



Tourism Commission Meeting Agenda

Monday, October 07, 2024 at 6:30 PM

Columbus City Hall – 105 N. Dickason Boulevard

Call to Order

Roll Call

Notice of Open Meeting

Approval of Agenda

Approval of Minutes

- [1.](#) Approve Minutes from September 9, 2024

Public Comment

Unfinished Business

- [2.](#) Summer Concert Series 2024 Room Tax Funding Final Report
- [3.](#) Redbud Players 2024 Room Tax Funding Request
- [4.](#) 2025 Proposed Budget Update

New Business

- [5.](#) Chamber of Commerce 2024 Room Tax Funding Request
- [6.](#) 2025 Room Tax Funding Guidelines

Staff Reports

[September](#) Financial Update

Adjourn

*A quorum of city committees and/or commissions may be present at this meeting. No action will be taken or considered by those committees and/or commissions.



Agenda Item Report

Meeting Type: Tourism Commission

Meeting Date: October 7, 2024

Item Title: Approve Minutes from September 9, 2024

Submitted By: David Bennett, Communications & Economic Development Coordinator

Detailed Description of Subject Matter:

The Tourism Commission met on September 9, 2024. Staff will present the minutes from that meeting to be reviewed, corrected if necessary, and approved by the commission.

List all Supporting Documentation Attached:

September 9, 2024 Minutes

Action Requested of Tourism Commission:

Review, make any corrections, and approve the Tourism Commission minutes from September 9, 2024



Tourism Commission Meeting Minutes

Monday, September 09, 2024 at 6:30 PM

Columbus City Hall

The September 9th Tourism Commission meeting was called to order at 6:32 pm

1. This meeting will take place via Zoom.

Join Zoom Meeting:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89326710303?pwd=0lzYIE6b6O4DvVQHd5aAfKhed5JgSu.1>

Meeting ID: 893 2671 0303

Passcode: 092686

Commission members Belschner, Famularo, Hammer, Roelke, Walcott, and Walker were present. Staff liaison Bennett was present. Craig Henrickson was present on behalf of the Columbus Redbud Players.

The meeting was properly noticed.

Roelke motions to approve the agenda. Belschner seconds. Motion approved unanimous vote.

2. Famularo motions to approve the minutes from August 12, 2024, with the addition of clarification that the project under item #4 is referring to print marketing materials. Roelke seconds. Motion passes by unanimous vote.

No public was present to comment and no correspondence was received.

Unfinished Business

3. After inquiring three times each, the nominees for officers were Walcott for Chair, Famularo for Vice Chair, and Walker for Secretary. There were no other nominations. Belschner moves to elect the nominated officers. Walker seconds. Motion passes by roll call vote: Hammer - aye, Roelke - aye, Walker - aye, Belschner - aye, Walcott - aye, and Famularo - aye.
4. Katie Nichols will be presenting a final report on behalf of the Columbus Historic Landmarks Preservation Commission at the October meeting regarding its \$1,000 room tax funding application for its Summer Concerts Series.
5. Bennett gave the Tourism Commission an update regarding the 2025 proposed Tourism budget. After meeting with the Treasurer, the proposed budget amendments may include projected decrease to room tax contribution, adjusting the contribution to the general fund line item for projected increased staffing costs, and decreasing the amount requested for carryover.

The Commission discussed the proposed amendments and would like to meet with the Treasurer to inquire further about the decrease to the carryover request. Hammer and Famularo will meet with the Treasurer and the Administrator to discuss further.

New Business

6. Craig Henrickson presented to the Commission on behalf of the Redbud Players for its application for \$3,105 in room tax funding towards a couple of plays. Belschner assisted in answering questions on behalf of the Redbud Players. Roelke questioned how much of the request is for operational expenses which is against the guidelines in the application. Belschner was confused at

the questioning and asked that expenses incurred for creation of the production should count. Walcott would like the application sent back and resubmitted for the next meeting. Famularo motions to deny the application and allow for reworking and resubmission for the October meeting. Roelke seconds. Motion passes by a vote of 5 ayes, 0 nays, and 1 abstain. Bennett will add discussion for outlining qualifications of expenses to a future agenda.

7. Bennett announced that the kayak rentals have been installed at Rotary Park. As per previous discussions, the Tourism Commission planned to host a ribbon cutting ceremony for the new installation. The ribbon cutting will take place in Rotary Park at 9:30 am on September 14, 2024. Hammer will get a ribbon with the Chamber of Commerce providing the giant scissors. Famularo will make a press release.

Bennett reported no new revenues. \$18,922.39 has been spent in 2024 so far with \$24,677.61 remaining in this year's budget. Expenditures incurred in August include \$71.91 to the Media/Web line item for renewal of GoDaddy domains and \$151.85 to the Marketing/Advertising line item for Google Ads.

Hammer motions to adjourn the meeting. Walker seconds. The meeting is adjourned at 7:42 pm by unanimous vote.

These minutes will be approved at the next Tourism Commission meeting and may be corrected or amended then.

Submitted by David Bennett, Communications & Economic Development Coordinator



Agenda Item Report

Meeting Type: Tourism Commission

Meeting Date: September 9, 2024

Item Title: Summer Concert Series 2024 Room Tax Funding Final Report

Submitted By: David Bennett, Communications & Economic Development Coordinator

Detailed Description of Subject Matter:

Katie Nichols on behalf of the Columbus Historic Landmarks Preservation Commission (CHLPC) will present the required final report for the Tourism Commission to review and take action on. The CHLPC requested room tax funding at the April 8, 2024 meeting. The request is for \$1,000 to help offset advertising costs.

A copy of the 2024 CHLPC Summer Concert Series Final Report was requested, but not received at the time of the packet creation.

List all Supporting Documentation Attached:

2024 CHLPC Summer Concert Series Room Tax Application
 CHLPC Final Report
 Concert Agreement – Mark Croft Trio
 Concert Agreement – Vintage Vegas
 Concert Agreement – Waunakee Big Band
 Invoice #105311 for Stickers
 Event Photos

Action Requested of Tourism Commission:

Discuss and take action to approve reimbursement or reject the request



CITY OF COLUMBUS

105 N. DICKASON BOULEVARD COLUMBUS, WISCONSIN 53925-1565
920.623.5900 FAX 920.623.5901 www.cityofcolumbuswi.com

ROOM TAX FUNDING GUIDELINES

All applications for room tax funds should be submitted at least 60 days prior to the date of the event for which funds are being requested. Applications for Room Tax Funding are to be given to the Director of Planning and Development, City Hall, 105 N. Dickson Blvd., Columbus WI 53925

1. The purpose of room tax proceeds is to foster tourism promotion and development within the City of Columbus. Priority will be given to events which will attract overnight visitors to the community.
2. Funds are granted to non-profit organizations or organizations that can provide proof of insurance or have the ability to obtain insurance, if required.
3. Room tax funds shall NOT be used to offset general operating expenses of any group or organization.
4. Applicants must leverage a minimum of \$2.00 of private funds for every \$1.00 of room tax funds requested.
5. Within 60 days of the completion of the event for which room tax funds are granted, applicants shall provide the Tourism Commission a final report detailing room tax eligible expenditures, including receipts for the expenditures for which they are seeking reimbursement. The report should also provide examples of the project/program and its effectiveness in promoting the City of Columbus. Failure to provide this report will result in the group not being eligible for the receipt of room tax funds for that grant year and for 18 months following the event.
6. Within 60 days of completion of the event for which room tax funds are granted, applicants shall provide the Tourism Commission multiple photos of the event, including the rights to the photos.
7. Applicants are encouraged have a mechanism in place to track effectiveness of their event, including statistics related to attendance and overnight stays generated.
8. Applicants are required to be present when the Tourism Commission considers their request.
9. The Tourism Commission will review applications and will make their decision based on:
 - a. How well the event meets these guidelines;
 - b. How well the organization makes use of its *own* resources along with the proposed use of funds;

The Tourism Commission will operate without discrimination as to age, race, religion, gender, national origin, or sexual orientation in the consideration of funding requests and will recommend funding only to organizations which do not discriminate as to age, race, religion, gender, national origin, or sexual orientation.

ROOM TAX FUNDING APPLICATIONEvent Information

Event Name:	Summer Concert Series	Date(s) of Event:	6/19, 7/17, 8/14/24
Event Address:	1049 Park Ave.		
Event Website:	N/A		
Total Amount Requested:	1000.00		

Use of Funds

Activity	Budget	Purpose
Performer fees	3000.00	pay talent for their performances
Advertising	2000.00	event promotion and sponsor recognition
Pavilion Rental/Stage	275.00	site fees and stage rental from DPW
Supplies	50.00	educational materials for HLPC outreach
Kids meals	450.00	Free supper for kids 12 and under
Insurance/Picnic License	730.00	safe and legal event
TOTAL	6505.00	

For Additional expenses please attach Exhibit A

Organizational Information

Organization(s) Requesting Funds:		Columbus Historic Landmarks and Preservation Commission	
Contact Person:	Katie Nichols	Phone Number:	608-669-2445
E-mail Address:	kmsharrow@gmail.com		
Tax exempt organization: <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No		Tax exempt number:	008-0000205087-06
List board members (if applicable): Ruth Hermanson, Libby Gilbertson, Henry Elling, Beth Altschwager, Peter Kaland, Jan Ulrich, Katie Nichols			
Years the organization has been in operation: 33			
Purpose or Mission of the organization requesting funds: To promote and preserve our city's historic sites and structures and foster public engagement with our cultural past. "Unlocking our future while preserving the past."			
Liability Insurance Carrier: Richards Insurance			

Contact Information for Organizations Accountant/Bookkeeper

Contact Name:	Elizabeth Altschwager	Phone Number:	920-623-2306
Address: 553 W. James St.			
Email: altschwager@att.net			

The Tourism Commission reserves the right to review the organization's most recent tax statement. Attach if available.

1. Explain your event and how it will attract visitors and generate overnight lodging in Columbus. How will attendance and overnight stays related to your event be measured?

The HLPC Summer Concert Series invites people from our community and beyond to enjoy three evenings of free entertainment in Fireman's Park. Entertainment includes opening acts by local performers as well as headlining musicians. We will use our table at the events to interact with concert goers to find out how far they traveled to see the concerts and where they will stay while they are here.

2. Explain how this past event (if applicable) has impacted overnight lodging in Columbus.

We have not surveyed the crowd in the past to find out who is traveling to enjoy the concerts.

3. Explain what impact your event will have on all other Columbus businesses (in addition to lodging) including ways you plan to track this impact.

We feature local vendors serving food and drink at our concerts. We do not take any fee at this time from vendors, but will collect sales information from them this year.

4. Will the proposed event generate revenue? ☒ Yes ☐ No

If yes, will revenue exceed the amount of expenses, and if so, what is typically done with that revenue?

Any profit from this event will go to restoration of the Resthaven in Fireman's Park.

5. Estimate how many people and what geographic area and demographic groups will be targeted by any promotions or advertising. How will you track the effectiveness of your promotion/advertising?

We will market through digital and print media as well as posters and banners in Dodge, Columbia and Dane County. When we survey concert goers, we will also ask how they found out about the concert series.

6. Will the proposed event include paid advertising? What media will be used? What "earned media" (unpaid promotion) will be generated by the event?

Paid advertising will be included through local print, digital and radio outlets. Social media will also be used for unpaid promotion. At the \$1000 sponsorship level, the Tourism Commission would be a "Bandleader" level sponsor: large sign at stage; announced during concert; listed as "Co-Host" for one concert on Facebook, etc.; opportunity for "swag" handouts at concert; logo in print/digital advertising including local newspapers, social media, and posters/flyers; yard sign in park all concerts.

7. Please include any information or examples of marketing materials you believe will help the Tourism Commission better evaluate your request.

Please see attached examples of poster and ads from last year.

Please note, the Tourism Commission may request additional information from an applicant for room tax funds. Please be sure to answer all questions on this form as completely as possible. All requests for room tax funds will be evaluated based on the contents of this application, a presentation before the Tourism Commission the State of Wisconsin Room Tax Statute and the City of Columbus Room Tax Ordinance.

Katie Nichols

Print Name



Signature

03/06/2024

Application Date

CHLPC Summer Concerts Room Tax Funding Report

The Columbus Historic Landmarks and Preservation Commission's *Summer Concert Series* continues to grow in popularity! We had our largest crowds ever this year approaching or exceeding 300 concert goers for each of our three concerts. We have especially enjoyed seeing more families and young people attend the series, gaining exposure to what CHLPC is and appreciation for our work in Columbus. We attribute this demographic shift to the additions of local performers as openers and free supper for kids for the past two summers. This year we enjoyed the return of Partners Dance Studio, and the Summer Concert debuts of the Red Bud Players and local singer/songwriter Chris Carter. Our headliners included Vintage Vegas, featuring Columbus Band Member Dominic Famularo, the Waunakee Big Band, and Madison-based Columbus Native Mark Croft with his Mark Croft Trio. These events truly brought the best of our small town to beautiful Fireman's park. It was such a pleasure to watch neighbors visit and relax under the oak trees, and many expressed their gratitude personally to members of our commission.

In addition to entertainment, many local businesses and organizations also enjoyed the opportunity to serve and achieve outreach in our community. Local businesses Sweet Memories, Cercis Brewing, and Little Sister Cookies offered delicious sweets and beverages. The American Legion and the Marines took advantage of the concerts to raise funds through food sales, each choosing to sponsor the meals for kids. We also invited the Columbus Area Historical Society for an opportunity to outreach and fundraise for their new museum home.

For our part, we were successful in raising awareness of our current project, the rehabilitation of the Rest Haven in Fireman's park. We had success raising funds in cash donations from concert goers, and, perhaps more importantly, made community connections regarding this historic and culturally significant structure. These connections help create a sense of pride and place in Columbus and also help foster relationships with major donors.

Thank you for your support in this successful community event,
Katie Nichols, Commissioner, CHLPC

Attachments: invoices, band contracts (which list payment) and photos

CONCERT AGREEMENT

This Agreement made by and between the Columbus Historic Landmarks and Preservation Commission (hereinafter "HLPC") and **Mark Croft Trio** (hereinafter "Performer").

WHEREAS, HLPC is conducting a live music concert series (hereinafter "Concert Series") to be held at the Fireman's Park Pavilion or in the oak grove between the Fireman's Park playgrounds generally located at 1049 Park Avenue in the City of Columbus (hereinafter "the Premises"), during the summer of 2024; and

WHEREAS, Performer desires to provide musical entertainment on the Premises during one of the HLPC Concert Series, dated **August 14, 2024**; and

WHEREAS, HLPC and Performer desire to enter into an agreement which will allow Performer to provide musical entertainment on the Premises during the HLPC Concert Series.

NOW, THEREFORE, HLPC and Performer do hereby agree as follows:

1. HLPC hires Performer to provide musical entertainment during one of the Concert Series events during the 2024 Concert Series. Performer shall receive the sum of \$750 for performing during the concert event. Payment shall be made by HLPC to Performer in one lump sum at the conclusion of the event. **Performance times: 6pm-8pm, 2 sets with one 10 min break**
2. On the day of the concert, Performer shall be allowed access to the Premises at 4:00 p.m. in order to set up prior to the concert. HLPC shall inform Performer of the specific site on the Premises designated for Performer. Performer shall remove all of its equipment and materials by 10:00 p.m. on the night of the concert and shall leave its space in a broom clean condition at the end of each concert.
3. HLPC reserves the right to cancel a concert based on inclement weather or for any other reason. In the event of cancellation, HLPC shall notify Performer as soon as reasonably possible.
- ~~4. Performer shall obtain and maintain third-party general liability insurance with \$1 million per injury coverage naming the City of Columbus as an additional insured or co-insured and shall deliver a certificate of insurance to HLPC prior to Performer's first appearance at a concert.~~
5. Performer shall defend, indemnify and hold harmless the City of Columbus, HLPC, its members, officers, agents and employees from and against any and all claims and damages

for injuries suffered or incurred by a person, other vendor, customer or other third party arising out of or related to Performer's negligent or intentional acts while acting as musical entertainment on the Premises during the Concert Series.

6. Notice as required by this Agreement should be sent to HLPC c/o Susan Caine, City Clerk, 105 N. Dickason Blvd., Columbus, WI 53925. Notice to the Performer shall be sent to

Mark Croft, phone number 608-469-6300.

CITY OF COLUMBUS

Date: _____

_____ print


_____ sign

Authorized Representative

PERFORMER

Date: 4/11/24

Mark Croft print

 sign

Authorized Representative

CONCERT AGREEMENT

This Agreement made by and between the Columbus Historic Landmarks and Preservation Commission (hereinafter "HLPC") and Vintage Vegas (hereinafter "Performer").

WHEREAS, HLPC is conducting a live music concert series (hereinafter "Concert Series") to be held at the Fireman's Park Pavilion or in the oak grove between the Fireman's Park playgrounds generally located at 1049 Park Avenue in the City of Columbus (hereinafter "the Premises"), during the summer of 2024; and

WHEREAS, Performer desires to provide musical entertainment on the Premises during one of the HLPC Concert Series, dated **June 19, 2024**; and

WHEREAS, HLPC and Performer desire to enter into an agreement which will allow Performer to provide musical entertainment on the Premises during the HLPC Concert Series.

NOW, THEREFORE, HLPC and Performer do hereby agree as follows:

1. HLPC hires Performer to provide musical entertainment during one of the Concert Series events during the 2024 Concert Series. Performer shall receive the sum of \$800 for performing during the concert event. Payment shall be made by HLPC to Performer in one lump sum at the conclusion of the event.
2. On the day of the concert, Performer shall be allowed access to the Premises at 4:00 p.m. in order to set up prior to the concert. HLPC shall inform Performer of the specific site on the Premises designated for Performer. Performer shall remove all of its equipment and materials by 10:00 p.m. on the night of the concert and shall leave its space in a broom clean condition at the end of each concert.
3. HLPC reserves the right to cancel a concert based on inclement weather or for any other reason. In the event of cancellation, HLPC shall notify Performer as soon as reasonably possible.
- ~~4. Performer shall obtain and maintain third-party general liability insurance with \$1 million per injury coverage naming the City of Columbus as an additional insured or co-insured and shall deliver a certificate of insurance to HLPC prior to Performer's first appearance at a concert.~~
5. Performer shall defend, indemnify and hold harmless the City of Columbus, HLPC, its members, officers, agents and employees from and against any and all claims and damages

for injuries suffered or incurred by a person, other vendor, customer or other third party arising out of or related to Performer's negligent or intentional acts while acting as musical entertainment on the Premises during the Concert Series.

6. Notice as required by this Agreement should be sent to HLPC c/o Susan Caine, City Clerk, 105 N. Dickason Blvd., Columbus, WI 53925. Notice to the Performer shall be sent to

Dominic Famularo, phone number 414-534-6310.

CITY OF COLUMBUS

Date: _____

_____ print

_____ sign

Authorized Representative

PERFORMER

Date: 4/23/2024

Dominic Famularo print

 sign

Authorized Representative

CONCERT AGREEMENT

This Agreement made by and between the Columbus Historic Landmarks and Preservation Commission (hereinafter "HLPC") and **Waunakee Big Band** (hereinafter "Performer").

WHEREAS, HLPC is conducting a live music concert series (hereinafter "Concert Series") to be held at the Fireman's Park Pavilion or in the oak grove between the Fireman's Park playgrounds generally located at 1049 Park Avenue in the City of Columbus (hereinafter "the Premises"), during the summer of 2024; and

WHEREAS, Performer desires to provide musical entertainment on the Premises during one of the HLPC Concert Series, dated **July 17, 2024**; and

WHEREAS, HLPC and Performer desire to enter into an agreement which will allow Performer to provide musical entertainment on the Premises during the HLPC Concert Series.

NOW, THEREFORE, HLPC and Performer do hereby agree as follows:

1. HLPC hires Performer to provide musical entertainment during one of the Concert Series events during the 2024 Concert Series. Performer shall receive the sum of \$1000 for performing during the concert event. Payment shall be made by HLPC to Performer in one lump sum at the conclusion of the event.
2. On the day of the concert, Performer shall be allowed access to the Premises at 4:00 p.m. in order to set up prior to the concert. HLPC shall inform Performer of the specific site on the Premises designated for Performer. Performer shall remove all of its equipment and materials by 10:00 p.m. on the night of the concert and shall leave its space in a broom clean condition at the end of each concert.
3. HLPC reserves the right to cancel a concert based on inclement weather or for any other reason. In the event of cancellation, HLPC shall notify Performer as soon as reasonably possible.
- ~~4. Performer shall obtain and maintain third-party general liability insurance with \$1 million per injury coverage naming the City of Columbus as an additional insured or co-insured and shall deliver a certificate of insurance to HLPC prior to Performer's first appearance at a concert.~~
5. Performer shall defend, indemnify and hold harmless the City of Columbus, HLPC, its members, officers, agents and employees from and against any and all claims and damages

for injuries suffered or incurred by a person, other vendor, customer or other third party arising out of or related to Performer's negligent or intentional acts while acting as musical entertainment on the Premises during the Concert Series.

6. Notice as required by this Agreement should be sent to HLPC c/o Susan Caine, City Clerk, 105 N. Dickason Blvd., Columbus, WI 53925. Notice to the Performer shall be sent to

Renee' Reindl, phone number 608-669-4485

CITY OF COLUMBUS

Date: _____

_____ print

_____ sign

Authorized Representative

PERFORMER

Date: 4/22/24

Renee' Reindl print

Renee' Reindl sign

Authorized Representative



Minuteman Item #2.

Formerly SprintPrint
2790 S Fish Hatchery Rd
Madison, WI 53711

Phone: 1-608-277-7500 / Fax: 1-608-227-7555

E-mail: fitchburg@minutemanpress.com

Web: WI221.minuteman.com

Invoice Number 105311

Invoice Date 6/30/2024

INVOICE

Bill to: Janice Ulrich
Janice Ulrich
504 River Road #1
Columbus, WI 53925

Phone: 262-389-2094
Email: janu2635@yahoo.com

Ship to: Janice Ulrich
Janice Ulrich
504 River Road #1
Columbus, WI 53925

Phone: 262-389-2094
Email: janu2635@yahoo.com

PLEASE MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO: MMP

6 Stickers - 2 each of 3 - June 19th Vintage Vegas, July 17th Waunakee Big Band, August 14th Mark Croft (Job 104758)	\$52.48
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15 Wide Format - number replacement stickers for yard signs (Job 104763)	\$15.00
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Invoice Subtotal:	\$67.48
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Invoice Total:	\$67.48
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Deposits and Payments:	(\$67.48)
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Balance Due:	\$0.00
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Tax Exempt ID:	CES #008-0000205087-06
	Certificate on file in
	Waunakee

Terms: Net 30 Days

Please pay from this invoice. No statements will be sent.
Thank you for your order! We appreciate your business.

2.0000% interest per month on past-due invoices.
A one-time charge of 2.0000% may be applied for late payments.



Minuteman

Item #2.

Formerly SprintPrint
2790 S Fish Hatchery Rd
Madison, WI 53711

Phone: 1-608-277-7500 / Fax: 1-608-227-7555

E-mail: fitchburg@minutemanpress.com

Web: WI221.minuteman.com

Invoice Number 105144

Invoice Date 6/10/2024

INVOICE

Bill to: Ruth Hermanson
CHLPC
105 N. Dickason Blvd
Columbus, WI 53925

Phone: 920-210-7676
Email: ruthhermanson@charter.net

Ship to: Ruth Hermanson
CHLPC
105 N. Dickason Blvd
Columbus, WI 53925

Phone: 920-210-7676
Email: ruthhermanson@charter.net

PLEASE MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO: MMP

3 Stickers - 1 each of 3 - June 19th Vintage Vegas, July 17th Waunakee Big Band, August 14th Mark Croft (Job 104297)	\$26.24
80 Posters - 11x17 - 4/0 - Full Bleed (Job 104298)	\$35.40
1,000 Postcards - 4/4 - 4.25x5.5 - 100# Cover (Job 104299)	\$279.24
15 Yard Signs - 4/4 - 18x24 + Standard Step Stakes (Job 104300)	\$186.75
3 Sponsor signs - 4/0 - 24x36 - Vertical Flutes + Standard Step Stakes (Job 104301)	\$58.52

Invoice Subtotal: \$586.15

Invoice Total: \$586.15

Deposits and Payments: (\$586.15)

Balance Due: \$0.00

Tax Exempt ID: CES #008-0000205087-06
Certificate on file in Waunakee

Terms: Net 30 Days

Please pay from this invoice. No statements will be sent.
Thank you for your order! We appreciate your business.

2.0000% interest per month on past-due invoices.
A one-time charge of 2.0000% may be applied for late payments.





Agenda Item Report

Meeting Type: Tourism Commission

Meeting Date: October 7, 2024

Item Title: Redbud Players 2024 Room Tax Funding Request

Submitted By: David Bennett, Communications & Economic Development Coordinator

Detailed Description of Subject Matter:

At the September meeting, the Tourism Commission rejected the application, but made a motion to allow the Redbud Players to revise the application to fit the guidelines and resubmit for this meeting. The previous application asked for \$3,105 and was questioned on whether the use of funds met the grant guidelines. The revised application request \$800 in room tax funding for \$2,417.88 spent on marketing that includes ads, flyers, and signage.

List all Supporting Documentation Attached:

2024 Room Tax Application (Revised)

2024 Room Tax Application (Previous)

Action Requested of Tourism Commission:

Discuss and take action to move forward with or reject the request



CITY OF COLUMBUS

105 N. DICKASON BOULEVARD COLUMBUS, WISCONSIN 53925-1565
920.623.5900 FAX 920.623.5901 www.cityofcolumbuswi.com

ROOM TAX FUNDING GUIDELINES

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1. The purpose of room tax proceeds is to foster tourism promotion and development within the City of Columbus. Priority will be given to events which will attract overnight visitors to the community.
2. Funds are granted to non-profit organizations or organizations that can provide proof of insurance or have the ability to obtain insurance, if required.
3. Room tax funds shall NOT be used to offset general operating expenses of any group or organization.
4. Applicants must leverage a minimum of \$2.00 of private funds for every \$1.00 of room tax funds requested.
5. Within 60 days of the completion of the event for which room tax funds are granted, applicants shall provide the Tourism Commission a final report detailing room tax eligible expenditures, including receipts for the expenditures for which they are seeking reimbursement. The report should also provide examples of the project/program and its effectiveness in promoting the City of Columbus. Failure to provide this report will result in the group not being eligible for the receipt of room tax funds for that grant year and for 18 months following the event.
6. Within 60 days of completion of the event for which room tax funds are granted, applicants shall provide the Tourism Commission multiple photos of the event, including the rights to the photos.
7. Applicants are encouraged have a mechanism in place to track effectiveness of their event, including statistics related to attendance and overnight stays generated.
8. Applicants are required to be present when the Tourism Commission considers their request.
9. The Tourism Commission will review applications and will make their decision based on:
 - a. How well the event meets these guidelines;
 - b. How well the organization makes use of its *own* resources along with the proposed use of funds;

The Tourism Commission will operate without discrimination as to age, race, religion, gender, national origin, or sexual orientation in the consideration of funding requests and will recommend funding only to organizations which do not discriminate as to age, race, religion, gender, national origin, or sexual orientation.

ROOM TAX FUNDING APPLICATIONEvent Information

Event Name:	Redbud Players productions	Date(s) of Event:	Sept. 20-29 and Oct. 19 & 26
Event Address:	Fireman's Park, Columbus Middle School and Lewke Dairy Barn		
Event Website:	www.facebook.com/ColumbusRedbudPlayers		
Total Amount Requested:	\$800		

Use of Funds

Activity	Budget	Purpose
Marketing	\$2,417.88	Ads, signs, flyers
TOTAL	\$2,417.88	

For Additional expenses please attach Exhibit A

Organizational Information

Organization(s) Requesting Funds:	Redbud Players		
Contact Person:	Craig Hendrickson	Phone Number:	608-333-1346
E-mail Address:	Craig Henrickson <craig.henrickson@yahoo.com>		
Tax exempt organization: <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No	Tax exempt number:	008-1028550772-02	
List board members (if applicable): Carla Woebbeking, Julie Belschner, Craig Henrickson, Kevin Miner			
Years the organization has been in operation: 25			
Purpose or Mission of the organization requesting funds: To have community theater performances to enhance and enrich the city of Columbus as well as attract visitors.			
Liability Insurance Carrier: Harding Insurance Agency			

Contact Information for Organizations Accountant/Bookkeeper

Contact Name:	Kevin Miner	Phone Number:	920-253-8081
Address: Columbus, WI			
Email: kb_miner@yahoo.com			

The Tourism Commission reserves the right to review the organization's most recent tax statement. Attach if available.

1. Explain your event and how it will attract visitors and generate overnight lodging in Columbus. How will attendance and overnight stays related to your event be measured?

The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe had six performances -- Sept. 20, 21, 22, 27, 28 and 29 at the Columbus Middle School. As shown by our December 2023 performance, people come from far and wide to attend; our farthest to it were from the Twin Cities. They stay overnight. Both local and visitors tended to eat at a restaurant before or after the play. It will be widely marketed and promoted. This production has a large cast of both adults and children -- and is a Narnia story loved by all ages. ... **

Udderly Terrifying Tales is new this year: it's a Columbus haunted barn. Haunted

2. Explain how this past event (if applicable) has impacted overnight lodging in Columbus.

The Best Christmas Pageant Ever, which was performed in December 2023, brought in 283 attendees -- plus cast and crew. We've included our report from that production. Our preliminary numbers from The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe indicate we had about 400 attendees.

3. Explain what impact your event will have on all other Columbus businesses (in addition to lodging) including ways you plan to track this impact.

Those who come to the play tend to eat in town, buy gas, shop downtown and generally see what Columbus has to offer if they haven't been here before.

4. Will the proposed event generate revenue? (☒) Yes (☐) No

If yes, will revenue exceed the amount of expenses, and if so, what is typically done with that revenue?

We hope to generate revenue but won't know until after the events. Any revenue will be invested back into the organization to help increase the presence of theatre and the arts in Columbus.

5. Estimate how many people and what geographic area and demographic groups will be targeted by any promotions or advertising. How will you track the effectiveness of your promotion/advertising?

We will be targeting a wide range of Facebook groups. We will be placing yard signs throughout the Columbus area. We will be dispensing flyers across Columbia, Dane, Dodge and Sauk counties to businesses and events. We are the opening act for the Aug. 14 Concert in the Park, where we will be promoting our productions. We were in the Fourth of July parade to promote the organization. We will use local and regional newspapers for ads and stories. We'll keep track of the promotions and their effectiveness. We've created banners to use at events and will hold a 25th anniversary celebration after the Sept. 20 production, inviting the public and past organization members.

6. Will the proposed event include paid advertising? What media will be used? What “earned media” (unpaid promotion) will be generated by the event?

We had ads in several local newspapers through Capital Newspapers, and also through Agri-View

7. Please include any information or examples of marketing materials you believe will help the Tourism Commission better evaluate your request.

See our flyer and signs artwork, attached.

Please note, the Tourism Commission may request additional information from an applicant for room tax funds. Please be sure to answer all questions on this form as completely as possible. All requests for room tax funds will be evaluated based on the contents of this application, a presentation before the Tourism Commission the State of Wisconsin Room Tax Statute and the City of Columbus Room Tax Ordinance.

Craig Henrikson

Print Name

Craig Henrikson

Digitally signed by Craig
Henrickson
Date: 2024.09.30 15:49:25
-05'00'

Signature

Application Date



CITY OF COLUMBUS

105 N. DICKASON BOULEVARD COLUMBUS, WISCONSIN 53925-1565
920.623.5900 FAX 920.623.5901 www.cityofcolumbuswi.com

ROOM TAX FUNDING GUIDELINES

All applications for room tax funds should be submitted at least 60 days prior to the date of the event for which funds are being requested. Applications for Room Tax Funding are to be given to the Director of Planning and Development, City Hall, 105 N. Dickson Blvd., Columbus WI 53925

1. The purpose of room tax proceeds is to foster tourism promotion and development within the City of Columbus. Priority will be given to events which will attract overnight visitors to the community.
2. Funds are granted to non-profit organizations or organizations that can provide proof of insurance or have the ability to obtain insurance, if required.
3. Room tax funds shall NOT be used to offset general operating expenses of any group or organization.
4. Applicants must leverage a minimum of \$2.00 of private funds for every \$1.00 of room tax funds requested.
5. Within 60 days of the completion of the event for which room tax funds are granted, applicants shall provide the Tourism Commission a final report detailing room tax eligible expenditures, including receipts for the expenditures for which they are seeking reimbursement. The report should also provide examples of the project/program and its effectiveness in promoting the City of Columbus. Failure to provide this report will result in the group not being eligible for the receipt of room tax funds for that grant year and for 18 months following the event.
6. Within 60 days of completion of the event for which room tax funds are granted, applicants shall provide the Tourism Commission multiple photos of the event, including the rights to the photos.
7. Applicants are encouraged have a mechanism in place to track effectiveness of their event, including statistics related to attendance and overnight stays generated.
8. Applicants are required to be present when the Tourism Commission considers their request.
9. The Tourism Commission will review applications and will make their decision based on:
 - a. How well the event meets these guidelines;
 - b. How well the organization makes use of its *own* resources along with the proposed use of funds;

The Tourism Commission will operate without discrimination as to age, race, religion, gender, national origin, or sexual orientation in the consideration of funding requests and will recommend funding only to organizations which do not discriminate as to age, race, religion, gender, national origin, or sexual orientation.

ROOM TAX FUNDING APPLICATION**Event Information**

Event Name:	Redbud Players productions	Date(s) of Event:	Aug. 5-9, Sept. 20-29 and Oct. 19 & 26
Event Address:	Fireman's Park, Columbus Middle School and Lewke Dairy Barn		
Event Website:	www.facebook.com/ColumbusRedbudPlayers		
Total Amount Requested:	\$3,105		

Use of Funds

Activity	Budget	Purpose
General marketing	\$500	to promote the organization and its productions
Performance licenses, scripts, signs, flyers, venue cost, etc.	\$3,000	to put on The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe
Decor, signs, flyers, glow sticks, etc.	\$1,500	to put on the Udderly Terrifying Tales haunted barn
Liability insurance, etc.	\$1,000	organizational expenses
Director expense for Summer Theater Camp	\$210	to run the Summer Theatre Camp
TOTAL	\$6,210	

For Additional expenses please attach Exhibit A

Organizational Information

Organization(s) Requesting Funds:	Redbud Players		
Contact Person:	Craig Henricks	Phone Number:	608-333-1346
E-mail Address:	Craig Henrickson <craig.henrickson@yahoo.com>		
Tax exempt organization: (☉) Yes (○) No	Tax exempt number:	008-1028550772-02	
List board members (if applicable): Carla Woebbeking, Julie Belschner, Craig Henrickson, Kevin Miner			
Years the organization has been in operation: 25			
Purpose or Mission of the organization requesting funds: To have community theater performances to enhance and enrich the city of Columbus as well as attract visitors.			
Liability Insurance Carrier: Harding Insurance Agency			

Contact Information for Organizations Accountant/Bookkeeper

Contact Name:	Kevin Miner	Phone Number:	920-253-8081
Address: Columbus, WI			
Email: kb_miner@yahoo.com			

The Tourism Commission reserves the right to review the organization's most recent tax statement. Attach if available.

1. Explain your event and how it will attract visitors and generate overnight lodging in Columbus. How will attendance and overnight stays related to your event be measured?

** The Summer Theatre Camp brings area children into Fireman's Park every year; 13 children are attending this year. It brings parents into downtown Columbus each day Aug. 4-8 to bring the kids to the camp. And then Aug. 9 there are parents, grandparents, friends and extended family who attend the camp's concluding performance. They will likely eat and shop in town as well as buy gas. ... ** The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe will have six performances -- Sept. 20, 21, 22, 27, 28 and 29 at the Columbus Middle School Auditorium from December 2023.

2. Explain how this past event (if applicable) has impacted overnight lodging in Columbus.

The Best Christmas Pageant Ever, which was performed in December 2023, brought in 283 attendees -- plus cast and crew. We've included our report from that production.

3. Explain what impact your event will have on all other Columbus businesses (in addition to lodging) including ways you plan to track this impact.

Those who come to the play tend to eat in town, buy gas, shop downtown and generally see what Columbus has to offer if they haven't been here before. We will again use our reporting system to track visitors for our 2024 productions.

4. Will the proposed event generate revenue? (☒) Yes (☐) No

If yes, will revenue exceed the amount of expenses, and if so, what is typically done with that revenue?

We hope to generate revenue but won't know until after the events. Any revenue will be invested back into the organization to help increase the presence of theatre and the arts in Columbus.

5. Estimate how many people and what geographic area and demographic groups will be targeted by any promotions or advertising. How will you track the effectiveness of your promotion/advertising?

We will be targeting a wide range of Facebook groups. We will be placing yard signs throughout the Columbus area. We will be dispensing flyers across Columbia, Dane, Dodge and Sauk counties to businesses and events. We are the opening act for the Aug. 14 Concert in the Park, where we will be promoting our productions. We were in the Fourth of July parade to promote the organization. We will use local and regional newspapers for ads and stories. We'll keep track of the promotions and their effectiveness. We've created banners to use at events and will hold a 25th anniversary celebration after the Sept. 20 production, inviting the public and past organization members.

6. Will the proposed event include paid advertising? What media will be used? What "earned media" (unpaid promotion) will be generated by the event?

We won't be using paid advertising. Instead we'll trade out an ad with local newspapers, and write stories to be included in newspapers.

7. Please include any information or examples of marketing materials you believe will help the Tourism Commission better evaluate your request.

See our flyer and signs artwork, attached.

Please note, the Tourism Commission may request additional information from an applicant for room tax funds. Please be sure to answer all questions on this form as completely as possible. All requests for room tax funds will be evaluated based on the contents of this application, a presentation before the Tourism Commission the State of Wisconsin Room Tax Statute and the City of Columbus Room Tax Ordinance.

Craig Henrickson

Print Name



Signature

08/08/24

Application Date



Agenda Item Report

Meeting Type: Tourism Commission

Meeting Date: October 7, 2024

Item Title: 2025 Proposed Budget Update

Submitted By: David Bennett, Communications & Economic Development Coordinator

Detailed Description of Subject Matter:

Staff met with administration, the Mayor, and the Treasurer to work out updating the carryover request. The transfer surplus line item (carryover) has been updated to \$23,903.92 from the proposed \$30,000. This will leave about \$8,000 remaining in the Tourism Fund Balance that can be accessed through either the City Administrator or City Council request. The carryover amount has been allocated to the expense lines of Materials & Services and Contr. Gen. Fund and balances the budget. The remainder of the budget remains as presented in the September meeting.

List all Supporting Documentation Attached:

2025 Proposed Tourism Budget Adjustments

Action Requested of Tourism Commission:

Review and discuss Treasurer's adjustments

2025 Proposed Tourism Budget Adjustments

REVENUES

Account	Description	2024 Budget	2024 YTD	2025 Prop.	2025 Adj.
250-414135-000	Contr. Room Tax	\$ 38,500.00	\$ 4,757.14	\$ 35,900.00	\$ 31,500.00
250-484810-000	Misc. Revenues	\$ 0.00	\$ 0.00	\$ 350.00	\$ 350.00
250-424218-000	WI State Travel Grant	\$ 0.00	\$ 0.00	\$ 0.00	\$ 0.00
250-484820-000	Interest Earned	\$ 100.00	\$ 140.83	\$ 100.00	\$ 100.00
250-484830-000	Kayak Rental Income	N/A	N/A	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00
250-494990-000	Transfer Surplus	\$ 0.00	\$ 0.00	\$ 30,000.00	\$ 23,903.92
Tourism Fund Revenues		\$ 38,600.00	\$ 4,897.97	\$ 67,350.00	\$ 56,853.92

vs. 2024 Budget: Red = decrease, Blue = increase, Black = no adjustments

Notes:

Transfer Surplus (i.e. carryover) has been adjusted to \$23,903.92 from the proposed \$30,000. This should leave about \$8,000 remaining in the fund balance.

Monies from EV station had been going to CDA. Staff and the Mayor advocated to allocate it to Tourism if Tourism paid for it. If allocated to Tourism, it would be added to the Misc. Revenues line item.

Staff is encouraged to seek partnerships for Joint Effort Marketing grant (not included) for general marketing of the area.

EXPENDITURES

Account	Description	2024 Budget	2024 YTD	2025 Prop.	2025 Adj.
250-511000-249	Materials & Services	\$ 10,000.00	\$ 19,212.50	\$ 35,000.00	\$ 20,000.00
250-511000-310	Web / Media	\$ 1,600.00	\$ 1,389.84	\$ 1,600.00	\$ 1,600.00
350-511000-313	Marketing / Advertise	\$ 17,500.00	\$ 1,368.90	\$ 10,000.00	\$ 10,000.00
350-511000-345	Special Events	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 0.00	\$ 10,000.00	\$ 10,000.00
250-568000-610	Contr. Gen. Fund	\$ 12,500.00	\$ 4,932.14	TBD	\$ 15,253.92
Tourism Fund Expenditures		\$ 65,435.61	\$ 23,918.07		\$ 56,853.92

vs. 2024 Budget: Red = decrease, Blue = increase, Black = no adjustments,

Notes:

Carryover has been added to Materials & Services (\$20,000) and Cont. Gen. Fund (\$3,253.92) which balances the budget.

Marketing/Advertise line item is for general promotion of city tourism, while Special Events is used for specific events promotion, partnerships, and room tax funding grant applications.



Agenda Item Report

Meeting Type: Tourism Commission

Meeting Date: October 7, 2024

Item Title: Chamber of Commerce 2024 Room Tax Funding Request

Submitted By: David Bennett, Communications & Economic Development Coordinator

Detailed Description of Subject Matter:

The Columbus, WI Area Chamber of Commerce is requesting \$1,225 in room tax funding for the cost of one trolley that will be at its Wine Walk event taking place on November 30, 2024. The application was submitted on October 2nd. Katie Nichols will present on behalf of the Chamber of Commerce.

List all Supporting Documentation Attached:

2024 Room Tax Application

Action Requested of Tourism Commission:

Discuss and take action to move forward with or reject the request



CITY OF COLUMBUS

105 N. DICKASON BOULEVARD COLUMBUS, WISCONSIN 53925-1565
920.623.5900 FAX 920.623.5901 www.cityofcolumbuswi.com

ROOM TAX FUNDING GUIDELINES

All applications for room tax funds should be submitted at least 60 days prior to the date of the event for which funds are being requested. Applications for Room Tax Funding are to be given to the Director of Planning and Development, City Hall, 105 N. Dickson Blvd., Columbus WI 53925

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3. Room tax funds shall NOT be used to offset general operating expenses of any group or organization.
4. Applicants must leverage a minimum of \$2.00 of private funds for every \$1.00 of room tax funds requested.
5. Within 60 days of the completion of the event for which room tax funds are granted, applicants shall provide the Tourism Commission a final report detailing room tax eligible expenditures, including receipts for the expenditures for which they are seeking reimbursement. The report should also provide examples of the project/program and its effectiveness in promoting the City of Columbus. Failure to provide this report will result in the group not being eligible for the receipt of room tax funds for that grant year and for 18 months following the event.
6. Within 60 days of completion of the event for which room tax funds are granted, applicants shall provide the Tourism Commission multiple photos of the event, including the rights to the photos.
7. Applicants are encouraged have a mechanism in place to track effectiveness of their event, including statistics related to attendance and overnight stays generated.
8. Applicants are required to be present when the Tourism Commission considers their request.
9. The Tourism Commission will review applications and will make their decision based on:
 - a. How well the event meets these guidelines;
 - b. How well the organization makes use of its *own* resources along with the proposed use of funds;

The Tourism Commission will operate without discrimination as to age, race, religion, gender, national origin, or sexual orientation in the consideration of funding requests and will recommend funding only to organizations which do not discriminate as to age, race, religion, gender, national origin, or sexual orientation.

ROOM TAX FUNDING APPLICATION**Event Information**

Event Name:	Bling in the Season! Wine Walk 2024	Date(s) of Event:	November 30, 2024
Event Address:	various locations in Columbus		
Event Website:	https://www.columbuswichamber.com/November		
Total Amount Requested:	\$1225 (the cost of one of the two trolleys)		

Use of Funds

Activity	Budget	Purpose
insurance + picnic licenses	725	liability/legality
ticketing and processing fees	350	online payment and Eventbrite
swag (tumblers, bags, lanyards, passports)	2062	for participants
wine	3125	delicious revelry
trolleys	2250	transportation
promotion	1050	posters, banners, print and digital ads
TOTAL	9562	

For Additional expenses please attach Exhibit A

Organizational Information

Organization(s) Requesting Funds:		Columbus Area Chamber of Commerce	
Contact Person:	Katie Nichols	Phone Number:	608-669-2445
E-mail Address:	kmsharrow@gmail.com		
Tax exempt organization: <input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No		Tax exempt number:	39-6127437
List board members (if applicable): Katie Nichols, Patti Walker, Sue Walcott, David Bennett, JD Milbourne, Jon Meister, Tiffany Faust, Barbara Oelke			
Years the organization has been in operation: 65			
Purpose or Mission of the organization requesting funds: The Columbus Chamber of Commerce, INC is organized for the purpose of advising the commercial, educational, cultural, and civic interests of this community and area, marketing			
Liability Insurance Carrier: Quamme Insurance, West Bend Mutual			

Contact Information for Organizations Accountant/Bookkeeper

Contact Name:	Patti Walker	Phone Number:	920-623-2200
Address: 1515 Park Ave., Columbus, WI 53925			
Email: pwalker@prairieridge.health			

The Tourism Commission reserves the right to review the organization's most recent tax statement. Attach if available.

1. Explain your event and how it will attract visitors and generate overnight lodging in Columbus. How will attendance and overnight stays related to your event be measured?

The Wine Walk is a well known event that brings up to 275 participants to area businesses for wine tasting and shopping. It will take place November 30 in celebration of Small Business Saturday. Ticket sales measure attendance and participant surveys help track use of lodging by event goers.

2. Explain how this past event (if applicable) has impacted overnight lodging in Columbus.
We do not have data for this.

3. Explain what impact your event will have on all other Columbus businesses (in addition to lodging) including ways you plan to track this impact.

This is a BIG day for area retailers. We have anecdotal evidence from business owners that past Wine Walk events have resulted in major sales days entering the Christmas/holiday season. Restaurants and bars also report strong sales with so many people out and about for the day. We will provide a business survey post Wine Walk to gather sales data during the event.

4. Will the proposed event generate revenue? (☒) Yes (☐) No

If yes, will revenue exceed the amount of expenses, and if so, what is typically done with that revenue?

The Chamber runs a number of promotions for local businesses throughout the holiday season, helping to promote shopping local as well as the Holiday Train. This year, the Chamber is also organizing a family and downtown shopping focused "Cookie Walk" on December 14. Any funds generated will help us organize and promote this new annual event in tandem with Recreation Department activities at the Pavillion and the Holiday Parade.

5. Estimate how many people and what geographic area and demographic groups will be targeted by any promotions or advertising. How will you track the effectiveness of your promotion/advertising?

We will promote the event locally with posters and a downtown banner. More broadly, we will promote the event digitally on local, area and statewide tourism and event sites. We will run an ad for four weeks in Columbus, Beaver Dam and Portage area papers. Our guest survey will include: Where did you travel from? and How did you hear about the Wine Walk?. This will help us track the effectiveness of our advertising.

6. Will the proposed event include paid advertising? What media will be used? What "earned media" (unpaid promotion) will be generated by the event?

Please see above.

7. Please include any information or examples of marketing materials you believe will help the Tourism Commission better evaluate your request.

<https://www.columbuswichamber.com/November>

<https://www.facebook.com/columbuswichamber>

See attached for examples of print media.

Please note, the Tourism Commission may request additional information from an applicant for room tax funds. Please be sure to answer all questions on this form as completely as possible. All requests for room tax funds will be evaluated based on the contents of this application, a presentation before the Tourism Commission the State of Wisconsin Room Tax Statute and the City of Columbus Room Tax Ordinance.

Katie Nichols, President

Print Name

Katie S Nichols

Signature

10/2/2024

Application Date



Agenda Item Report

Meeting Type: Tourism Commission

Meeting Date: October 7, 2024

Item Title: 2025 Room Tax Funding Guidelines

Submitted By: David Bennett, Communications & Economic Development Coordinator

Detailed Description of Subject Matter:

At the September meeting, there was confusion as to what qualifies as general operating expenses during a room tax funding application initial presentation. Staff has included the guidelines that were approved at the August Tourism Commission meeting along with highlighting the changes and adding possible language to identify and clarify what general operating expenses are. Staff also added a few options for the application process to aid in transparency for applicants and establish consistency.

List all Supporting Documentation Attached:

2025 Room Tax Funding Guidelines and Processes

Action Requested of Tourism Commission:

Review, discuss, and give staff direction for developing guidelines to implement for room tax funding requests

ROOM TAX FUNDING GUIDELINES

All applications for room tax funds should be submitted at least 60 days prior to the date of the event for which funds are being requested. Applications for Room Tax Funding are to be given to the ~~Director of Planning and Development~~ **Community and Economic Development Director or their designee**, City Hall, 105 N. Dickason Blvd., Columbus, WI 53925.

- 1) The purpose of room tax proceeds is to foster tourism promotion and development within the City of Columbus. Priority will be given to events which will attract overnight visitors to the community.
- 2) Funds are granted to non-profit organizations or organizations that can provide proof of insurance or have the ability to obtain insurance, if required.
- 3) Room tax funds shall NOT be used to offset general operating expenses of any group or organization. **General operating expenses refer to insurance, licensing, staffing/personnel, any expense not directly associated with the event listed in the application, and rentals. The Tourism Commission may make exceptions on a case-by-case basis and has final say in what qualifies as general operating expenses.**
- 4) Applicants must leverage a minimum of \$2.00 of private funds for every \$1.00 of room tax funds requested.
- 5) Within 60 days of completion of the event for which room tax funds are **[granted or applied for]**, applicants shall provide the Tourism Commission a final report detailing room tax eligible expenditures, including receipts for the expenditures for which they are seeking reimbursement. The report should also provide examples of the project/program and its effectiveness in promoting the City of Columbus. Failure to provide this report will result in the group not being eligible for the receipt of room tax funds for that grant year ~~and for 18 months following the event~~ **in which they applied**.
- 6) Within 60 days of completion of the event for which room tax funds are granted, applicants shall provide the Tourism Commission multiple photos of the event, including the rights to the photos.
- 7) Applicants are encouraged to have a mechanism in place to track effectiveness of their event, including statistics related to attendance and overnight stays generated.
- 8) Applicants are required to be present when the Tourism Commission considers their request.
- 9) The Tourism Commission will review applications and will make their decision based on:
 - a. How well the event meets these guidelines;
 - b. How well the organization makes use of its own resources along with the proposed use of funds.

The Tourism Commission will operate without discrimination as to age, race, religion, gender, national origin, or sexual orientation in the consideration of funding requests and will recommend funding only to organizations which do not discriminate as to age, race, religion, gender, national origin, or sexual orientation.

~~Strike thru and red are what was removed in the previous version of the guidelines and will be in effect until the end of 2024 due to pending applications this year.~~

Highlighted and yellow are what will be in effect in 2025 due to changes made by the Tourism Commission on August 12, 2024.

Highlighted and blue are staff recommended additions.

The Guidelines may need to be tweaked further to align with the process of how the Tourism Commission would like to distribute room tax funding. Listed below are possible options for how the process can go.

ROOM TAX FUNDING PROCESS # 1 (Single Meeting - Reimbursement)

Applicants for room tax funding will follow this process:

- 1) All applications for room tax funds should be submitted at least 60 days prior to the date of the event for which funds are being requested. Applications for Room Tax Funding are to be given to the Community and Economic Development Director or their designee, City Hall, 105 N. Dickason Blvd., Columbus, WI 53925.
- 2) Staff will review the application to make sure it follows the guidelines established by the Tourism Commission.
 - a. Staff may decline the application if it does not meet the guidelines. Staff will notify the applicant of why it was declined and the applicant may resubmit the application if it meets the guidelines.
 - b. Staff may forward the application to the Tourism Commission for a discussion only review at its next meeting and for official documentation.
- 3) The Applicant will need to procure the necessary materials as requested in the guidelines for their final report. The applicant will need to coordinate with staff for their in-person final report at a Tourism Commission meeting within 60 days of completion of the event.

- 4) At a Tourism Commission meeting within 60 days of completion of the event for which room tax funds are applied for, applicants shall provide the Tourism Commission a final report detailing room tax eligible expenditures, including receipts for the expenditures for which they are seeking reimbursement. The report should also provide examples of the project/program and its effectiveness in promoting the City of Columbus. Failure to provide this report will result in the group not being eligible for the receipt of room tax funds for that grant year in which they applied. The applicant or their representative must be present in order to answer any questions the commission may have. Once the report is done, the Tourism Commission will deliberate and decide on whether or not to award the funding and how much to award up to the amount requested by the applicant.
 - a. If awarded, the applicant will provide photos of the event and agree to allow the Tourism Commission and designated City staff rights to the photos.

ROOM TAX FUNDING PROCESS # 2 (Two Meetings - Upfront)

Applicants for room tax funding will follow this process:

- 1) All applications for room tax funds should be submitted at least 60 days prior to the date of the event for which funds are being requested. Applications for Room Tax Funding are to be given to the Community and Economic Development Director or their designee, City Hall, 105 N. Dickason Blvd., Columbus, WI 53925.
- 2) Staff will review the application to make sure it follows the guidelines established by the Tourism Commission.
 - a. Staff may decline the application if it does not meet the guidelines. Staff will notify the applicant of why it was declined and the applicant may resubmit the application if it meets the guidelines.
 - b. Staff may forward the application to Tourism Commission for review and decision at its next meeting and for official documentation.
- 3) At a Tourism Commission prior to the date of the event for which funds are being requested, the applicant or designee will be required to attend in order to present their application. After reviewing the application, the Tourism Commission will deliberate and decide on whether or not to award funding and determine an amount up to what is requested by the applicant.
 - a. If approved, the applicant will deliver an invoice to the City in which staff will send the invoice to the Finance Department for processing and payment. Staff will include the granted funding in the next meeting's financial update.
- 4) The Applicant will need to procure the necessary materials as requested in the guidelines for their final report. The applicant will need to coordinate with staff for their in-person final report at a Tourism Commission meeting within 60 days of completion of the event.
 - a. The applicant will need to share copies of photos of the event and give the Tourism Commission and designated City staff rights to use them within 60 days of the completion of the event.

- 5) At a Tourism Commission meeting within 60 days of completion of the event for which room tax funds were granted, applicants shall provide the Tourism Commission a final report detailing room tax eligible expenditures, including receipts for the expenditures for which they are seeking reimbursement. The report should also provide examples of the project/program and its effectiveness in promoting the City of Columbus. Failure to provide this report will result in the group not being eligible for the receipt of room tax funds for that grant year in which they applied. The applicant or their representative must be present in order to answer any questions the commission may have.

ROOM TAX FUNDING PROCESS # 3 (Two Meetings - Current)

Applicants for room tax funding will follow this process:

- 1) All applications for room tax funds should be submitted at least 60 days prior to the date of the event for which funds are being requested. Applications for Room Tax Funding are to be given to the Community and Economic Development Director or their designee, City Hall, 105 N. Dickason Blvd., Columbus, WI 53925.
- 2) Staff will review the application to make sure it follows the guidelines established by the Tourism Commission.
 - a. Staff may decline the application if it does not meet the guidelines. Staff will notify the applicant of why it was declined and the applicant may resubmit the application if it meets the guidelines.
 - b. Staff may forward the application to Tourism Commission for review and decision at its next meeting and for official documentation.
- 3) At a Tourism Commission prior to the date of the event for which funds are being requested, the applicant or designee will be required to attend in order to present their application. After reviewing the application, the Tourism Commission will deliberate and decide on whether or not to move forward in the process to reimburse the applicant.
- 4) If approved to move forward, the Applicant will need to procure the necessary materials as requested in the guidelines for their final report. The applicant will need to coordinate with staff for their in-person final report at a Tourism Commission meeting within 60 days of completion of the event.
- 5) At a Tourism Commission meeting within 60 days of completion of the event for which room tax funds were granted, applicants shall provide the Tourism Commission a final report detailing room tax eligible expenditures, including receipts for the expenditures for which they are seeking reimbursement. The report should also provide examples of the project/program and its effectiveness in promoting the City of Columbus. Failure to provide this report will result in the group not being eligible for the receipt of room tax funds for that grant year in which they applied. The applicant or their representative must be present in order to answer any questions

the commission may have. After the report, the Tourism Commission will deliberate and either award (with possible modification) or deny the grant.

- a. If awarded, the applicant will need to give the Tourism Commission and designated City staff rights to use event photos.



Agenda Item Report

Meeting Type: Tourism Commission

Meeting Date: October 7, 2024

Item Title: September Financial Update

Submitted By: David Bennett, Communications & Economic Development Coordinator

Detailed Description of Subject Matter:

No new room tax revenues to report. \$20,724.48 has been spent for the 2024 budget so far. There is \$22,875.52 remaining. Expenditures in September included \$143.76 from the Marketing/Advertising line item for Google Ads for promoting the tourism website, but has not been processed and tacked onto our September budget statement yet.

List all Supporting Documentation Attached:

September Tourism Budget Statement

Action Requested of Tourism Commission:

No action requested

CITY OF COLUMBUS

REVENUES WITH COMPARISON TO BUDGET

FOR THE 9 MONTHS ENDING SEPTEMBER 30, 2024

TOURISM COMMISSION

		PERIOD ACTUAL	YTD ACTUAL	BUDGET AMOUNT	VARIANCE	% OF BUDGET
ROOM TAX FUNDING						
250-414135-000	CONTRIBUTION FROM ROOM TAX FND	.00	4,757.14	38,500.00	(33,742.86)	12.36
TOTAL ROOM TAX FUNDING		.00	4,757.14	38,500.00	(33,742.86)	12.36
MISCELLANEOUS REVENUES						
250-484820-000	TOURISM; INTERST INCOME	.00	180.74	100.00	80.74	180.74
TOTAL MISCELLANEOUS REVENUES		.00	180.74	100.00	80.74	180.74
OTHER FINANCING SOURCES						
250-494990-000	TOURISM; CARRY OVER PY FUNDS	.00	.00	5,000.00	(5,000.00)	.00
TOTAL OTHER FINANCING SOURCES		.00	.00	5,000.00	(5,000.00)	.00
TOTAL FUND REVENUE		.00	4,937.88	43,600.00	(38,662.12)	11.33

CITY OF COLUMBUS

EXPENDITURES WITH COMPARISON TO BUDGET

FOR THE 9 MONTHS ENDING SEPTEMBER 30, 2024

TOURISM COMMISSION

PERIOD		BUDGET		% OF
ACTUAL	YTD ACTUAL	AMOUNT	VARIANCE	BUDGET