amanda Garcia (Arts in MC)

In an effort to fill the vacant spots on the Tourism Advisory Council, Octavio Fernandez, Celeste Cash and Amanda Garcia were asked if they would be interested in volunteering to serve on the council. All three agreed and were invited to attend this meeting as guests. Celeste was unable to attend but Octavio and Amanda were present.

The Tourism Advisory Council By-laws require that members fall under listed categories. The by-laws were distributed as a part of the meeting packet.

ITEMS / COMMENTS - MEMBERS

PUBLIC COMMENTS

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 4:50 pm.

AGENDA NOTICES

Bay City Tourism Council:

The Bay City Tourism Council serves as an advisory body to City Council and the Mayor. Therefore, although the Bay City Tourism Council does not fall under the purview of the Texas Open Meetings Act, its meetings shall be open to members of the public.

Attendance by Other Elected or Appointed Officials:

It is anticipated that members of other city board, commissions and/or committees may attend the meeting in numbers that may constitute a quorum of the other city boards, commissions and/or committees. Notice is hereby given that the meeting, to the extent required by law, is also noticed as a meeting of the other boards, commissions and/or committees of the City, whose members may be in attendance. The members of the boards, commissions and/or committees may participate in discussions on the same items listed on the agenda, which occur at the meeting, but no action will be taken by such in attendance unless such item and action is specifically provided for on an agenda for that board, commission or committee subject to the Texas Open Meetings Act

The facility is wheelchair accessible and accessible parking spaces available. Request for accommodations or interpretive services must be made 48 hours prior to the meeting. Please contact the City Secretary's Office at 979-245-5311 or email, dholubec@cityofbaycity.org for further information.



ESTIMATE

Zeinab Ghais
 323.369.5557
 zeinabghais@gmail.com

5.13.24

410 E Bayshore Dr.
 Palacios, TX 77465

To: **City of Bay City Tourism Dept.**
 Darve Smith

Wings for Bayside Chic in Matagorda. They are wanting them painted on the Southside of their building. Space is 11.25 x 9.6 in size. Wings are of a Rosette Spoonbill. The intention is to make they realistic.

Description	Quantity	Unit Price	Cost
Bird wings			\$2,100.00
Materials			\$144.00
		Subtotal	\$2,244.00
		Total	\$2,244.00

Thank you for your business! Please make checks payable to **Zeinab Ghais**.



Bay City Tourism Advisory Council & Matagorda County Eco-Tourism Partnership

ITEM #8.

In March 2024, the Bay City Tourism Advisory Council (TAC) and the Matagorda County Eco-Tourism Partnership (MCETP) embarked on a joint strategic planning process to develop the strategic priorities for Fiscal Year 2025 through 2026. The following is the process used to reach the conclusions for the joint Strategic Plan.

On May 8, 2024, the Bay City Tourism Manager, Darve Smith, the Bay City Tourism Advisory Board, and the Matagorda County Eco-Tourism Partnership Board of Directors met at the Beachside Clubhouse in Palacios, Texas for a strategic planning workshop to begin planning for fiscal years 2025 through 2026. Alysia A. Cook, PCED, IOM with Opportunity Strategies LLC served as their facilitator throughout this process.

During the Strategic Planning Retreat, the participants received the feedback from the attendees of the Bay City Tourism/Hospitality Focus Group discussion held on March 21, 2024, at the USO Service Center.

Following the Focus Group feedback review, the participants engaged in two exercises.

The first was a SWOT Analysis where the group brainstormed the strengths, weaknesses, potential opportunities, and potential threats facing the Tourism industry in Bay City and Matagorda County.

The second was an exercise called Start-Stop-Accelerate where the facilitator asked the participants to list what both organizations needed to start doing, stop doing, and accelerate their efforts to achieve.

Midway through the Strategic Planning Retreat, both organizations welcomed the Associate General Counsel of the Texas Hotel & Lodging Association to present the most recent updates to the laws in Texas regarding Hotel Occupancy Taxes including the legalities around HOT monies collections, administration, and expenditures.

The following is the joint group's FY 2025-2026 Strategic Plan.

Bay City Tourism Advisory Council Mission Statement

Bay City TAC promotes and develops tourism and awareness of our beaches, birds, thriving arts and downtown culture.

Vision Statement

The Vision Statement is to be a nationally recognized as the Birding Capitol and finest family destination in North America.

Matagorda County Eco-Tourism Partnership Mission Statement

Responsibly Unlocking the Wonders of Matagorda County

The Matagorda County Eco-Tourism Partnership is a collaborative team, dedicated to unlocking the hidden gems of our unique ecosystems for both local families and eco-conscious travelers. By working hand-in-hand, we unlock the true potential of Matagorda County – a vibrant destination where discovery thrives in balance with conservation, enriching lives and leaving a lasting legacy for all.

We strive to achieve the following goals:

1. Safeguard our irreplaceable natural treasures: By prioritizing conservation and sustainable practices, we ensure the wonders of Matagorda County flourish for generations to come.
2. Craft unforgettable experiences: We provide responsible access to nature, fostering appreciation and understanding through immersive encounters with our diverse ecosystems and rich cultural heritage.

3. Embrace responsible tourism: We attract eco-tourists who share our values, seeking partners who contribute to well-being of our communities and environment.
4. Cultivate environmental stewards: We offer educational programs for all ages and abilities, inspiring a deep sense of responsibility for protecting our natural world.
5. Thrive together: Through collaboration, we empower local businesses and communities, ensuring economic prosperity alongside environmental harmony.
-

SWOT Analysis

The facilitator engaged the participants in an exercise to brainstorm and list the strengths and weaknesses of the Bay City Tourism Advisory Council and Matagorda County Eco-Tourism Partnership, as well as the current and/or potential opportunities and threats facing the organizations. The facilitator shared the aggregated responses with the whole group and discussed the comments collected. The results of the SWOT are listed here:

Strengths

- Blank Slate
- Environment
 - Weather
 - Wildlife
 - Water
- Motivated
- Diverse
- Open-minded
- History
 - Home of La Belle
- Heritage
 - Matagorda - 3rd oldest city in Texas
- Governmental
 - Backing
 - Collaboration
- Location
- Waterfront
- Fishing
- Birding

- Willingness for change

Weaknesses

- Organization of Committee
- Staffing
- Volunteers/Commitment
- Dedicated members
- Budget information
- Collaboration with other cities and local
- Lack of eating establishments
 - Variety?
- Tour guides for birding
- Wayfinding signs
- Lack of Aquatic Center
- Geographically challenged
 - Spread out
- Public education and communication
 - Who we are
 - Assets we have
- Seasonal opportunities
 - Winter void
 - 100°+ void
- Market Day \$

Opportunities

- Other funding
 - City general funding
 - County budget
 - Greater percentage of existing funding
- Create a Unique Tourist Draw/Attraction
 - Like Sulphur Springs' Mirrored Bathrooms
- Roundabout
 - Sculpture
- Cottonwood Creek
- Seafood industries
 - Celebrate and support
- Educational
 - Kids
 - Adults
- Diversity
 - Culture
- Need seafood restaurant
- Culinary
- Artists
- Collaborations
 - Marketing and organization
 - Countywide
 - Social Media
 - Event coordinator
- Harbor
 - Captive audience
- On water experiences
- Outdoor experiences
 - Birding
 - Beach
 - Fishing
 - Nature Center and more
- Unique tours
- Adopt-A-Spot
 - Litter pick-up
 - Taste of Palacios
 - Seafood Market

Potential Threats

- Shrimping industry
- HOT tax management
- Taking on too much too soon
- Beach erosion/management
- Lack of participation - Apathy
- Lack of community collaboration
- Communication
- Turnover
- Other tourism attractions - Competition
- Weather – Hurricanes

Start – Stop – Accelerate

The facilitator engaged participants in a group exercise called Start – Stop – Accelerate which divided participants into small groups and has them offer feedback on what the Bay City Tourism Advisory Council and Matagorda County Eco-Tourism Partnership need to start doing, stop doing, and accelerate efforts to do.

These are individual recommendations and not necessarily agreed to by all participants.

The responses are as follows:

Start

- Hotel roundtables
- Budget and staff support
- Support TAC
 - Organize TAC
- ID target audience/diversity
- Arts sub-committee
 - Festival/events

Stop

Organizational chaos
Apathy
Vague expectations

Accelerate

- Signage
 - Wayfinding
- Tourist Itineraries
- Arts - support projects
- Eco-tourism sub-committee
- Advisory Council expectations/roles
- Kiosk project
- More staff

Goal #1: Organizational Structure

To review and revise tourism organizational structures.

Strategies

- 1.1 Solidify names of council and sub-committee
- 1.2 Create board/council commitment forms
- 1.3 Create onboarding binder
- 1.4 Schedule board/council training

Goal #2: Visitor Center

To re-establish the Downtown Visitor Center kiosk.

Strategies

- 2.1 Turn on power/new door lock/clean
- 2.2 Establish hours
- 2.3 Gather updated materials
- 2.4 Open during hours of special events
- 2.5 Market Visitor Center to local entities
- 2.6 Monitor materials in kiosk Darve Smith Ongoing Ongoing

Goal #3: Marketing and Data

To create and execute a Marketing Plan.

Strategies

- 3.1 Gathering of data
 - Gather prices on purchasing cell phone data
 - Gather Hotelier data (see Goal 4)
- 3.2 Create tourist/visitor avatars
 - Identify target audience for tourism ads
- 3.3 Create Marketing Plan
 - Website
 - Visitor guide
- 3.4 Invest more money into market and research
- 3.5 Build itineraries for Tourists
- 3.6 Location logistics
 - Design/idea
 - Wayfinding (see Goal 6)
 - How to get here
- 3.7 Staff under Tourism
- 3.8 Research the Brazoria County Avatar(s)

Goal #4: Build Relationships

To enhance tourism collaboration.

Strategies

- 4.1 Foster and grow hotelier relationships
 - Identify and contact hoteliers
 - Schedule semi-annual roundtables
 - Collaborate and exchange ideas/data
- 4.2 Report to City Council quarterly

Goal #5: Events

To support and promote Matagorda County events.

Strategies

- 5.1 Create an Event Coordinator position (paid)
 - Coordinate Social Media
 - Create event checklist for processes
- 5.2 Promote Day of the Dead, Artwalk Series, Matagorda Bay Birdfest, Camofest, and other main tourist events
- 5.3 Seafood Festival feat. shrimpers, oysters, etc.
- 5.4 Utilize Bay City digital signs to promote events
- 5.5 Promote events on billboards
- 5.6 Promote Mud Races (Van Vleck)

Goal #6: Art/Culture

To increase the presence of public arts and culture.

Strategies

- 6.1 Invest in more visual art displays
 - 6.1.1 Have an idea/identify location
 - 6.1.2 Commission artist
 - 6.1.3 Review completion of artwork
- 6.2 Develop an Arts Committee to leverage diversity and culture through art events
- 6.3 Create visually appealing wayfinding signs
 - 6.3.1 Research award-winning wayfinding signs
 - 6.3.2 Identify the location of signs
 - 6.3.3 Contact sign companies for bid
 - 6.3.4 Select company and manage installation