



City of Eustis

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TO: EUSTIS CITY COMMISSION

FROM: TOM CARRINO, CITY MANAGER

DATE: NOVEMBER 7, 2024

RE: DISCUSSION DOCUMENT FOR TOUR BOAT OPERATION ON LAKE EUSTIS

Background

In March, Mayor Holland, along with City staff, several Chamber members, and Chamber staff met with the owner of Trident Pontoons to discuss the company's interest in partnering with the City to begin a tour boat operation on Lake Eustis.

As a follow-up to that meeting, the following activities took place between April and October:

- Staff conducted due diligence research on boat tours successfully operating in Mount Dora and Tavares
- City and Chamber representatives visited the Trident Boat facility
- A bid solicitation for a boat tour operator was issued
 - Why Knot Water Excursions (partners include Trident Pontoons) was the only respondent
- Reached out to Randy Connor of Lake Adventures to make sure that a tour boat operation would not conflict with his watercraft rental business
- Met with Why Knot to discuss its base of operations needs
- Met with Why Knot to discuss terms and provisions of a franchise agreement

Estimated investment needed to establish infrastructure for future boat tour operations

• 8'x80' Fixed Dock Engineering & Permitting	\$ 25,000
• 8'x80' Fixed Dock Construction	\$120,000
• Exs pier modifications/demo	\$ 15,000
• Shed with 100 amp panel	\$ 14,000
• Water Supply to unplumbed shed	\$ 3,500
• SUBTOTAL	\$177,500
• 15% Contingency/Unknowns	\$ 26,625
TOTAL	\$204,125

Additional Relevant Information

Boat Information

Name:	TBD
Vessel Size:	50 ft long; 12 ft wide
Diameter of pontoons	42"
Passenger Limit	49

Boat Tour Sales Model

- Company expects that as much as half of its business will be corporate and special group tours
- General public and small group tours will be arranged based on demand
- All bookings will be done online

Annual Passenger Projection

Because tours are seasonal and the companies operating them are private, not enough reliable data is available to make a statistically accurate projection. However, using some very conservative numbers we estimate a minimum annual passenger count of 3,200 (Calculation: $(4 \times 25 \times 32) = 3,200$)

- ◆ No of cruises per week is 4
- ◆ No of passengers per cruise 25
- ◆ Season – 8 months (32 weeks)

Other Boat Tours Operating in Area

1. Rusty Anchor Mount Dora Boat Tours
2. Premier Boat Tours (Mount Dora)
3. Catboat Escapes (Clermont)
4. Dora Queen (Tavares)
5. Cruisin' Tikis Lake Dora (Tavares)

Action:

Direction from City Commission on whether to proceed with dock improvements to support tour boat operations.

Prepared by:

Al Latimer, Economic Development Director

Reviewed by:

Tom Carrino, City Manager