



Southeast Volusia Advertising Authority  
NSB City Hall Chambers – 210 Sams Ave.  
New Smyrna Beach, FL 32168  
February 21, 2017 – 10:30 a.m.

### ***SPECIAL BOARD MEETING AGENDA***

- I. Call to Order: Betsy Baker, Chairwoman  
Roll Call: Debbie Meihls
- II. Discussion and Approval of NSB Trolley Project
- III. Old Business/Public Comment:  
  
Public Participation: Public Participation is limited to three minutes, unless otherwise granted by the Southeast Volusia Advertising Authority members.
- IV. Adjourn

# **SOUTHEAST VOLUSIA ADVERTISING AUTHORITY**

NSB City Hall, Minutes of Special Board Meeting

Tuesday, February 21, 2017

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**Members Present:** Mike Arman, Betsy Baker, Donna Ruby, Chad Truxall, Erik Lumbert, Jamie Dudley and Tom Clapsaddle (by phone).

**Members Absent:**

None.

Betsy, Chairwoman, called the meeting to order at 10:32 a.m.

Debbie Meihls called roll.

Betsy Baker acknowledge the elected officials that were present at the meeting: Mayor Jim Hathaway, City Commissioner Jason McGuirk, Vice Chair County Council Deb Denys.

## **DISCUSSION AND APPROVAL OF NSB TROLLEY PROJECT**

Debbie Meihls presented the trolley project. She stated that there has been a lot of community talk about the trolley from merchants' associations, hoteliers and other in the area. That is the reason they called the special meeting, to review and explore what bringing a trolley to NSB might entail and how and if SVAA can assist in this partnership. They know that SVAA cannot take this project alone, so it will require a tri-party agreement between City of NSB, Volusia County and SVAA. The information presented was preliminary research with the assistance of Votran for the most practical route and good guideline of cost. They look forward to potentially going for RSQ for further services. The quote presented was from Creative Bus Sales, which included leasing for two 2016, Hometown Villager trolley, two options available 26 seated passengers and 1 wheelchair or 24 seated passengers plus 2 wheelchairs. They are ADA accessible. The projection was to operate the trolley Friday and Saturday from 10 am to 9 pm, and Sunday from 12-5 pm. For the Friday operation alone would be 52 days per year, 572 hours a year for a total of \$42,900 a year, at a \$75 hourly rate that includes the driver, gas, insurance, and maintenance. Leasing two trolleys will have an annual cost of \$193,920, or monthly lease of \$7,958, annually \$88,620 per each trolley. If adding a second trolley, the lease alone would be \$88,620. There would be a need of 9 bus stops implementation which would include a bench for an approximate one time cost of \$36,000 for a total of \$322,140 a year. Other projected expenses are tracking technology \$14,000, delivery charges for each trolley \$1,800 or \$3,600 for both. First year operating expenses would be \$336,140 or \$28,012 a month. Second year, if there is ridership, operating both trolleys would be \$387,840 a year or \$32,320 monthly.

The routes projected will work counter clockwise for an approximate time of 30 minutes. It is so important that the City of NSB be involved because their partnership and leadership is needed. There

are 9 stops that need to be added with ADA compliance. Starting point by Brannon Center, go over South Cause Way, Norwoods and Publix Plaza. Then loop around Atlantic Avenue and 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue, stop at Jessamine, then Pine and Flagler, Hampton Inn and North Cause by Marine Discovery Center and then Julia and Sams Avenue.

Any amount for FY 2016-17 would be from reserves because the marketing budget has already been placed for the year.

Debbie Meihls emphasized on the importance of a tri-party agreement in order to make this work County, City, industry support, stakeholders and citizens.

**Board Comments:**

Betsy Baker stated that the trolley idea is great, but they are just starting to scratch the surface of what needs to be done for this project to happen. She expressed concern on the time frame and didn't understand the urgency to start by the summer. All monies on the current fiscal year have been allocated. She recommends to reach to the research data firm to start including on their surveys if the guests and visitors are trolley riders or if they would ride it. Parking needs to be addressed. This year a lot of big changes are coming such as Visit Florida might be eliminated, and it will not be there to help us with marketing. SVAA mission is to market the area to visitors, not to create reasons to visitors to come. Reserves are needed in case there are disasters such as hurricanes.

Mike Arman said it is a wonderful idea and something nice to have in the city. He thinks the vehicle is too expensive for an untested market. He recommends to look for different vehicles. May considered tractor. Daytona had these vehicles and they don't have them anymore and that makes him very nervous. He supports the idea but he doesn't think SVAA should finance the vehicle, because they are not in the transportation business. Should not take the risk with such as expensive vehicle, but they can still support it. He likes the RFP idea, of someone else taking the risk.

Chad Truxall agrees so far with all the comments from the board members. He expressed that there has been talk about trolley in the city for quite some time. As the destinations becomes stronger and grows they have to look at this as a viable option to solve some of the problems of transportation and parking. He likes the idea of people walking and taking mass transit. He supports sustainability and eco-tourism. He loves the concept. For him this is about planning, he would like to see a feasibility study to see what option are available. SVAA roll should be help fund but not lead the way. SVAA roll is to market the destination. He would like to hear the other partners' thoughts.

Erik Lumbert thinks it would be a beautiful addition to the City. He would like to explore other options of vehicles that are more affordable, other route options such as southern sections or beach side. They are Southeast Volusia so there is more than the proposed route. He would like to see if there is a comparable market that has an existing system. Get input if there is any Interest from the private sector

and become self-sustain at one point. He thinks it is a great idea, but they don't have enough answers at the moment.

Jamie Dudley supports the idea of a trolley, but further research is needed. He does not like the idea of a tractor, but other type of vehicle options. It is important to know if there is going to be support from the County and the City. Consider a hospitality tax or other ways to collect funds to cover the operating costs.

Donna Ruby thinks that the community is lacking public transportation, but she doesn't think it is SVAA's responsibility, it is stretching their scope of responsibility because their dollars are supposed to be spent on advertising and marketing not the bricks and mortar, that is the TDC board responsibility. Their return on investment is heads in bed. SVAA is not in the transportation business, they will help start projects, fund them, but they are not responsible to run them. They will help market and advertise them. Feasibility study needs to happen, route and parking are a big issue, only one stop has parking availability. She doesn't think the trolley will alleviate traffic. She Likes the idea but more data is needed.

Tom Clapsaddle stated that they are talking \$300,000 or more, there are more things that we can be doing with that kind of money to bring visitors to the area. He asked the question that if the trolley would make the difference alleviating traffic. Great attraction for NSB. That is a lot of money and they could be marketing Osteen, Port Orange and Oak Hill.

**OLD BUSINESS**

There was none

**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Adele Aletti stated that she was part of the group that was doing research about trolleys and ridership. They looked into tractors and golf cars, but that is not a feasible idea because of the speed limits on the bridge. After looking at the suggested route, she thinks there is parking spaces available at most of the stops. The idea is that visitors can leave their cars in the hotels and go see the town. She thinks the trolley will not make a big impact on traffic. Income can be generated by advertising and ridership. It could bring good revenue. She also suggested pamphlets, cards and trolley news as another way for advertising and generating revenue. She would like to see this project happen in her lifetime. She stated that it would be a great addition to the city for the visitors and locals.

Lynn Williams McIntyre from Flagler Business Association. She lives and runs a business in NSB. She expressed that she has personally interviewed hundreds of customers who would ride the trolley, only one person said they will not ride the trolley. When they did the research the second trolley was supposed to run down to the condos on Atlantic Avenue. There is a parking lot by 31<sup>st</sup> Street and they

can leave their car there and take the trolley. There is parking by the old high school, Marine Discovery. As a business owner, she knows it is not easy to move from Flagler Avenue to Canal Street. The trolley can bring some type of fun and while the visitors are riding, they can be learning about the history of NSB. She knows it will not solve all problems, but visitors and employees will benefit from it. When they were researching the lease, cost was around \$3,000 a month.

Scott Steger president of Flagler Avenue Business Association stated that they have answers to most questions that have been a concern. They have different vendor options and they have done an extensive research and he hates to see efforts duplicated so they would gladly share what they have. The problem is that he doesn't see a for profit situation, it is not a profit generating project. They have done a lot of research that includes alternative vehicles, fuel sources, distance, hills and different routes. The project needs a champion. Getting started is what matters, they need someone to do so and get the local groups involved. The project doesn't show a profit, but cover most the cost.

Rusty Saunders expressed that this should be a joint project because it benefits city and county. They been advocates for the project for more than 5 years pre-Jim Hathaway. Great opportunity getting people around. He thinks is a win-win situation and they need to look at the practicality.

Marie Kveen from Anchor Inn, believes that the guest will take advantage and will be huge draw to downtown. She also said that there is a parking lot on US1 that is never used and the route doesn't go near it. If they are trying to bring more visitors to the area, there has to be a place to park. The map needs to include the additional parking spaces and needs to be joint venture with the City, County and local businesses.

Glenn Storch represents a number of hotels that have come to the area recently. He stated that parking and traffic issues should not be the concern for SVAA, the City and County should be the ones addressing that issue. Mass transit system will have less people on the road and trying to find parking space. This project will help the visitor, so they don't have to think about parking and driving. All the hotels that have come in recently require 100 percent parking. He said that anything that makes us unique is what will draw the tourist and this project does that.

Polly Walsh a local resident said that they need to identify better who is going to ride the trolley. Jessamine is narrow street and residential area; she rides trolleys in every city she goes to. She thinks the project should be taken slow and work out some of the issues.

Randy Herman local resident supports the initiative. He thinks there is a will and there are the ways. The project won't be profitable but close to breaking even.

Deb Denys Vice Chair from Volusia County Council, stated that Southeast Volusia, New Smyrna Beach and Ad Authority have the opportunity to go where they have never gone before. The project requires leadership, vision, thinking bigger than where they are now for a bigger project. There have been multiple conversations from the Canal Street Merchant Association, Flagler Avenue Merchants

Association and the City. Timing is everything and this is a great opportunity to start the conversation. The idea is not to figure it out everything today and nobody is expecting to be done that way. The intent is to have an open mind and be willing to seat with Flagler Avenue Association and city groups on a workshop event because they have a lot of information and many questions can be answered. The key is to have tri-party agreement SVAA, City and County. Revenue was not addressed either; the plan was to charge \$1 to ride the trolley. Even at 50% capacity it looked pretty good. There are all kinds of creative ways to finance the project. HAA trolley failed because 3 cities were involved. Brannon civic center will bring conferences and will fill hotels and restaurant. The trolley could be used for special occasions and other days of the week.

Erik Lumbert stated that he sees support from the mass majority. A champion is needed and he likes the idea of a workshop.

Betsy Baker stated that she didn't want to miss the opportunity and that committee or workshop is needed. She would like a commitment from the other parties.

Tom Clapsaddle we create heads in bed and he personally things that a trolley is not what they do.

Chad Truxall agreed that they are all open to the concept, the board is open minded and all ways bring different things to the table. He would like to verify if legally SVAA can participate in the project. Management company that will contract with and who will be directing them. He would not like the Executive Director's time and staff's time devoted to this project. He doesn't want SVAA to be leading and managing the project.

Deb Denys suggested to vote to support the concept and to look at the option and calling the workshop.

Mike Arman made the motion support the concept and have a workshop with the pertinent parties to include, but not limited to the County, City on New Smyrna Beach, Votran, Flagler Merchants, Canal Street, 3<sup>rd</sup> Street, Chamber of Commerce, Chad Truxall seconded. The majority of members were in favor except Tom Clapsaddle who was opposed.

<b>ADJOURN</b>
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Meeting adjourned at 11:48 AM.