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DYER

On Wednesday, March 14, members of the CFHLA Governmental Affairs Committee met with [City of Orlando Mayor Dyer](#) at the [Mall at Millenia](#) (Thank You, Steven Jamieson).

Mayor Dyer provided GA members with a number of updates relating to City initiatives, including the [Orlando Green Works 'Energy and Green Buildings' subcommittee](#), a [new home sharing ordinance](#) passed by the City, sports tourism efforts such as the [NFL Pro Bowl](#) and major projects including the [UCF downtown campus](#).

The GA Committee also discussed the recently concluded Legislative Session

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the Tourist Development Tax. Mayor Dyer indicated that while a conversation could be had on creating an additional “penny” to the tax, that legislators should not jeopardize the integrity of the existing tax funds being collected.

CFHLA thanked Mayor Dyer for his support of Central Florida’s Hospitality Industry and for his continued partnership with the Association.



City of Orlando Mayor Buddy Dyer (center right) with Governmental Affairs Committee Members CFHLA Ex-Officio Board Member Steven Jamieson, General Manager of the Mall at Millenia, CFHLA Historian Peter Kacheris, Managing Director of the Hilton Orlando Bonnet Creek / Waldorf Astoria Orlando, CFHLA Board Chair Fred Sawyers, Complex General Manager of the Walt Disney World Swan and Dolphin Resort, CFHLA Board Member and Governmental Affairs Committee Vice Chair Jon McGavin, General Manager of the Ritz-Carlton Orlando, Grande Lakes and CFHLA Board 2nd Vice Chairman Keith Wolling

FORUM

One week from today, on **Thursday, March 29**, CFHLA will be conducting an **Orange County 2018 Mayoral Candidate Forum** from **12 Noon - 1:30 PM** at the **Sheraton Lake Buena Vista Resort (Thank You, Cindy Staley)**.

The three “**Leading Candidates**” in the Orange County Mayoral Race will be participating in this forum:

-Orange County Commissioner Pete Clarke

-Orange County Sheriff Jerry Demings

-Businessman/Philanthropist Rob Panepinto

Don’t miss this opportunity to see these individuals discuss their vision for Orange County and share their positions on Hospitality-related issues.

A limited number of tables and seats remain available. To register today, please [**click here**](#).

PAC/PC

On Wednesday, March 21, the **CFHLA Political Action Committee** (CFHLA-PAC) and **CFHLA Political Committee** (CFHLA-PC) Boards of Directors met to discuss important upcoming local races as well as evaluating the 2018 Legislative Session voting records of Central Florida State Representatives and State Senators.

Importantly, the CFHLA Political Committee **formally endorsed** the re-election campaigns of the following **“Pro-Hospitality”** candidates:

**-State Representative Bobby Olszewski
(Florida House District 44)**

**-State Representative Rene “Coach P” Plasencia
(Florida House District 50)**

**-Orange County Commissioner Victoria Siplin
(District 6)**

While additional endorsements will occur in the coming months, please also note that the CFHLA Political Committee will be conducting extensive **Candidate Interview Sessions** on the **week of June 25**. If you are interested in volunteering to serve as an **interview “panelist,”** please contact CFHLA Public Policy Director Kevin Craig at publicpolicy@cfhla.org.

RECAP

While the Hospitality Industry once again faced a number of challenges in Tallahassee during the 2018 Legislative Session, which concluded on March 11, CFHLA can report that Central Florida’s tourism community **avoided major setbacks** on issues such as the **Tourist Development Tax**, **regulations on Destination Marketing Organizations** (DMOs) and **VISIT FLORIDA funding**.

Relating to legislation that would have placed burdensome regulations on **Destination Marketing groups** such as Visit Orlando, CFHLA worked with industry partners to **halt the passage of Senate Bill 1714** and ultimately preventing the legislation from passing this Session.

As it relates to the **Tourist Development Tax**, despite political maneuvering that added TDT-expansion language opposed by CFHLA to a major piece of legislation, CFHLA spearheaded efforts at the **“last minute”** to amend the bill that **effectively excluded Orange and Osceola County** from being adversely impacted. With **Seminole County already excluded** in the bill’s existing language, CFHLA worked with industry partners and key Senators to prevent Orange and Osceola County TDT revenues from being utilized for non-tourism promotion purposes such as sewage transportation, etc.

Lastly, [VISIT FLORIDA](#), which was nearly eliminated during the 2017 Legislative Session, received **\$76 million** in annual funding once again to continue their fine efforts in promoting Florida to the world, a **major victory** for the Hospitality Industry.

CFHLA thanks all members who participated in **VoterVoice “action alerts”** distributed during this past Legislative Session and encourages your participation in these efforts in the future to let your voice be heard in Tallahassee.

ARC

At the Friday, March 16 Orange County Tourist Development Tax Grant **Application Review Committee** (ARC), committee members discussed the CFHLA “TDT Grant Applications” that had been adopted by the ARC in February and began evaluating how the Committee would “weigh” the various criteria within the “Events” and “Capital Projects” applications.

CFHLA Board 1st Vice-Chairman **Brian Comes** of the [Hyatt Regency Orlando](#), who serves on the ARC, expressed that the Committee should **prioritize projects** that would “**generate room nights**” for Orange County.

The ARC continues to evaluate their application reviewal and scoring process and does not anticipate accepting applications for TDT funds the third quarter of 2018.

CFHLA proudly has a number of Board Members that serve on this important Orange County advisory board, including:

Ross Burke
[Blue Heron Beach Resort](#)

Brian Comes
[Hyatt Regency Orlando](#)

Jon McGavin
[Ritz-Carlton Orlando, Grande Lakes](#)

Louis Robbins
[Key Performance Hospitality Management](#)

SPORTS

Recently, CFHLA Board Member **Mark Politte**, **General Manager** of the [Doubletree by Hilton at the Entrance to Universal Orlando](#) was appointed to

Incentive Committee.

The Sports Incentive Committee will work alongside professionals at [Visit Orlando](#) to review applications for sports incentive funds authorized under the [Orange County Tourist Development Plan](#) and will submit recommendations to the Board of County Commissioners for final determination on funding requests.

The first meeting of the Sports Incentive Committee will be held on **Monday, March 26** at the Orange County Administration Center. CFHLA thanks Mark Politte for his service to the Hospitality Industry and Orange County community.

PUTNAM

At the upcoming **March 27 CFHLA Board of Directors meeting**, CFHLA Board Members will meet with **Florida's Commissioner of Agriculture** and **2018 Candidate for Florida Governor, Adam Putnam**.



Commissioner Putnam plans to discuss his **achievements as Commissioner of Agriculture**, the **importance of tourism** to Florida's economy and **his vision for Florida** if elected Governor in 2018.

Currently, Commissioner Putnam's challengers for Governor include US Congressman Ron DeSantis, Tallahassee Mayor Andrew Gillum, former US Congresswoman Gwen Graham, businessman Chris King of Winter Park and former Mayor of Miami Beach Philip Levine.

ADOPT

CFHLA salutes the following Board Members for conducting their 1st Quarter meetings with their 2018 CFHLA “**Adopt an Elected Official**” program partners:

Gina Fedotova - City of Orlando Commissioner Patty Sheehan

Siegbert Kindl - City of Orlando Commissioner Tony Ortiz

Bruce McDonald - City of Orlando Commissioner Jim Gray

Mark Politte - City of Orlando Commissioner Sam Ings

Brian Wong - Osceola County Commissioner Fred Hawkins

The CFHLA Adopt an Elected Official program is an important tool that allows for the **enhancing of relationships** between Central Florida elected officials and the Hospitality Industry.

The purpose of this CFHLA initiative is to educate Central Florida Elected Officials on the importance of the Hospitality Industry to Central Florida as it relates to **job creation**, **economic development** and **tax revenue generated from the Tourism Industry**.

GREEN

CFHLA salutes **Craig Leicester General Manager** of the **Aloft Orlando Downtown** for volunteering to serve as the CFHLA “Appointee” to the **City of Orlando’s Energy & Green Buildings subcommittee**.

This new City subcommittee, comprised of energy and green building professionals and practitioners will provide input and guidance for future programs, policies, and suggested updates to existing City of Orlando policies, including topics such as energy efficiency, green building programs, electric vehicles, renewable energy, and more.

LINKS


Below please find news articles relating to the political interests of the Hospitality Industry:

[Hurricane Irma](#)

[Central Florida won't feel effect from hotel tax law change](#)


[State vacation-rental bill gets eviction notice](#)

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