**Councilmember Suncoast goes to Tallahassee**

First, Congratulations on your membership to the Suncoast League!

The Suncoast League of Cities represents 27 member cities in 3 counties, serving a population over 2 million Floridians and is a Florida League affiliate. SLC’s Advocacy Team works to secure support from legislators on issues that affect our cities and citizens. SLC has a solid reputation with the Suncoast Legislative Delegation for working with legislators to retool policy so it works better for our cities and our citizens. Our legislators have said that we are the go-to association!

Overview of Agenda:

Monday Travel to Tallahassee (*Pro/Am Tip: Ask Dan about a barbeque place along the way.)*

Check in to Doubletree Hotel (check-in starts at 3 pm)

 6 pm virtual or in-person strategy session with Jennifer

Tuesday League of Cities Update

 Meetings with Individual Legislators

 Watching/Speaking at Committee Meetings

Wednesday Check out of Hotel (check-out is by 12 noon) (*Pro Tip: Check out before your meetings)*

Meetings with Individual Legislators

 Watching/Speaking at Committee Meetings

Dress/Behavior Expectation:

* Be confident in your attire. Tallahassee is business attire and is more conservative in dress style. Covered shoulders, jackets, shoes not sandals – so very different from our laid back beachy vibe!
* Don’t be that guy/gal. While the legislators may get obnoxiously drunk after hours and (seem to) get away with it, you should not. You are representing the Suncoast League of Cities.
* Wait/Hurry Up – it’s the Tallahassee way. Don’t have a meeting – don’t worry. Always swing by the office if there is someone with whom you want to meet. And if the legislator’s aid is willing to fit you in, take it and wait. Generally, getting into the capital takes 5-10 minutes. And, meetings with members are generally 15 minutes during session.
* Be kind…to everyone. The unassuming secretary of the Speaker who is often floating around the freshman and sophomore floors has more power than the majority of the House members regardless of party. You never know who you are speaking to.
* Not there? If a legislator is not there, offer to leave a handout behind with their staff member or on the staff member’s desk. Write a personalized note and include your name and cellphone.

So you are at the legislator’s office suite, now what:

* Find their name by their door and introduce yourself to their aide whose desk will be close to their office.
* When welcomed into the office, introduce yourself (give them your business card) and the SLC -- mention the number of cities and population represented by SLC
* State the SLC’s priorities and provide them with the handout
* Have specific asks and points of thanks that are relevant to that week’s agenda
* Thank them for their time and ask their aid to take your picture.

Before you leave:

* Set your meetings with legislators the week before to ensure they can see you.
* Practice your introduction to the Suncoast League. This affiliation gives you greater power in the process than simply being identified by your city because the footprint is larger, and the SLC has such a great reputation.
* Grab a big stack of your business cards and handouts to leave with the legislators

After you get back:

* Send personalized thank you cards and/or emails to every member with whom you meet.

(*Pro Tip: Include a picture so the Legislator remembers who you are. If it is printed they may even add it to their office décor.)*

Hotel Information:

Doubletree Tallahassee

101 S Adams St, Tallahassee, FL 32301

Check In/Out: begins at 3 pm/before 12 noon

*Pro Tips: Car valet service is only $2.50 more than self-parking…and much easier to find.*

*Check out before your meetings; check your bags with the front desk.*

In a Pinch and Need Help/Have Questions or Concerns:

Jamie Robinson:727-692-1240

Jennifer Webb: 727-320-6275

Angela Crist: 813-857-8801

*ProTip: For Emergencies, dial 911.*

Good Luck!