

# **AGENDA**

March 27, 2024 9:30am

### CENTRAL FLORIDA TOURISM OVERSIGHT DISTRICT

# Agenda March 27, 2024 9:30 a.m.

- 1. CALL TO ORDER
- 2. OPENING INVOCATION
- 3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE
- 4. SAFETY MINUTE
- 5. PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD
- 6. CONSENT AGENDA
  - **6.1** February 28, 2024 Meeting Minutes
- 7. REPORTS
  - 7.1 Management Report
- 8. NEW BUSINESS
  - **8.1** Board Consideration of Request from Stephanie Kopelousos to serve as District Administrator.
- 9. UNFINISHED BUSINESS
- 10. OTHER BUSINESS
- 11. EXECUTIVE SESSION
  - 11.1 Attorney/ Client Executive Closed Session

As requested by the Acting General Counsel, pursuant to Section 286.011(8), Florida Statutes, the Board of Supervisors of the Central Florida Tourism Oversight District will hold an Attorney/ Client Executive Closed Session to discuss strategy and settlement negotiations related to litigation expenditures in the following case: Walt Disney Parks and Resorts U.S., Inc. v. DeSantis, et. al., N.D. Fla. Case No. 4:23-cv-

00163-MW-MJF, Central Florida Tourism Oversight District v. Walt Disney Parks and Resorts U.S., Inc., Orange County Circuit Court Case No. 2023-CA-011818-O and Walt Disney Parks and Resorts U.S., Inc. v. Central Florida Tourism Oversight District, Orange County Circuit Court Case No. 2023-CA-017887-O. The persons in attendance at the closed-door meeting will be Board of Supervisor members, Vice-Chair - Charbel Barakat, Brian Aungst, Jr., Ron Peri, and Bridget Ziegler; District Administrator; Acting General Counsel Daniel Langley and A. Kurt Ardaman; litigation counsel Paul Huck, Jason Gonzales and David Thompson.

#### 12. ADJOURN

APPEALS: All persons are advised that, if they decide to appeal any decision made at a Board of Supervisors hearing, they will need a verbatim transcript of the record of the proceedings. It is the responsibility of every party-in-interest to arrange for a transcript of the proceedings, which must include the verbatim testimony and evidence upon which the appeal is made.

AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT: The Central Florida Tourism Oversight District is committed to reasonably accommodating the needs of anyone with disabilities who wishes to attend or participate in public meetings. Anyone with a disability who requires a reasonable accommodation should contact the Clerk of the Board, by telephone at (407) 934-7480 or via email (currently at <u>DistrictClerk@rcid.org</u>), no less than one business day (i.e. Monday through Friday, excluding legal holidays) in advance of the applicable meeting to ensure that the District has sufficient time to accommodate the request.

## Central Florida Tourism Oversight District

### **Board of Supervisors**

### Agenda Item 6.1

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Meeting Date	
March 27, 2024	
Agenda Item Name	
February 28, 2024 Meeting Minutes	
Requested Action	
Transcript of meeting.	
Staff Report	
Additional Analysis	
Fiscal Impact Summary	
<b>Exhibits Attached</b>	

### In The Matter Of:

Central Florida Tourism Oversight District

Board of Supervisors Meeting February 28, 2024

Legal Realtime Reporting 622 E. Washington Street Suite 200 Orlando, Florida 32801

Original File 02-28-24CFTOD BOS meeting - public.txt Min-U-Script® with Word Index

# CENTRAL FLORIDA TOURISM OVERSIGHT DISTRICT BOARD OF SUPERVISORS MEETING

\* \* \* \* \*

LOCATION: Central Florida Tourism Oversight

District

1900 Hotel Plaza Boulevard

Lake Buena Vista, Florida 32830

DATE TAKEN: February 28, 2024

TIME: 9:35 a.m. - 10:49 a.m.

REPORTED BY: SANDRA D. BROWN, FPR,

Court Reporter and Notary Public

State of Florida at Large

#### PRESENT:

BOARD MEMBERS: Martin Garcia, Chairman; Charbel Barakat, Vice Chairman; Brian Aungst, Jr.; and Bridget Ziegler

SPEAKERS: Pastor Greg Squires, Freedom Life Church, Kissimmee, Florida; Eddie Fernandez, CFTOD Operational Safety Consultant; Chris Wills, Disney Defenders; Nelly Hernandez, Osceola Action Committee; George R. Jackow; Jayne Smithers; Katherine Luetzow, Planning & Engineering Manager; Tanya Naylor, Director of Security and Emergency Management

CFTOD STAFF: Glenton Gilzean, Jr., District Administrator; Paula Hoisington, Deputy District Administrator of Administration; Mike Crikis, Deputy District Administrator of Operations; Daniel Langley, Acting Counsel for CFTOD; Kurt Ardaman, Acting Counsel for CFTOD; Eddie Fernandez, Internal Risk Manager; Eric Ferrari, Acting Fire Chief; Alycia Mills, Executive Assistant to Mr. Gilzean; Matthew Oberly, External Affairs Director; Rocky Haag, External Affairs Coordinator; Tanya Naylor, Director of Security and Emergency Management; Ron Zupa, IT Service Delivery Manager; Samarth Thomas, Systems Administrator; Katherine Luetzow, Planning & Engineering Manager; Michele Dicus, Human Resources Director; Tiffany Kimball, Contracting Officer; Erin O'Donnell, Town Clerk and Public Records Administrator; Yenni Hernandez, Chief Information Officer; Joel Edwards, Deputy Fire Chief; Heidi Powell, Manager - Financial Reporting Analysis; Susan Higginbotham, Director of Finance; Joey Rodriguez, Chief Building Inspector and Interim Building Official; Christine Ferraro, Director - RCES; Ella Hickey, Building & Safety

#### PROCEEDINGS

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CHAIR GARCIA: Hey, good morning. I'd like to call the meeting to order. Welcome to everybody, thank you for being here, thank you for your interest in the work of this Board, and thank you for your interest in the work of this District.

We'll begin with the opening invocation.

Mr. Gilzean.

MR. GILZEAN: At this time, I would like to introduce Pastor Greg Squires of Freedom Life Church in Kissimmee, Florida. In 2008, following the Holy Spirit's direction, he was handed the baton from his father-in-law. Since then Freedom Life Church has grown to more than 600 people attending each weekend, and is known for helping people experience the freedom of Christ in their everyday lives.

Pastor, can you please join us and lead us in prayer?

PASTOR SQUIRES: Thank you guys for the opportunity to do this. I do very much believe in the institution of government, but I do believe in the institution of government seeking God for help since he is the one that created this institution

and has all wisdom.

So I want to just give you a quick scripture. This is definitely not a message or even a nugget but just more of a scripture. And it says in 1 Timothy 2:1, "I urge you, first of all, to pray for all people, and ask God to help them, intercede on their behalf, and give thanks for them. Pray this way for kings and for all those who are in authority so that we can live peaceful and quiet lives marked by godliness and dignity. This is good, and it pleases God, our Savior, who wants everyone to be saved and to understand the truth."

So it would be right to always do an invocation before any type of government meeting. I believe in that because we do need the help of God, we need his wisdom, obviously, about not just today, but for the discussions that we make today, how is it going to affect our future and for those that are in our districts.

So thank you, again, for allowing us to do that. So I'm going to ask God to give wisdom to this meeting so that you guys can do your jobs with great grace and ability to help our area, so thank you again.

Father, we are so grateful that we have this

privilege and this honor to be able to pray. Thank you that we're allowed to do that in our state and in this district in this way. We thank you for the privilege for the freedom that we have. And while we don't take it lightly, and so, Father, we invite you now into this room, the very person of the Holy Spirit, to come and to give wisdom. We are asking for wisdom to everyone that makes decisions upon this Board, and those that are in positions of authority, wisdom about what is happening in this district.

How can we make it better? How can, Father, you be pleased with it? How can your plan and your agenda come to pass? How the people can be helped and it can become a better place for families to live and for people to be able to come and enjoy, even on vacation, an area like this.

So, Father, we ask you for wisdom and direction and grace and understanding and discernment, and we believe that, Father, we receive it today, and we thank you for it. In the name of Jesus we pray, Amen.

ATTENDEES: Amen.

CHAIR GARCIA: Pastor, thank you very much for your blessings and for your words of wisdom.

Next, let's honor this great nation by saying the Pledge of Allegiance. Please stand.

ATTENDEES: I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic, for which it stands, one nation, under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

CHAIR GARCIA: Okay. Let's cover our safety procedures, please.

MR. FERNANDEZ: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and members of the Board for including this safety minute for the benefit of our audience.

To audience members, if you're facing the front of the room towards the Board, you'll notice there are double doors on either side. Both of those exits will lead to the outside of the building.

If you do make your way out, on the left side here, that will lead you to the back of the building. Make your way towards the front following the path, and to either end of the parking lot where you will see members of our team from this building wearing a safety vest.

If you make your way to the ends of the parking lot, please wait there for emergency vehicles, and then they'll tell us when it is safe

to come back in.

In addition, for your health and safety, we have a first-aid kit and an AED at the security desk that we will approach and use, if necessary.

Thank you very much and enjoy your meeting.

CHAIR GARCIA: Thank you very much. Next, public comments. We have two public comments. First, Chris Wills. Welcome back, Chris. We know who you are, but, for the record, please tell everyone who you represent.

MR. WILLS: Good morning, Chairman. Yes, my name is Chris Wills. I'm here on behalf of Disney Defenders. Appreciate the opportunity to address the Board again this morning.

I don't have any documents to provide to you guys this morning, but we did make something for you. So this week marks, as you-all noted, your one-year anniversary. It's also our one-year anniversary. We basically launched Disney Defenders in response to Governor DeSantis's creation of this Board, which was done in retaliation against the "Don't Say Gay" law.

And so we made this cake for you-all that simply says, just like gay means happy, "We wish you all a very gay anniversary."

And it was said last meeting that, you know, that's a gross mischaracterization of the law, but we would like to differ. You know, we have certain members of the Board that have engaged in gross hypocrisy on specifically this issue.

And so I wanted to take the rest of this time because over the last week, a lot has been said about the successes of the Central Florida Tourism Oversight District, especially at this press conference that was unannounced. And you guys were so proud of it, I would have thought you guys would allow more public participation in that.

But the reality is Reedy Creek was created by a Republican governor. It was overseen over its 50-plus years by majority Republicans in Tallahassee. And since this Board's creation in just a year, right, you had nothing but controversies; whereas, Reedy Creek, most folks didn't even know it existed because there was literally no controversy. There were no issues that were reported by the press or anybody else. Certainly not the Republicans that were regulating it in Tallahassee.

And in just one year we've seen Board member scandals, a board member resigning. We've had an

effort to defund the police. We've had not complying with public records request, which, by the way, anybody on the Board that doesn't know how to screenshot their text messages, as it seems that that's one of the impediments to providing the public records request, I volunteer to show you how to screenshot text messages, and I'm sure there's a lot of staffers here that would help with that, as well.

There have been a lot of corrupt contracts provided to folks that are connected directly to Governor DeSantis. You guys ended the diversity, equity, and inclusion program sending a really messed up message to anybody who is of a diverse background. You know, large numbers of employees quitting, and the most important thing, an adversarial attitude to your largest taxpayer. That is Walt Disney World.

This Board exists and government exists to serve the people and the businesses that pay its taxes, so we strongly urge each and every one of you to re-evaluate what you're doing because every time that a controversy hits, it only acquires us more signatures to officially dissolve the Central Florida Tourism Oversight District and restore

Reedy Creek and prohibit political retaliation in the State of Florida.

Thank you very much for the time. We really appreciate it. And one last question, anybody want cake?

CHAIR GARCIA: You know, Chris, with all those ugly things you say about us, I don't know if I'm going to eat that cake.

MR. WILLS: I -- I promise you it was baked by an excellent baker who had no issues baking a gay cake. I promise.

CHAIR GARCIA: I'm very risk adverse. But I want to tell you, we appreciate the thought, but I think you ought to keep the cake.

MR. WILLS: Okay. We will enjoy it.

CHAIR GARCIA: But thank you.

MR. WILLS: Thank you.

CHAIR GARCIA: Next, Nelly Hernandez.

Ms. Hernandez, if you're here in a representative capacity, please tell us who you represent.

MS. HERNANDEZ: Good morning, how is everybody doing?

MR. AUNGST: Good morning.

MS. HERNANDEZ: Looking forward to Friday.

We're not there yet. So my name is Nelly -- Nelly

Hernandez, and I am the president, Osceola Action

Committee, a grass roots citizens group created out

of frustration of our community due to

out-of-control growth.

Since massive land purchase in Central Florida by Disney and since 1965, many deals have been made by our local, county, and state governments which benefited them at the expense of our community.

While Disney has generated revenue via sales and tourist development taxes, the company has been shielded from contributing from painful property taxes and impact fees for their development in the region, which some have estimated to be almost 200 million a year in lost revenue for the region. That's a lot.

The impact to traffic, crime, and transient homelessness are major issues which are direct -- directly connected to Disney that have a negative impact in our community. We commend Governor DeSantis, our state legislature, and the newly created Central Florida Tourism Oversight Board for creating a level playing field to ensure Disney pays their full fair share for the impacts to our community. So we appreciate you guys. Thank you.

CHAIR GARCIA: Ms. Hernandez, thank you very

1 much for your comments, and your points are not lost on this Board and many people in Central 2 Florida. And one of the things that really has 3 never been done, and that this Board will do at the 4 appropriate time, is do an independent regional 5 fiscal impact analysis so that we can better 6 7 respond to all the points that you make here. 8 they're right on the money, and I want to let you 9 know that we hear you loud and clear. 10 MS. HERNANDEZ: Thank you. I appreciate your time. 11 12 CHAIR GARCIA: Yes, ma'am. Thank you. 13 Next, George Jackson (sic). And, Mr. Jackson, tell us --14 15 MR. JACKOW: Jackow. CHAIR GARCIA: 16 I'm sorry. MR. JACKOW: J-A-C-K-O-W. I'm not whacko, 17 18 either. 19 CHAIR GARCIA: Okay. That W looked like an N 20 to me. I'm sorry. MR. JACKOW: Sorry about that. 21 That's okay. If you're here in 22 CHAIR GARCIA: 23 a representative capacity, tell us who you

No, I'm just here as a citizen.

represent, please.

MR. JACKOW:

24

25

Okay. First of all, good morning, Board, and thank you for the opportunity to come here and speak before you. I'll be very succinct. I am curious, and I'm very loquacious, so I'll cut to the chase. My name is George R. Jackow, and I've been a resident of Osceola County for over 37 years. So I'm quite familiar with the county and the operations.

First of all, I'd like to thank you for allowing me. That's number one. And recently the governor was here talking about the importance of legislation that helped change the Disney district. I was caught offguard when there was a mention of eminent domain.

You mean to tell me that our state gave the past district that power, that authority? Hmm, I'm glad to see the new district in place and hope to learn more about other issues that I was not made aware of for the past few decades.

Please keep me informed and others informed about any other issues that were not public knowledge. Again, being very succinct and direct, thanks for all you're doing, and I hope to hear more feedback in the near future. Thank you.

CHAIR GARCIA: So, Mr. Jackow --

1 MR. JACKOW: Jackow.

CHAIR GARCIA: Mr. Jackow --

MR. JACKOW: Think of Michael Jackson's nickname, Jacko, J-A-C-K-O, add the W. All right. I don't do the moon dance or moon walk or what have you.

CHAIR GARCIA: I'm going to call you George.

It's easier for me.

MR. JACKOW: By George, that's right.

CHAIR GARCIA: So your -- your points are well taken, and what I would direct you to, have you seen the audit that -- the independent audit that was produced by this Board?

MR. JACKOW: No, I have not.

CHAIR GARCIA: Okay. So in terms of some of the questions that you have, and your reference to the --

MR. JACKOW: Eminent domain?

CHAIR GARCIA: Yes. We -- in the first week of December, before that, we went out and hired some of the leading national experts to do an audit of what has been going on in the district for the previous 56 years under the Reedy Creek Improvement Act. Okay. And we brought in these experts, and they generated an independent audit. It's about

800 pages, but the summary is about 12 pages, and the full report is about 80 pages. And it's on our website, isn't it, Mr. Gilzean?

MR. GILZEAN: Correct.

CHAIR GARCIA: And for a citizen like you, who's interested in public policy, what's going on in the district, I recommend that you -- you look at our -- look at the audits.

MR. JACKOW: So, let's see, 800 pages, 12 pages, 80 pages. Well, you're in competition with the federal government then. Okay. That's nice to know. Is it in English?

CHAIR GARCIA: Yes, sir.

MR. JACKOW: Thank you. I appreciate that.

CHAIR GARCIA: Well, George, thank you for your public comments.

MR. JACKOW: Thank you.

CHAIR GARCIA: Next, Jayne Smithers, and if you're here in a representative capacity, please tell us who you represent.

MS. SMITHERS: I'm a citizen of Osceola

County. Good morning, Chairman, and Board. Thank
you for the opportunity to address you openly and
honestly about the direction the district is
headed.

During Governor DeSantis's visit, many things were said that I was not aware of. The biggest take-away as a resident of Osceola County was the amount of years Disney was able to get away without paying impact fees. Osceola County has been victimized with traffic issues, and there seems to be no end in sight. I believe with the Board's leadership, we will see positive changes for our community.

Please continue to improve our quality of life. Once again, thank you for this opportunity to express my opinion.

CHAIR GARCIA: Well, thank you for your -your public comments, and I know you were here when
you heard my responses to the previous --

MS. SMITHERS: Yes.

CHAIR GARCIA: Yes. So I would recommend -you might be interested in going on our website and
looking at that audit because it will tell you a
lot more than what we discussed at the press
conference last week, and for citizens like you,
who are interested in what's going on in their
community, I think that's something you might enjoy
or at least get information from.

MS. SMITHERS: I will do that, and thank you

1 for that.

CHAIR GARCIA: Yes, ma'am. Thank you. Okay. That concludes the public comments.

Next, the consent agenda. Any comments with respect to the consent agenda?

MR. AUNGST: Move to approve item 6.1.

CHAIR GARCIA: Is there a second?

MR. BARAKAT: Second.

CHAIR GARCIA: All in favor, indicate by saying aye.

THE BOARD: Aye.

CHAIR GARCIA: Any opposed? Let the record reflect that the motion passes unanimously.

CHAIR GARCIA: Okay. Mr. Gilzean, next, reports. First, management report.

MR. GILZEAN: In our inaugural year, the Central Florida Tourism Oversight District has achieved historic successes benefiting our employees, visitors, and all taxpayers. We've turned this district into a leading example of effective governance.

The creation of our district is attributed to the bold and visionary leadership of Governor Ron DeSantis and the Florida legislature. Furthermore, as with any vision, realization demands hard work

and dedication from our Board and staff. Each of our significant reforms are backed by extensive research, drafting, and implementation.

For those keeping track at home, here's a brief summary. We've implemented numerous new policies, introduced good governance practices and ensured open and transparent access. The millage rate has been slashed through our fiscal discipline, and for the first time in district history, we've approved a bargaining contract ahead of its expiration date.

Additionally, we've been cultivating strong relationships with all taxpayers frequently addressing the needs that were previously overlooked or denied.

Additionally, we have overdated -- overhauled outdated policies and introduced new benefits to improve the well-being of work-life balance of our staff. Some of these policies include short-term disabilities, parental leave, block pay, attire and grooming.

Lastly, we've implemented a new leave donation policy to provide support to our employees during challenging times. Through a collaborative effort, RCFD is now proudly known as the District Fire

Department.

After successfully hiring over 20 new team members, our fire department is one of only a few fully staffed in the Central Florida region for the first time in over 30 years. I want to thank our human resources team for making this achievement possible.

In addition, our HR team successfully filled over 70 positions with just over a few vacancies remaining. Given the swift influx of qualified applicants, I'm confident that we will promptly remain -- we will promptly fill the remaining positions.

Later in the meeting I will ask the Board to approve a sexual harassment policy to protect district employees from unwanted advancement and harassment in the workplace. I want to show our staff and let them know that this leadership team will not tolerate harassment, or -- sexual or otherwise.

Now I'd like to update you on our BuyLocal program. Government entities are not known for having a deep focus and investment in their procurement process. As of today -- I have to slow down. There we go. As of today, over \$80 million

have been awarded through our open bid platform.

Next slide. Over \$15 million to first-time vendors doing business with the district ever. And \$9 million to vendors headquartered in Orange, Osceola, Lake, Polk, and Seminole Counties, while saving taxpayers -- there you go, \$5.3 million in procurement costs. And this is in less than four-and-a-half months.

Since December 1st, 718 vendors registered on our BuyLocal website. 552 of them are brand new vendors to the district. That's 77 percent in less than three short months. The district is dedicated to creating a regional impact and offering a better future for all who live, work, and play in the Central Florida region.

Earlier this month, the district hosted

Ms. Catherine McManus, president and CEO of Habitat

for Humanity Greater Orlando and Osceola County.

Last year, President McManus published a report,

"Face the Housing Crisis." It states that

92 percent of people making the median wage cannot afford median entry-level homes in Orlando, which now roughly costs \$316,000.

CFTOD inked a historic partnership with Habitat to build a better tomorrow. Thank you,

Ella Hickey, and -- CFTOD's director of building and safety; and Joey Rodriguez, CFTOD's building official, who both have recently been promoted to their new roles.

Here's the exciting part. Under Ella's leadership last summer, CFTOD Building & Safety Department became a national leader by leveraging technology and implementing a DocuSign process for issuing permits. This process was dramatically -- this process will dramatically reduce time and -- reduce time for staff and taxpayers.

Further, the department continues to conduct an annual emergency test program. These tests are conducted on every building district-wide in a collaborative effort between the building and safety department, land owners, tenants, engineering departments, utilities, and fire prevention.

This rigorous test effort has proven to be highly effective ensuring the safety of every person who enters any building in the district, whether it is a restaurant, retail space, resort, or attraction. The district is the only jurisdiction in the country to offer this type of program. Procedures like this makes the district a

model for efficient and effective governance.

I've already mentioned our wonderful team, but it is important to me that we recognize them properly. Central Florida Tourism Oversight

District has been -- has the best government team in the state of Florida. Each one of our employees has shown up daily not only to support our taxpayers but also to create a profound impact as good neighbors graciously lending their time and professional knowledge throughout the community.

Last year brought notable change to our organization. I, the Board of Supervisors, and the entire leadership team thanks our employees for their continued effort. You often hear the phrase, "Actions have ripple effects." I want to thank our staff for bringing the positive ripple affects to the greater Central Florida region. I'm proud of each of you.

At this time, I would like to bring up our colleague, Katherine, from -- our planning and engineering manager, to present the public facilities report.

MS. LUETZOW: Good morning. As Glen mentioned, my name is Katherine Luetzow, and I'm the manager of planning and engineering, and today

I am going to give you a highlight overview of the public facilities report that was included in your board package.

This is our initial public facilities report, and the reason being is that previously the district was not required -- sorry. Previously, the district was not required to complete this report. However, one of the changes with our new charter, that has been modified, and so, as such, we compiled and are presenting today.

Now, the high-level purpose and intent of this report is that it is a planning tool used to help promote and foster coordination and communication with special districts and their surrounding local governments. So, in our case, this report will end up going to both Orange and Osceola Counties for their use.

Now, in terms of public facilities, really the report is focused on major capital improvements of the district. And this can be for various asset categories, so our transportation networks, including our roads, to our utility infrastructure, to our master drainage system of canals and water control structures.

And it is looking -- as this is our initial

report, we have information on our existing facilities. Those in existence currently operating today, as well as the planning forecast down the road of an eight- to ten-year outlook of what facilities we are looking at.

In general, the type of projects that are of interest are either replacements of a type of facility, an expansion where you're adding capacity to an existing facility, or a brand new capital project where the district could be adding infrastructure.

So the existing facilities listed we grouped by asset categories. So we provided detail about utilities, canals, things of that nature. And then as mentioned, we identified proposed projects that are on our horizon. These projects were predominantly previously identified in other planning tools of the district, such as our comprehensive plan, and they've been identified as a planned forecasted need based on existing, as well as, projected growth, both internal as well as external to the district, looking at the adjacent counties and some of their planned development.

Because a project is listed, again, this is a planning tool. So, obviously, all of these

projects would have to have subsequent approvals, go before the Board for individual phase approvals. So this is just kind of a long-term forecasted of some potential items to use in collaboration with adjacent counties.

Likewise, as the one constant in life is change, this is meant to be a living document, so as the district's long-term plans may change over time, we, likewise, would be occasionally updating this report to reflect any changes, and, again, sharing that with the adjacent counties to help keep them aware of what the district would be doing.

And so with that, that's kind of a high-level overview. Are there any specific questions regarding the report?

CHAIR GARCIA: Any questions from my fellow board members?

MR. AUNGST: Mr. Chair, yeah. Thank you,
Katherine. I appreciate all your hard work on this
and your team, and it was a pleasure meeting with
you-all, I believe, last month and driving around
and seeing some of the projects that are already
underway and some of the issues that are
identified.

Also appreciate the fact that I think this is the first time that the team has been required to prepare this report, so I appreciate all the hard work that went into that, and it's exceptionally helpful for me to understand the assets, the current state of the assets, and then some opportunities and challenges and things that we'll need solutions to going forward.

Also certainly appreciate the importance that will play when we go through the comprehensive planning process. As you know, we're required to complete by -- I believe, it's July of 2026, which we discussed in our meeting and looking forward to getting that process moving in earnest, hopefully, this year. At least put that into place to get that accomplished on time -- well in excess of time.

One of the things I'm interested in, and I certainly don't expect you to have an answer for it now, but something I would be interested to know is I understand, particularly, as it relates to transportation, and as it relates to drainage and stormwater systems and -- and those things, that we work hand-in-hand or we should be working hand-in-hand with our partners that are our

neighbors, and the folks that we impact and the folks that impact us, and I also understand that they have similar reports.

So I would be interested to see some of those -- some of their reports as it relates to our infrastructure, and maybe their infrastructure that impacts our infrastructure. So, obviously, not something I expect you to have off the top of your head, but something that I'd like to see either one-on-one or back in front of the Board maybe in a few months talking about how that interacts with particularly transportation and stormwater and potable water and all those issues that we talked about with the team in our meeting.

So, again, thank you, very helpful. Great -great work and look forward to getting more and
more information and getting deeper in the weeds on
these issues as we go forward.

MS. LUETZOW: Definitely. Thank you.

CHAIR GARCIA: Any other questions or comments from my fellow Board members?

MR. BARAKAT: Mr. Chair, I would just add. I mean, I certainly echo Brian's comments, but it's great to see -- Katherine, first, thank you for the report. This is very thorough, and one thing it

really does is highlight the need for significant public or sort of improvement projects going forward in the next five to ten years.

And, you know, I don't know that you need -anybody who has spent time driving -- whether on
World Drive or Buena Vista or Western Way or -- I
think you don't necessarily need this report to
tell you that there's need for improvement there,
but I think this really crystallizes it
significantly. And I think that's something that
we all are looking forward to getting to work on.

Obviously, funding is a question. We're going to come up with some creative, I think, ideas on that front, but it's good to see this in front of us and sort of lay out an agenda for the -- for the near future, so thank you.

MS. LUETZOW: You're welcome.

CHAIR GARCIA: Any other questions or comments from my fellow board members?

MR. AUNGST: I guess just to add on additional kind of information, wondering other challenges that our neighbors are facing that might impact us would be an area that I'd be very interested in.

Because certainly, you know, their infrastructure and the -- the status of their infrastructure

certainly is something that we need to be aware of, so it's -- to kind of include that as a focus. I'd be interested to know that, as well.

MS. LUETZOW: Definitely.

MR. AUNGST: Thank you.

MS. LUETZOW: Thank you.

CHAIR GARCIA: Katherine, thank you very much for an excellent report, and thank you for the written report. Very comprehensive, the Board appreciates your good work.

MS. LUETZOW: You're welcome. Thank you.

CHAIR GARCIA: And, Mr. Gilzean, thank you for your management report. And that will now take us to the public hearings part of the agenda.

First, Resolution 659.

MR. LANGLEY: Resolution No. 659, a resolution of the Central Florida Tourism Oversight District adopting a sexual harassment policy.

MR. GILZEAN: Mr. Chairman, and members of the Board, I request your immediate vote and ratification on the sexual harassment policy, policy No. 24 -- 2024-05. Once approved, this policy will be sent to staff, distributed to members of the press, and posted on our website for public access.

The key highlights of the policy is a zero tolerance, confidential reporting, supporting resources, training, and education. And that concludes the overview on that. Is there any questions or comments?

CHAIR GARCIA: I know we have to open this up to public comments. Are there any public comments with respect to Resolution 659?

Hearing none, is there a motion that we adopt it?

MS. ZIEGLER: I move to approve Resolution 659.

MR. AUNGST: Second.

CHAIR GARCIA: Is there any discussion?

MS. ZIEGLER: I just wanted to highlight I work on another board, and this is a very important policy, and I think it's very comprehensive, especially, highlighting the reporting, retaliation, whistleblowing, and chain of command. I think those are great highlights, so I wanted to applaud the work on this one. Thank you.

CHAIR GARCIA: Thank you. Any other comments from my fellow board members?

Hearing none, all in favor, indicate by saying aye.

THE BOARD: Aye.

CHAIR GARCIA: Any opposed? Let the record reflect that the motion passed unanimously.

Resolution 660. Mr. Langley.

MR. LANGLEY: Resolution No. 660, a resolution of the Central Florida Tourism Oversight District adopting a comprehensive emergency management plan.

MR. GILZEAN: At this time, our director of emergency management will speak on it.

MS. NAYLOR: Good morning, Board. Good morning, Board Chair, board members, Mr. Gilzean, Mr. Ardaman, Mr. Langley.

MR. BARAKAT: Good morning.

MS. NAYLOR: So the district continues to remain high priority on emergency planning. In September I came and asked for a resolution approval for Resolution 655, and that was for the emergency management plan for the hurricane preparedness.

Today I'm here to present Resolution 650 (sic) -- 660 for the approval of a comprehensive emergency management plan.

So the state requires through Chapter 252 for all of the counties to provide a comprehensive emergency management plan for the counties. As we

are a special taxing district, we are not required to do that; however, we have leveraged that chapter within the state statute to prepare a comprehensive emergency management plan for the district and for the district activities.

While this might be the first formally promulgated plan for the district from a comprehensive emergency management plan standpoint, the partnerships that form the basis of this plan have been in place since the inception of the district, whether it was Reedy Creek or the Central Florida Tourism Oversight District. So we continue to manage those partnerships for our planning purposes.

So I'm here to present that today. I had the pleasure of meeting with board member Ziegler and board member Peri to deep dive into these plans recently.

CHAIR GARCIA: Well, thank you for that report, Tanya. We have to open it up for public comments. Are there any public comments with respect to Resolution 660?

Are there any comments or questions from my fellow board members?

MS. ZIEGLER: Mr. Chairman, I just want to

1	highlight. I think we've talked about this a
2	couple times before, but the district staff really
3	is world class. I'm a policy nerd, I will admit,
4	with the risk management background that I have.
5	And reading through this, Tanya, I can't applaud
6	you more. I think you have a lot to be very proud
7	of. This is a top-notch emergency management plan,
8	and so I really enjoyed reading over it. So thank
9	you.
10	MS. NAYLOR: Thank you very much.
11	CHAIR GARCIA: Any other comments or questions
12	from my fellow board members?
13	Hearing none, is there a motion?
14	MS. ZIEGLER: Move to approve Resolution 660.
15	CHAIR GARCIA: A second?
16	MR. BARAKAT: I'll second.
17	CHAIR GARCIA: All in favor, indicate by
18	saying aye.
19	THE BOARD: Aye.
20	CHAIR GARCIA: Any opposed?
21	Let the record reflect that the motion passes
22	unanimously. Thanks again, Tanya.
23	MS. NAYLOR: Thank you-all very much.
24	MR. AUNGST: Thank you.
25	CHAIR GARCIA: Okay. That takes us to the

shade portion of the meeting. We will recess to -for the Board to meet with counsel in what we call
a shade meeting. And at the conclusion of that, we
will come back and adjourn unless there's further
business to do. So -- yes, Mr. Langley.

MR. LANGLEY: Before we adjourn, I just want to make a couple statements just to give a little more information.

So the acting general counsel, we're asking for the Board's input concerning three active pending litigation cases pursuant to Section 286.011, Subsection 8. We're going to hold this closed-door session on the three pending cases that involve Walt Disney Parks and Resorts USA, an appeal to the 11th circuit; one in the Orange County circuit case, Central Florida Tourism Oversight District versus Walt Disney Parks and Resorts USA. And another litigation case concerning Walt Disney Parks and Resorts USA versus Central Florida Tourism Oversight District also in the circuit court in Orange County.

The people in attendance at the meeting will be the full Board that are here today, plus

Mr. Gilzean, myself, Mr. Ardaman, and attorney Paul

Huck. At this time, if it's okay with you, we will

1 adjourn -- and the court reporter. I'm sorry. Thank you. 2 The court reporter will also join us. 3 Everything that's said in that closed-door meeting 4 5 will be transcribed. That transcript will be confidential until the litigation is completely 6 7 over and appeals are exhausted. 8 So at this time, we can adjourn. Thank you. 9 CHAIR GARCIA: Okay. We will -- we'll be back. We're just going to recess for a little bit. 10 11 Thank you. (Board of Supervisors Meeting recessed for the 12 non-public portion of the meeting, which is in a 13 separate confidential transcript.) 14 15 (After which, Board of Supervisors Meeting resumed as follows:) 16 CHAIR GARCIA: Okay. There's no further 17 18 business before the Board today, and we will stand adjourned. Thank you. 19 20 MS. ZIEGLER: Thank you. 21 (Time ended 10:49 a.m.) 22 23 24

25

### CERTIFICATE STATE OF FLORIDA COUNTY OF ORANGE I, SANDRA D. BROWN, Florida Professional Reporter, certify that I was authorized to and did stenographically report the foregoing proceedings and that the transcript is a true and complete record of my stenographic notes. Dated this 29th day of February, 2024. Landra D. Brown SANDRA D. BROWN FLORIDA PROFESSIONAL REPORTER

# Central Florida Tourism Oversight District

# **Board of Supervisors**

# Agenda Item 8.1

Page 1 of 1

Meeting Date			
March 27, 2023			
Agenda Item Name			
Consideration of Employment Agreement with Stephanie Kopelousos for District Administrator			
Requested Action			
Approval of the Employment Agreement with Stephanie Kopelousos			
Staff Report			
None			
Additional Analysis			
None			
Fiscal Impact Summary			
None			
Exhibits Attached			
Employment Agreement with Stephanie Kopelousos			

### STEPHANIE KOPELOUSOS

#### March 18, 2024

Central Florida Tourism Oversight District Board of Supervisors & District Administrator Central Florida Tourism Oversight District 1900 Hotel Plaza Boulevard Lake Buena Vista, FL 32830

# Dear Central Florida Tourism Oversight District Board of Supervisors & District Administrator:

I am writing to you in response to the Governor's recommendation of me for the District Administrator within the Central Florida Tourism Oversight District (CFTOD). I am enthusiastic about the prospect of serving in that role. My extensive background in executive county management, strategic planning, and infrastructure development has prepared me well for this role. I am eager to leverage my experience to support the district's ongoing success and growth.

Since the appointment of each of you to the District, I have been closely following the positive transformations within the CFTOD spurred by Governor DeSantis's decisive actions. In 2023, Governor DeSantis signed House Bill 9-B, catalyzing a comprehensive review of the district's operations. This led to the identification of areas for improvement, highlighting a new era of accountability and transparency. The audit revealed opportunities to enhance governance practices, particularly in improving safety inspections, including oversight of the Monorail. With the implementation of initiatives like the Buy Local Now program, aimed at fostering local businesses and reducing the tax burden, the district is poised for positive development and growth. I am inspired by the Board of Supervisors and Governor DeSantis's commitment to excellence and integrity; and I am eager to contribute to the ongoing progress and success of CFTOD.

My tenure as the County Manager for the Clay County Board of County Commissioners equipped me with invaluable experience in overseeing essential services, managing budgets, and fostering strategic initiatives to meet the needs of residents. My strategic approach to resource allocation and my experience in serving nearly 200,000 residents and businesses, as well as coordinating with vendors, suppliers, and contractors, would be

instrumental in ensuring the district's infrastructure meets the highest standards of safety and functionality to accommodate the influx of visitors.

Furthermore, my background as the Secretary of Transportation for the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) uniquely positions me to address the district's transportation needs. I successfully negotiated acquisitions, secured federal funds for infrastructure projects, and implemented policies to improve transportation accessibility and efficiency. Leveraging my expertise, I am committed to enhancing transportation networks to facilitate seamless travel experiences for visitors while prioritizing safety and sustainability.

In addition to my infrastructure management experience, my emergency response planning and environmental stewardship leadership align with the district's priorities. I understand the importance of supporting our firefighters and emergency response teams while maintaining a rapid response time for fire and EMS services to ensure the safety of the district.

I am particularly impressed by the district's dedication to maintaining high standards of public services for its visitors, which aligns closely with my values of transparency and accountability. With my proven track record of effective leadership, strategic vision, and collaborative decision-making, I can support the district's objectives and enhance its reputation as a premier tourism destination.

Thank you for considering my application. I am eager to discuss how my qualifications and experiences align with the specific needs and goals of the CFTOD. I am enthusiastic about the opportunity to contribute to the district's success and would welcome the chance to discuss further how I can serve.

Sincerely,

**Stephanie Kopelousos** 

### STEPHANIE KOPELOUSOS

#### **PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE**

#### Senior Advisor

**July 2023 – February 2024** Tallahassee, Florida

#### **Ron DeSantis for President**

- Provided expert strategic counsel to First Lady Casey DeSantis on key policy initiatives and public engagements, ensuring alignment with campaign goals.
- Acted as a central communication liaison between the First Lady and campaign leadership, managing messaging consistency to enhance the campaign.
- Oversaw the planning and execution of coalition building, including recruiting for the Mamas for DeSantis Coalition.
- Coordinated logistics and protocol to ensure the First Lady's engagements aligned with the campaign's objectives, enhancing her public profile and supporting campaign messaging.

#### **Legislative Affairs Director**

history.

**January 2019 – July 2023** 

#### **Executive Office of Governor Ron DeSantis**

Tallahassee, Florida Developed and executed legislative strategies to advance Governor Ron DeSantis' key priorities, resulting in a historic success rate in legislative initiatives. Successes include securing the largest tax cuts in state history, universal school choice, historic increases in transportation and infrastructure, and the most comprehensive law and order laws in state

- Led and oversaw over 30 state agency legislative affairs departments to identify and prioritize legislative goals, ensuring alignment with the governor's vision and success for Florida families.
- Cultivated and maintained strong relationships with legislators, advocacy groups, and stakeholders to build support for legislative initiatives.
- Advised Governor Ron DeSantis on all legislative matters and provided recommendations to inform decision-making processes.
- Coordinated with communication teams to ensure effective messaging and outreach strategies for legislative priorities.
- Successfully navigated the legislative process, including drafting and reviewing bills, testifying before committees, and managing lobbying efforts.

#### **County Manager**

March 11, 2011 – January 2019 Green Cove Springs, Florida

#### **Clay County Board of County Commissioners**

- Led over 500 employees, created staff development programs, managed a budget of over \$300 million to deliver essential services to over 190,000 residents of Clay County, and advised the Board of County Commissioners.
- Achieved savings during economic recovery by reorganizing departments and implementing an expedited review process for development projects and building permits, resulting in time and cost savings for businesses.
- Designed a transportation road paving plan for 200 miles of dirt roads and aging infrastructure.

#### **Special Counsel**

#### February 2011 – March 2011

#### U.S. Congress, Representative John Mica, Chairman

#### **House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee**

#### Washington, DC

• Served as Special Counsel to the Chairman to secure the reauthorization of federal highway legislation. Created a working group of State Transportation Officials to provide guidance to the Chairman and Committee staff on the effects the legislation has on the day-to-day operations of a State Transportation Department.

#### Secretary of Transportation Chief of Staff

February 2007 – January 2011 December 2005 – February 2007

Tallahassee, Florida

#### Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT)

- Led 7,200 employees, managed an annual budget of nearly \$8 billion, served as a Governor's leadership team member, and represented the Governor before the Florida Legislature.
- Preserved the transportation funding program and initiated major new projects despite significant revenue reductions, a key component of the state's economic recovery.
- Secured major policy legislation on public-private partnerships and passenger rail service, establishing FDOT as a national leader, including the Port of Miami Tunnel (over \$600M) and I- 595 reversible lanes project (\$1.2B) using private investment.
- Negotiated the acquisition and agreements for the commuter SunRail in Central Florida.
- Secured federal funds to build I-95 Express Lanes, a Design-Build Finance project in South Florida. The project creates High Occupancy Toll (HOT) lanes with variable congestion pricing to maintain a minimum speed targeted at 45 mph.

### Senior Legislative Analyst

February 2001 – December 2005

#### State of Florida Washington Office, Governor Jeb Bush

Washington, DC

- Served as a policy advisor to Governor Bush and department secretaries on federal transportation and emergency management issues.
- Developed and advocated the Governor's policy position on the reauthorization of the Surface Transportation Act, ensuring Florida's allocation of federal transportation funding. Liaised with FEMA, the Florida congressional delegation, and the state to secure hurricane disaster relief and recovery funding.

# Senior Legislative Assistant, Legislative Correspondent & Staff Assistant August 1993 – January 2001 U.S. Congress, Representative Tillie K. Fowler Washington, DC

- Served as Senior Policy Advisor and staffed the Vice Chair of the House Republican Conference
  on issues including transportation, non-defense appropriations, environment, energy,
  education, health care, and Medicare. These issues were heard before the House Committee on
  Transportation and Infrastructure, including the Subcommittee on Oversight, Investigations,
  and Emergency Management, which she chaired.
- Formulated strategies that secured passage of legislation and appropriations, including the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 (Public Law 106-390) and House passage of the Preparedness Against Terrorism Act of 2000.

#### **EDUCATION**

University of Alabama
Bachelor of Arts, Political Science

Tuscaloosa, Alabama

1993

# 8. NEW BUSINESS

## 1. Approval

8.1 - Board Consideration of Request from Stephanie Kopelousos to serve as District Administrator.



#### Central Florida Tourism Oversight District Board of Supervisors Closed-Door Meeting

On Wednesday, March 27, 2024 at 9:30 a.m. or soon thereafter as the progression of the Board's regular meeting permits, pursuant to Section 286.011(8), Florida Statutes, the Board of Supervisors of the Central Florida Tourism Oversight District will commence a public meeting and then meet in an Attorney/Client Executive Closed Session to discuss strategy and settlement negotiations related to litigation expenditures in the following cases:

- Walt Disney Parks and Resorts U.S., Inc. v. DeSantis, et. al., N.D. Fla. Case No. 4:23-cv-00163-MW-MJF (On appeal to the Eleventh Circuit of the United States Court of Appeals)
- Central Florida Tourism Oversight District v. Walt Disney Parks and Resorts U.S., Inc., Orange County Circuit Court Case No. 2023-CA-011818-O.
- Walt Disney Parks and Resorts U.S., Inc. v. Central Florida Tourism Oversight District, Orange County Circuit Court Case No. 2023-CA-017887-O

The persons in attendance at the closed-door meeting will be Board of Supervisor members, Vice-Chair - Charbel Barakat, Brian Aungst, Jr., Ron Peri, and Bridget Ziegler; District Administrator; Acting General Counsel Daniel Langley and A. Kurt Ardaman; litigation counsel Paul Huck, Jason Gonzalez and David Thompson. The closed-door meeting will be held at 1900 Hotel Plaza Blvd., Lake Buena Vista, FL 32830.

# 11. EXECUTIVE SESSION

## 11.1 Attorney/ Client Executive Closed Session

As requested by the Acting General Counsel, pursuant to Section 286.011(8), Florida Statutes, the Board of Supervisors of the Central Florida Tourism Oversight District will hold an Attorney/ Client Executive Closed Session to discuss strategy and settlement negotiations related to litigation expenditures in the following case: Walt Disney Parks and Resorts U.S., Inc. v. DeSantis, et. al., N.D. Fla. Case No. 4:23-cv-00163-MW-MJF, Central Florida Tourism Oversight District v. Walt Disney Parks and Resorts U.S., Inc., Orange County Circuit Court Case No. 2023-CA-011818-O and Walt Disney Parks and Resorts U.S., Inc. v. Central Florida Tourism Oversight District, Orange County Circuit Court Case No. 2023-CA-017887-O. The persons in attendance at the closed-door meeting will be Board of Supervisor members, Chair - Martin Garcia, Vice-Chair - Charbel Barakat, Brian Aungst, Jr., Ron Peri, and Bridget Ziegler; District Administrator; Acting General Counsel Daniel Langley and A. Kurt Ardaman; litigation counsel Paul Huck, Jason Gonzales and David Thompson.