



Austin Independent Business Alliance
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May 18, 2017

Larry Schooler
Visitor Impact Task Force
City of Austin Communications and Public Information Office
Austin, Texas

Mr. Schooler,

I feel compelled to write following Tuesday's Task Force meeting and I am asking that you share this with the Task Force.

In the meeting on May 16, Tom Noonan, President and CEO of ACVB, misled and deceived the Task Force in regards to ACVB's relationship with AIBA. Specifically, Mr. Noonan stated that ACVB and AIBA meet multiple times a year to work together to promote local business. I have been with AIBA for 15 years and I have never met Tom Noonan. AIBA did meet with other representatives of ACVB on May 17, 2010; November 30, 2010; November 14, 2012; January 29, 2013; and May 28, 2013. We have not met since 2013. Furthermore, while AIBA has proposed many ideas for working together, ACVB has rejected every one and closed the door on any collaboration. Mr. Noonan's statement is simply false.

In regards to ACVB promoting the IBIZ Districts, this is again, totally false. A search of the ACVB website produces only one result matching "IBIZ District." This is in a listing for Amelia's Retro-Vogue and Relics which closed in October 2016. In this listing, the South First IBIZ District is used to identify where Amelia's is located and oddly (and incorrectly) listed as "South 1st St. IBIZ ... district" (a copy is attached). ACVB does not promote the IBIZ Districts as claimed by Mr. Noonan. In these two regards, Mr. Noonan has misrepresented his organization's marketing of the IBIZ Districts and local business. I bring these two error up because the Task Force will be making decisions based on information they received that was incorrect.

ACVB is "charged with marketing Austin nationally and internationally as a premier business and leisure destination, thus enriching our community's overall quality of life." ACVB is not charged with directing visitors once they get here. As Mr. Noonan stated, they cannot promote locally owned business over other business. Therefore ACVB cannot be the entity that drives visitors to locally owned business. It's our job to direct visitors to local business.

In addition, I find it concerning that the Task Force seems to be addressing allocation of only the potential 2% increase in HOT funds because City Council Resolution 20160818-075 clearly directs the Task Force to "Make recommendations to the City Council about how to best utilize *all* hotel occupancy revenue to impact tourism by April 1, 2017." It has been my observation that some Task Force members who currently receive funding from the HOT funds employ forceful intimidation (and in Mr. Noonan's case, deceptive information) to deny the Task Force the opportunity to consider *all* hotel occupancy tax revenue. I respectfully request that you, as facilitator, bring *all* HOT funds back into full review.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rebecca Melançon", written over a horizontal line.

Rebecca Melançon
Executive Director

A search for 'IBIZ District' on the ACVB website on May 17, 2017 produced one result of an individual business that has been out of the retail business for 8 months.



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SEARCH SEARCH

Results for "IBIZ District" in All Content Types. Filter your search by selecting a specific type of content.
Listings: 1

Search Results Showing 1-1 of 1

AMELIA'S RETRO-VOGUE & RELICS
</listings/amelias-retro-vogue-&-relics/3293/> - Listings
Amelia's has been a Mecca for vintage lovers for over two decades. Recently relocated into the heart of the South 1st St. *IBIZ ... district*, Amelia's collection of Mid-19th to Mid-20th century apparel and accessories has been written about, appeared on stage and screen ... screen, walked the red carpet and inspired generations of Fashionistas. Hats, bridal, and historic accuracy are our specialties. ...

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