

Putnam County Chamber of Commerce
Tourism Development Council
Quarterly Report July – September 2020

Pursuant to the agreement made and entered between the Putnam County Board of County Commissioners and the Putnam County Chamber of Commerce this report is submitted for the fourth quarter, July through September 2020.

The Chamber provides support necessary to administer the Putnam County Tourism Development Council (TDC) and tourism program. The tourism program is funded entirely by bed tax revenues – paid by visitors not our residents!

Marketing and Visitor Services

Enhanced and published tourism brochures, website, events calendar, social media, and electronic messaging.

Placed advertising in the 2020 Atlanta Braves print and digital Magazine, that was distributed to thousands across the country.

Currently running a new TV campaign emphasizing “safe vacationing” airing in Ashville, NC and a Baton Rouge, LA.

Also running a digital marketing campaign that includes both video and static advertisements revised to market our County as a “safe” vacation or getaway location with an abundance of outdoor opportunities fitting the new environment caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. Currently running in Atlanta, Charlotte and Mobile.

Responded to leads from print and online ads and direct inquiries from phone, mail, email, website, and social media.

Administration and Evaluation

Chamber staff continues attempting to call and email every restaurant and hotel in the county with a special focus on our hospitality industry to ask what we could do to help them. We are speaking with them often and running campaigns to help generate sales.

Contacted many area event coordinators and TDC grant recipients (and continue to do so) assisting with info and rescheduling.

Assisted hospitality industry businesses with CARES Act information to help lessen negative impacts from Coronavirus and re-open to visitors. Aided many with Payroll Protection Program (PPP), Economic Injury Disaster Loan (EIDL), SBA Bridge Loan and County Cares Act applications.

Disseminated vetted information to help businesses navigate throughout the pandemic. Continue to provide constantly updated information pertinent to operating during a pandemic and recovery.

Provided administrative services to facilitate quarterly TDC meeting. Conducted research on tourism industry indicators to measure changes in local tourism economy.

Solicited major events for the 2021 calendar year to try and jumpstart local economy.

Updated Bed Tax information indicates we will end fiscal year 2019/20 with our 2nd largest year of revenues at just over \$510,000. This was only the case due to a large increase in collections for October 2019 – Feb 2020 over 35% above previous year.

Tourism Industry Relations

Partnerships with local, regional and state organizations including Florida Office of Greenways and Trails, Arts Council of Greater Palatka, Ravine Gardens State Park, St. Johns River Water Management District, Clay County Tourism, Florida Fish & Wildlife Commission, RCI Regional Tourism Committee and Visit Florida.