ACCOMMODATIONS TAX ADVISORY COMMITTEE
10:00am, Wednesday, June 10, 2026
1207 Palm Boulevard, Isle of Palms, SC

MINUTES

1. **Call to order**

Present: Rebecca Kovalich, Park Williams, Barb Bergwerf, Margaret Miller, Mike Boykin (via Zoom)

Absent: Chrissy Lorenz, Rod Turnage

Staff Present: Administrator Kerr, Deputy Administrator Kuester, Director Hamilton, Council Member Cohen

2. **Approval of previous meeting's minutes** – May 13, 2026

Ms. Bergwerf made a motion to approve the minutes of the May 13, 2026 meeting, and Ms. Miller seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

3. **Presentations – Rebranding Candidates**

A. Black Dog Designs
B. Blue Ridge Creative Marketing
C. MandelaMade
D. Destination by Design
E. Blue Ion
F. Marketing Alliance

Representatives from Black Dog Designs, Blue Ridge Creative Marketing, MandelaMade, Destination by Design, Marketing Alliance, and Blue Ion gave brief presentations about their respective organizations and their approach to providing a rebrand for the City of Isle of Palms. Their presentations can be found on the City's website embedded in the agenda for this meeting.

Administrator Kerr asked Committee members to use the provided scoring sheet to grade the presentations and send those sheets to him in the next week. The scores and a vote will take place at the July meeting.

4. **Financial Statements**

Director Hamilton said ATAX revenues remain strong and expenditures are generally aligned with budget expectations. Available cash in the ATAX fund is up 15% over prior year. Revenue for Q1 were up 10% over prior year, Q2 up 6% but were down 13% in Q3. Interest income is up

25% over prior year. She noted that there will be a few expenses needing approval for overages at the next meeting.

Director Hamilton will provide clarity at regarding purchases and sales in the t-shirt giveaway program.

Mr. Williams asked if the City should adjust the FY27 budget in light of the "flat" ATAX revenues. Administrator Kerr said the Second Reading of the budget is in two weeks, and he doubts that staff could secure data in that time period to support making such changes. Director Hamilton reminded the Committee that the City budgets conservatively. Council Member Cohen said City Council watches tourism revenues closely.

5. **Old Business**

Discussion and consideration of FY27 Budget for Charleston Visitors' Bureau

Mr. Campbell explained again to Committee members the difference between the money the CVB expects to receive from the City and what it expects to spend on behalf of the City. He said that difference is related to regional marketing. He clarified that the number does not reflect the anticipated revenue from the City. "The delta of several hundred thousand dollars is essentially the benefit that we are able to bring to the island thanks to having a regional marketing approach."

Committee members asked if there is a better way to present that information so it does not look like they are spending more than they are receiving. Council Member Cohen explained that City Council needs clarity on that money is being spent.

MOTION: Ms. Bergwerf made a motion to approve the FY27 Budget for State Accommodations Tax Funds. Ms. Miller seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

6. **New Business -- none**

7. **Miscellaneous Business**

The next meeting of the ATAX Committee will be Wednesday, July 8, 2026 at 10am. The agenda will include a consideration for the branding RFP.

8. **Adjournment**

Ms. Bergwerf made a motion to adjourn, and Ms. Miller seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 10:56am.

Respectfully submitted,

Nicole DeNeane
City Clerk