

Polk County Tourist Development Council  
Committees Interest Form  
FY 2023-2024

Please email completed form to: Carrie Cahoon @ [Carrie@visitcentralflorida.org](mailto:Carrie@visitcentralflorida.org)

Name: Gene Conrad Date: 8/11/25  
Work Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone: 937-902-8538  
E-mail: gconrad@flysnf.org Primary contact preferred? ☐ Work ☐ Home ☒ Cell ☐ E-mail  
Occupation: President/CEO Employer: ACE/SNF  
Please identify the committee/s on which you wish to serve: (see back for descriptions)

- ☒ TDC Board  
☐ TDC Marketing Committee  
☐ TDC Arts, Culture & Heritage Committee  
☐ TDC Sports & Special Events Committee

List any past and/or present community involvement: (please attach a resume)

CFDC Board Member 7 years, Leadership Polk Class VII,  
Inside PCPS Class II, Leadership Lakeland Class 29

List specific tourism, sports and/or arts & culture involvement:

Airport Director Lakeland Linder International  
Airport 12 years, President/CEO Sun n Fun  
Aerospace Expo 3 1/2 years

Have you previously served on: ☐ TDC Board Dates Served: \_\_\_\_\_  
☐ TDC Nominating Committee Dates Served: \_\_\_\_\_  
☐ Sports and Special Events Committee Dates Served: \_\_\_\_\_  
☐ Marketing Committee Dates Served: \_\_\_\_\_  
☐ Arts, Culture & Heritage Committee Dates Served: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of years in the tourism and/or sports industry 20

Are you a Polk County resident? ☒ Yes ☐ No  
Are you a U.S. Citizen? ☒ Yes ☐ No  
Are you an owner or manager of a Polk County accommodation? ☐ Yes ☒ No  
Can you serve a full one-year term (Committees only)? ☒ Yes ☐ No  
Can you regularly attend meetings of committee you are applying for? ☒ Yes ☐ No

Identify any potential conflicts of interest that might occur if you were to be appointed.

Potential conflict may arise when TDC Board  
is asked to opine on any potential SNF  
support at which time I would recuse myself.



## Tourist Development Council Committee Descriptions

### **TDC Board**

TDC Board members must derive a portion of their income or be employed in a business that deals directly with tourists, has an extensive knowledge of or background in the marketing and/or sales of tourism goods or services. Examples of such businesses would include attractions, restaurants, museums, hospitality education and other businesses, which cater to tourists. The TDC Board meets six times per year.

### **TDC Sports & Special Events Committee**

This committee meets six times per year, or as needed, to advise and assist staff with marketing, recruiting and hosting sports and special events. The committee will make recommendations as to the sponsorship of special events.

### **TDC Marketing Committee**

This committee meets six times per year, or as needed, to advise and assist staff in developing the marketing plan, identify and analyze potential target markets, marketing strategies and tactics.

### **TDC Arts, Culture and Heritage Committee**

This committee meets six times per year, or as needed, to advise and assist staff with arts and culture marketing strategies. This committee will also make recommendations as to the sponsorship of special events and marketing initiatives that are related to arts and culture.

*For Office Use Only*

Date received:		Received by:	
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Thank you for your interest in the Polk County Tourist Development Council.

It is the responsibility of the individual to keep the information on this form current. Please advise Carrie Cahoon of changes to your information at [Carrie@visitcentralflorida.org](mailto:Carrie@visitcentralflorida.org) or via phone @ (863) 551-4750. Applications will remain on file for one year.

## **EUGENE B. CONRAD III, C.M.**

**937.902.8538**

conrad.gene@yahoo.com

**4969 Nocosee Place  
Lakeland, FL 33811**

### **SUMMARY**

Aviation Executive with extensive background in airport operations and development. Comprehensive knowledge in business turn-around and growth strategies. Aggressive marketing abilities with excellent government, public and media relation techniques. Team developer with strong leadership skills. Committed to the highest standards in professionalism and customer services.

### **EDUCATION**

#### **BACHELOR OF ARTS, AVIATION MANAGEMENT**

THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY, Columbus, OH

*Magna cum Laude*

*Certified Member*

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF AIRPORT EXECUTIVES (AAAE)

### **COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT**

GRADUATE LEADERSHIP LAKELAND CLASS XXIX

GRADUATE LEADERSHIP POLK CLASS VII

GRADUATE INSIDE POLK COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS CLASS II

BOARD CHAIR CENTRAL FLORIDA DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

## QUALIFICATIONS

- DAILY AIRPORT OPERATIONS
- STRATEGIC & CREATIVE MARKETING
- PROMOTIONAL CAMPAIGNS
- NATIONAL & REGIONAL MARKETING
- NEW BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT
- TURN AROUND STRATEGIES
- GROWTH & OPPORTUNITY STRATEGIES
- BUDGET MANAGEMENT
- SUBCONTRACTORS & FUEL VENDORS
- CONTRACT NEGOTIATIONS
- MAJOR AIR SHOW MANAGEMENT
- AIRLINE PLANNER RELATIONS
- DEPARTMENT OPERATIONS
- SAFETY OPERATIONS
- FEDERAL, STATE & LOCAL COMPLIANCE
- AIR SERVICE DEVELOPMENT
- AIRPORT GENERAL MAINTENANCE
- AIRPORT CONCESSIONS
- AIRPORT GRANT DEVELOPMENT
- COMMUNITY NETWORK RELATIONS
- COMMUNITY PARTNERING
- MEDIA & PUBLIC RELATIONS

## PROFESSIONAL HISTORY

### 2022-Present **PRESIDENT & CEO**

AEROSPACE CENTER FOR EXCELLENCE (ACE) & SUN 'n FUN AEROSPACE EXPO, Lakeland, FL

- *Successfully led team and over 3,000 volunteers through a two-year planning effort to produce and execute the 50<sup>th</sup> Annual SUN 'n FUN Aerospace Expo which hosted over 200,000 people, 3,500 aircraft and 560 exhibitors over six days*
- *Increased operational revenues by over \$3M through effective organizational management of event sales, marketing, sponsorship and donor relations*
- *Built out an educational team of 18 focused on engaging youth in STEM through our Skylab Innovation Center, which during the 2023-24 school year hosted over 6,000 students from our region*
- *Developing the first master site plan for our organization in partnership with Lakeland International Airport and Visit Central Florida in an effort to prepare our year-round and fly-in footprint for future airport growth and new facility development*
- *In Partnership with Polk County Public Schools and numerous other local partners and donors, entering the final planning stages to construct a \$15M Central Florida Aerospace Academy facility at Winter Haven Regional Airport*

### 2010 - 2022 **AIRPORT DIRECTOR**

LAKELAND LINDER INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT, Lakeland, FL

#### *Specific Achievements:*

- *Managed \$200M Capital Improvement program which included terminal renovations, runway rehabilitation and strengthening, new taxiway construction and rehabilitation, new parking lot development, new ILS installation and upgrades, ATCT design and construction, new fuel farms, land acquisition, new dual-house fire station, numerous building renovations and expansions*

**PROFESSIONAL HISTORY continued**

- *Negotiated 50-year ground lease with Amazon Air Cargo to build a 223,000-square foot Gateway facility on 47.7 acres, on airport capital investment by Amazon of over \$200M*
- *Increased airport revenues from \$3.5M annually in 2010 to over \$11M in FY2022*
- *Transitioned the airport from a General Aviation Reliever Airport to a full-service Commercial facility in 2011 moving over 70,000 passengers in 8 months*
- *Successfully secured over \$170M in grant funding through the FAA and FDOT*
- *Developed 20-year Master Plan Update partnering with Local, State and Federal agencies*
- *Created a comprehensive outreach and communication program to better serve the airport's tenants and customers*
- *Negotiated 20-year building lease and constructed a \$30M 176,000-square foot hangar facility to become the home of NOAA's Aircraft Operations Center, 110 personnel and nine aircraft*
- *Worked with numerous stakeholders on the development of an 8.6 megawatt on airport solar farm installation that generates over \$300,000 annually in utility credits to the airport*
- *Recruited and retained five new flight schools increasing aircraft operations to over 130,000 in 2021*
- *Partnered with Sun n' Fun, Polk County Schools, Polk County and the City of Lakeland in the development of the Central Florida Aerospace Academy's 58,000 square foot on airport high school*
- *In 2016 named FAA's Southern Region Airport Manager of the year*

**2008 - 2010 DEPUTY DIRECTOR, MARKETING & AIR SERVICE DEVELOPMENT**

BRANSON AIRPORT, LLC, Hollister, MO

Recruited as one of two Deputy Directors for first privately developed and operated commercial service airport in the United States, a \$155M airport.

*Specific Achievements:*

- *Opened Airport on time and within budget on May 11, 2009*
- *Successfully recruited AirTran Airways, a national network carrier, and Sun Country Airlines to serve four non-stop destinations*
- *Processed over 30,000 passengers in first three months of operation*
- *Managed multi-million dollar regional and national marketing campaign and grand opening air show with 50,000 in attendance*
- *Developed Branson JetCenter, Airport's privately operated FBO*
- *Directly involved in selecting and coordinating fuel vendor*
- *Partnered with Chamber/CVB and Theater League to develop \$1M+ campaign to market Branson and airport opening*
- *Managed airport concession and grew revenues in excess of projection; Enterprise Rental Car, Famous Dave's restaurant and Bass Pro retail store*
- *Secured \$440,000+ air service development grant from Missouri DOT*
- *Produced national awareness for Branson Airport and its unique story through creative Public Relations campaign*
- *Generated 350+ stories for ad equivalency of over \$2M*
- *Developed company-wide master schedule to cross utilize employees and create maximum efficiencies in employee management*

**PROFESSIONAL HISTORY continued****2002 - 2008    AIR SERVICE COORDINATOR & MARKETING MANAGER, 2006-08**

DAYTON INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT &amp; WRIGHT BROTHERS AIRPORT, Dayton, OH

- *Drove significant increases in air service enhancements*
- *Raised profile and awareness for Airport with aggressive marketing and community partnerships*
- *Developed and launched marketing campaign to introduce the region to new air services*
- *Marketing efforts included radio, print, billboards, TV web and creation of micro website as centerpiece of campaign*
- *Handled all public relation initiatives and inquiries for airport*
- *Implemented daily radio spot on local talk radio station, reported traffic and delay information to public, market airport service and amenities*
- *Developed strong and critical relationships with numerous airline planners*
- *Created and presented multiple presentations to airlines at conferences and one-on-one meetings at headquarters*
- *Collaborated with Dayton Area Chamber of Commerce, Dayton Development Coalition and CVB on presentations representing regional strengths*

**AIRPORT DUTY SUPERVISOR, 2002-06**

- *Inspected airside/landside facilities; monitored airport construction and general airfield maintenance*
- *Conducted instruction of badge/security and driving class*
- *Assisted with maintenance and up-keep of government publications, Airport Certification Manual*
- *Assisted in newly formed airport operations and safety regulations department*
- *Ensured airport compliance with federal, state, county local laws and operations regulations*

**2001 - 2002    AIRPORT OPERATIONS COORDINATOR**

PORT COLUMBUS INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT &amp; BOLTON FIELD, Columbus, OH

- *Coordinated day-to-day operations of a medium hub airport*
- *Airport management representative after 5:00 PM*
- *Responsible for compliance with all federal, state, and local regulations*
- *Coordinated all construction activity*
- *On-Duty Operations Coordinator during terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001*