

THE STATE OF TEXAS §
COUNTY OF ANDERSON §
THE CITY OF PALESTINE §

The Tourism Advisory Board of the City of Palestine convened in a Regular Meeting on Tuesday, August 12, 2025 at 3:30 p.m., in the City Hall Conference Room, 504 N. Queen Street, Palestine, Texas, with the following people present in person: Board Chair Patty Smith, Board Vice-Chair, Daniel Hennessee, and Members Michael Nichols, Cristy Buckner, Chris Keller and Kasey Crutcher. Board Member Edward Mondich arrived at the meeting at 4:00 pm.

Staff present: City Manager Teresa Herrera, Tourism Marketing Manager Cassie Ham, Tourism Project Coordinator Noemi Chapman and City Secretary April Jackson.

Others Present: Amy Parady, Steve Presley, Tabitha Enge

CALL TO ORDER

With a quorum present, Board Vice-Chair Daniel Hennessee called the meeting to order at 3:32 p.m.

PROPOSED CHANGES OF AGENDA ITEMS

There were none.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Tabitha Enge made a public comment regarding HOT Funding Grant, HOT Funding Applications, and Mt. Vernon AME Church. She noted that she submitted two grant applications for consideration, but only one was added to the agenda. Requested staff research what happened to the second application.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST DISCLOSURES

Board Member Kasey Crutcher filed affidavit on abstention from voting on Item 2 of the Discussion and Action Items.

MANAGER'S REPORT

There was no manager's report.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

There were no minutes to approve.

DISCUSSION AND ACTION ITEMS

1. Discussion and possible action regarding a Hotel Occupancy Tax Grant for the Texas State Railroad annual events for the 2025-2026 season.

Ms. Amy Parady was present additional information to supplement her grant proposal made at the July 29, 2025 meeting of the Tourism Advisory Board.

No action was taken.

2. Discussion and possible action regarding the Hotel Occupancy Tax Event Grant Applications for Fiscal Year 2025-2026.

Ms. Enge presented a grant application for funding for the Raise the Roof Campaign of the Mt. Vernon AME.

No action was taken.

CLOSED SESSION

The Tourism Advisory Board will go into closed session pursuant to Texas Government Code, Chapter 551, Subchapter D

1. Section 551.087 deliberation regarding Economic Development negotiations: Fiscal Year 2025-2026 Hotel Occupancy Tax Funding Grant Applications.

Kasey Crutcher did recuse himself from discussion from 4:34 p.m. until 4:44 p.m.

RECONVENE IN REGULAR SESSION

Take any action necessary regarding the Fiscal Year 2025-2026 Hotel Occupancy Tax Funding Grants.

1. Regarding item 1 from Discussion and Action Items, Board Member Michael Nichols made a motion to approve the Hotel Occupancy Tax Funding Grant for the Texas State Railroad as a marketing coop between Visit Palestine and the Texas State Railroad, as presented on August 12, 2025, with the requirements that no tax rebates will be due, but instead a \$25,000 contracted rate, and the Texas State Railroad is to include Visit Palestine in the top 20% of marketing materials. Cristy Buckner seconded the motion.

On vote, the motion passed with a 7-0 unanimous vote.

2. Regarding item 2 from the Discussion and Action Items, Board Member Cristy Buckner made a motion to award the following grants:
 - a. The Palestine Area Chamber of Commerce for the Hot Pepper Festival is awarded a HOT rebate grant on hotel stays generated by the event, plus an additional \$5,000 for promotional and marketing support.
 - b. The Palestine Area Chamber of Commerce for the Dogwood Festival is awarded a HOT rebate grant on hotel stays generated by the event, plus an additional \$5,000 for promotional and marketing support.
 - c. The Palestine YMCA for the Jalapeno Tree Fall Classic Soccer Tournament is awarded a HOT rebate grant on hotel stays generated by the event, plus an additional \$5,000 for promotional and marketing support.
 - d. The ACYLA for the Rush Herrington Memorial Rode is awarded a HOT rebate grant on hotel stays generated by the event, plus an additional \$7,500 for promotional and marketing support.
 - e. Palestine ISD for the Dance Effect Competition is awarded a HOT rebate grant on hotel stays generated by the event, plus an additional \$5,000 for promotional and marketing support.
 - f. Palestine ISD for the Synergy Dance Competition is awarded a HOT rebate grant on hotel stays generated by the event, plus an additional \$5,000 for promotional and marketing support.
 - g. The Journey HQ for the Hot Pepper Festival Car Show is awarded a HOT rebate grant on hotel stays generated by the event, plus an additional \$5,000 for promotional and marketing support.
 - h. Project Restoration for the Raise the Roof Campaign is awarded a HOT rebate grant on hotel stays generated by the event.

Daniel Hennessee seconded the motion.

On vote, the motion passed with a 6-0 vote, Kasey Crutcher abstains from voting.

ADJOURN

With no other business to come before the board, the meeting was adjourned at 5:47 p.m.

PASSED AND APPROVED THIS 28TH DAY OF OCTOBER 2025.


Chair

ATTEST:



Cassie Ham,
Tourism Marketing Manager