

CITY COUNCIL RESEARCH DIVISION LEGISLATIVE SUMMARY



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Bill Type and Number: Ordinance 2022-515

Introducer/Sponsor(s): Council Members Bowman, Freeman and Newby

Date of Introduction: July 28, 2022

Committee(s) of Reference: NCSPHS, R, F

Date of Analysis: July 30, 2022

Type of Action: Ordinance Code amendments; authorizing execution of contracts; invoking Procurement Code direct contracting exemption; designation of oversight agency; providing codification instructions

Bill Summary: The bill amends various portions of Ordinance Code Chapter 70 – Tourist Development Council, Chapter 111 – Special Revenue and Trust Accounts, and Chapter 666 – Duval County Tourist Development Plan to provide for a direct contract relationship between the Tourist Development Council and Visit Jacksonville Inc. for the agency to provide the City’s tourism marketing and promotion, convention sales and service, and tourist bureau functions for a term of at least 10 years with at least one 10-year renewal option. It invokes the exemption in Ordinance Code Chapter 126 – Procurement Code – permitting direct contracting exempt from competitive solicitation if authorized by ordinance. The Tourist Development Council is designated as the City’s oversight agency for the contract. The bill authorizes members of the TDC to serve two consecutive terms, except for the City Council members who continue to serve 1-year terms. It adds references to sponsorships and promotions as potential revenue sources to the TDC.

Background Information: In the spring of 2022 the Tourist Development Council proposed to City Council the concept of eliminating the upcoming RFP process to competitively select a company or companies to provide the City’s tourism marketing and promotion, convention sales and service, and tourist information bureau services and instead engaging the current contractor – Visit Jacksonville Inc. – in a long-term direct contract for those services. The TDC cited the fact that Visit Jacksonville has provided the City’s tourism-related services for over 20 years and determined that it is uniquely qualified to continue providing those services on a long-term contractual basis. The Council approved the concept via Resolution 2022-174-A. The TDC has proposed this package of authorizations and Code amendments to implement the direct contracting plan, which it believes will provide for streamlined administration of a revised single contract and will allow Visit Jax to do more long-term planning and staffing with the certainty of a 10 year contract.

The Tourist Development Plan is amended to revise and regroup the current 8 plan components into 6 components: 1) Tourism Marketing, Sales, Experiences and Promotion; 2) Planning and Research; 3) Event Grants; 4) Development; 5) Contingency for any uses authorized under F.S. §125.0104(5)(a) (reserve account); and 6) Promotion of the Jacksonville Equestrian Center. The table of specific funding percentages required to be allocated to various components is removed and language is inserted providing that changes to the amount of funding allocated to the designated county destination marketing organization shall be done via a continuous review process by the TDC board . The requirement that contract providers for the various plan components must be competitively procured through procedures in the Procurement Code is specifically waived with regard to the Visit Jax contract. The administration is authorized to execute the direct contract with Visit Jax authorized by the ordinance.

Unrelated to the direct contracting arrangement, the bill also takes the opportunity to make several additional desired changes in the tourism-related Code sections. Language is added providing for 2 consecutive terms for TDC board members (currently only one 4-year term is permitted), except for the City Council members (Council President, Council Vice President and a past Council President or a council member with a demonstrated interest or experience in tourism) who will continue to serve 1-years terms. Section 111.600 – Tourist Development Tax Special Revenue Fund – is amended to add reference to sponsorships and promotions as additional potential external revenue sources that may be received by and allocated from the fund. Section 666.106 – Tourist development tax – is amended to make the TDC “bed tax” applicable to vacation rental by owner properties (such as those booked via AirBnB or VRBO).

Policy Impact Area: Tourism and convention promotion and services

Fiscal Impact: Anticipated to be minimal.

Analyst: Clements