

Agenda

Tourism Board Budget Public Hearing Meeting

5:30 PM June 1, 2026

Board Meeting Room, Town Hall Annex, 105 E. Corbin St.



1. **Call to order and confirmation of quorum**
2. **Agenda changes and approval**
3. **Minutes**
 - A. April 6, 2026
 - B. May 4, 2026
4. **Discussion/Action Items**
 - A. Burwell School Scope of Work Response Presentation
 - B. **Public Hearing** for the draft FY27 budget
 - Draft FY27 Budget updates
 - Contract Partner Responses/Budgets for FY27; updates from HAC and Alliance
5. **Staff and Board member updates/comments**
 - A. FY26 F&B tax report to date
6. **Adjournment**

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101 E. Orange St., PO Box 429, Hillsborough, NC 27278
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Minutes

TOURISM BOARD

Regular meeting

5:30 p.m. April 6, 2026

Board Meeting Room of Town Hall Annex, 105 E. Corbin St.



Present: Chair Victoria Pace, Vice-Chair Megan Kimball, Rainbow Cabbage, Barney Caton, Meaghun Darab, Scott Czechlewski, Spencer Welborn, and Eryk Pruitt

Absent: Smita Patel

Staff: Planning and Economic Development Manager Shannan Campbell
Planning Technician Dakotah Kimbrough

1. Call to order

Planning and Economic Development Manager Shannan Campbell confirmed the presence of a quorum. Chair Victoria Pace called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

2. Agenda changes and approval

A request was made to add a presentation by Meaghun Darab representing PORCH Hillsborough to the agenda as Item 5a. Additionally, it was requested by Member Rainbow Cabbage that a brief discussion on the America 250 event proposal from the previous meeting be added. That item was proposed to be added as Item 5d under Regular Discussion/Action Items.

Motion: Member Eryk Pruitt moved to approve the agenda as amended. Member Spencer Welborn seconded.

Vote: 8-0.

3. Minutes review and approval

Minutes from regular meeting on March 2, 2026

Member Cabbage noted that details of the America 250 proposal appeared to have evolved since the March meeting — specifically, that the food component had shifted away from indigenous foods toward watermelon, and that the event landscape in Orange County had changed with Chapel Hill announcing a drone show. It was clarified that the minutes must reflect the conversation as it occurred at the time of the meeting, not subsequent developments. The board agreed that the America 250 discussion would be taken up under Item 5d.

Motion: Member Pruitt moved to approve the March 2, 2026, minutes as submitted. Member Barney Caton seconded.

Vote: 8-0.

4. Presentations

Contract Scope of Work Response Presentations:

101 E. Orange St., PO Box 429, Hillsborough, NC 27278
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A. Alliance- Visitors Center (\$271,922)

Dani McIvor, Executive Director of the Alliance for Historic Hillsborough, presented the organization's funding request. She noted the overall budget has not changed significantly, with two targeted increases being sought. The first is a 3% cost-of-living adjustment for staff, consistent with the federal figure, which combined with a 5% retirement contribution for Site Manager Ben — who has reached three years of full-time service per the Alliance policy — totals \$3,364.28. The second increase of \$1,352 addresses rising professional service fees, including accounting, Zoom, and payroll software subscriptions. McIvor emphasized that all requested increases were categorized as the highest priority in the budget justification. Overhead costs such as cleaning and pest control have remained stable. Continuation of the event shuttle pilot program was noted as included in the budget at the same price as last year.

B. Hillsborough Arts Council (\$75,000)

Heather Tatreau, Executive Director of the Hillsborough Arts Council, presented the organization's funding request. She opened with an overview of the Arts Council's reliance on tourism funding relative to its own earned revenue and fundraising, emphasizing the importance of tourism board support in making free public events possible. The request for regular programming remains unchanged from last year.

The new addition to this year's ask is \$5,000 toward the Handmade Parade, scheduled for April 2027. The Parade occurs every two years but has had a three-year gap due to staffing transitions. Tatreau explained that the \$5,000 previously received in prior years for off-year preparation was not requested last year and has since been used for workshops and staffing support. The 2027 parade will require additional contracted performers and puppeteers to compensate for the loss of the organization's own giant puppets, which were destroyed flooding from TS Chantal. The Arts Council currently retains only two puppets and plans to contract with 123 Puppetry and Paperhand Puppet Intervention to fill out the parade. Musical acts and drummers are also being pursued. Tatreau noted that April was selected as the parade date to avoid the summer travel season and the busy fall event calendar. The Arts Council has been building awareness through puppetry workshops in partnership with Scrap Exchange in Durham, with the intent of drawing Durham County residents to Hillsborough for the event.

C. OC Museum (\$59,500)

Catie Atkinson, Site Manager of the Orange County Historical Museum, presented the organization's request, which is unchanged from the prior year at \$59,500. Atkinson noted that while the museum's budget will increase slightly due to cost-of-living adjustments, holding the ask flat is intended to create greater incentive for the board to pursue fundraising. Plans for next year include a larger annual fundraising event, a more robust April–June annual campaign, an expanded November–December holiday giving campaign, and increased sponsor solicitation for special exhibits and general museum support through tiered sponsorship levels.

Atkinson also announced the opening of a new exhibit on Thursday, April 9, titled United We Stand, Divided We Fall: Unity and Division in Orange County History, featuring 36 spotlighted individuals and spanning six thematic lenses of Orange County history. Board members were invited to an opening reception.

D. Hillsborough Chamber of Commerce- Parade & Tree Lighting (\$14,600)

Scott Czechlewski presented on behalf of the Hillsborough Chamber of Commerce. He reported that no increase is being requested. While some event costs have risen slightly — particularly rentals and service fees associated with the parade — a modest \$10 increase in the registration fee implemented last year has offset most of those increases. Expenses shared with the Visitors Center for the Jingle and Joy Weekend event, including character appearances and rental floats, also remain consistent. A light hearted exchange ensued

regarding candle supply at the tree lighting event; Czechlewski acknowledged that attendance exceeded expectations last year and committed to increasing the candle order for the coming year.

E. Burwell School (?)

Matt Hughes, presenting on behalf of the Burwell School Historic Site, noted that the formal scope of work had not yet been submitted to the Tourism Board yet due to an ongoing staffing transition. He reported that the organization has recently completed interviews for a new Site Director and that the preferred candidate — who is local to Hillsborough — has accepted the offer, with a start date of May 4 and a transition to full hours in early June.

Hughes stated that the formal ask will be \$85,000, representing an increase over the amount funded last year. Reasons cited for the increase include cost-of-living adjustments for staff, rising utility and liability insurance costs, and two significant financial setbacks during the current fiscal year: the failure of both HVAC units in succession, and the inability to hold the organization's annual gala due to the staffing transition. To compensate for lost gala revenue, the organization is conducting two rounds of annual fund solicitations this year rather than one, and plans to convert its fall festival into a more substantial revenue-generating event. Hughes noted that security and safety improvements to address known trip hazards will also be included in the ask.

5. Regular Discussion/Action Items

A. PORCH Hillsborough – Spring Fundraiser Funding Request (Added Item)

Meaghun Darab recused herself from deliberation and voting, disclosing that she serves as Executive Director of PORCH Hillsborough and a Town Commissioner. She then presented the request on behalf of the organization in the absence of Program Manager Nora Decker, who couldn't make the meeting.

PORCH Hillsborough is a food insecurity organization serving Northern Orange County. In 2025, it distributed over \$633,000 worth of food with the support of 6,745 volunteer hours across eight distribution sites. The spring fundraiser, scheduled for Saturday, May 2, 2026, at 2:00 PM, will take the form of a scavenger hunt through downtown Hillsborough. Participants — capped at 100 ticketed attendees at \$40 per ticket — will start at the Visitors Center, collect items representing a typical distribution at eight historic locations around town, and conclude at the Rookery. Clues were developed in collaboration with the Orange County Historical Museum and the Visitors Center. Cedar Ridge High School PORCH club members will assist participants. Local businesses may be invited to offer themed promotions tied to the event.

The total event budget is approximately \$1,000, and PORCH is requesting \$500 from the Tourism Board on a matching basis. Planning and Economic Development Manager Shannan Campbell explained that because of the low dollar amount and the timing — the request came in after the regular grant cycle and the event precedes the start of the new fiscal year when grants become available — staff recommended handling this as a special project partnership request rather than routing it through the formal grant process. It was noted that if approved, any marketing support from the Visitors Center would be through general event calendar promotion rather than dedicated advertising.

The board discussed the tourism value of the event, noting the relatively low ask, the potential for ancillary spending by participants and their guests, and the novelty of the scavenger hunt format. No concerns were raised regarding the dollar amount.

Motion: Member Pruitt moved to fund the \$500 PORCH Hillsborough spring fundraiser request, approving a fund balance budget adjustment for Special Projects/Partnerships, if needed. Member Caton seconded.

Vote: 7-0. Member Darab abstained from the vote.

B. Vice Chair Appointment

Campbell noted that the Vice Chair appointment had been tabled at the March meeting because current Vice Chair Megan Kimball was absent at that time. Kimball indicated she would be rolling off the board in the near future upon completion of her term as Alliance Board Chair, with her seat to be filled by Blake Tedder, whose first meeting is anticipated to be late Summer. She expressed willingness to continue as Vice Chair until her departure but encouraged the board to consider another appointment.

Member Pruitt was nominated and accepted the nomination for Vice Chair.

Motion: Member Caton moved to appoint Member Pruitt as Vice Chair. Vice Chair Kimball seconded.

Vote: 8-0.

Pruitt noted that he would not be present for the May meeting and conferred with Chair Pace that she would be able to attend.

C. Continue to discuss FY 2027 draft budget

Campbell presented the current draft of the FY 2027 budget for continued board review and discussion, noting that contract partner figures from the evening's scope of work presentations had not yet been incorporated and would be updated for the May meeting. She flagged several highlighted line items as optional— including a proposed Riverwalk entrance shelter — that may depend on co-funding from the Town Board and could be removed if not pursued jointly.

Campbell identified a website update as a higher-priority item. She estimated a cost of \$28,000–\$30,000, to be shared with the TDA, though quotes are still pending. She noted the update would address ADA accessibility improvements and flagged that upcoming federal accessibility requirements, while primarily directed at local governments, may apply to public authorities to some extent. She emphasized the importance of providing tourism information to those who are differently abled.

Discussion turned to the overall budget picture. FY 2026 collections were currently trending below the prior year, but could pick up. This flat revenue trend against increasing contract partner asks prompted concern from board members about the overall financial picture and the sustainability of funding at current and increased levels each year to contract partners.

Chair Victoria Pace expressed reservations about potentially drawing down the fund balance by approximately \$92,000 in a single year, particularly given the revenue trend and the potential need to draw from reserves again in FY 2028. She indicated that discretionary special projects and partnership line items, totaling approximately \$40,000–\$65,000, should be considered first for reduction before asking contract partners to cut their requests.

Member Kimball agreed and noted that she planned to meet with the Alliance to identify potential voluntary reductions, and encouraged other contract partners to do the same rather than waiting for the board to impose across-the-board cuts. Heather Tatreau (Arts Council) spoke and cautioned that cuts to contract partner funding translate directly into reduced staffing and programming, which in turn reduces the tourism activity that generates the meals and beverage tax revenue the board depends upon.

Member Caton raised the philosophical question of what an appropriate fund balance threshold should be, suggesting the board consider adopting a formal floor or standard rather than reacting intuitively. Matt

Hughes noted that there are precedents of the state legislature reclaiming fund balances from tourism authorities it perceived as holding excess reserves, a factor worth considering when calibrating how much to retain.

Vice Chair Pruitt raised a previously discussed idea of placing the fund balance in a high-yield savings account to generate interest income so that some of it could be spent for contract partners but some of it could also be growing in case of a natural disaster or severe economic downturn, etc. Campbell confirmed that the finance director had identified a legally permissible option in North Carolina, of which there are not many, and committed to providing more information at the next meeting. Vice Chair Pruitt estimated that at approximately 4% interest, the fund balance could have generated roughly \$23,000 in a single year — a meaningful contribution toward offsetting any projected deficits and funding contract partners.

Campbell noted that the board would have a more complete and specific budget to review at the May meeting, with adoption targeted for the June 1st public hearing. She said the budget would be developing and would be updated a little after each meeting and even potentially at the budget public hearing depending on the will of the board.

D. America 250 Event Discussion (Added Item)

The board revisited the America 250 event, which received a prior funding commitment from the Tourism Board. Member Rainbow Cabbage raised the question of whether the event's programming had changed since the original proposal, noting that the budget had included a large amount of funding for hospitality and food described at the time as involving indigenous foods, which appeared to have shifted to just watermelon and bottled water distribution.

Campbell clarified that shifts within budget line items are common as events develop and would not ordinarily be prohibited, but that a wholesale change in event character, theme, or purpose would not be permitted. She noted the event is actively evolving, describing the current concept as a vendor market on the Courthouse Lawn from approximately 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM, followed by a walking parade from the Courthouse Lawn down King Street and into River Park, culminating in live music and entertainment in the evening. There are hopes for a laser light show or some kind of light performance at the end. She indicated that there may be some kind of food/water to be given away as well as food for sale. She explained that the event is still being developed and getting funding was a sort of 'first step'.

Campbell confirmed that a flyer and press release are in development and will be distributed to the board and TDA as the event details are finalized. She expressed confidence that the event would be well-executed through the partnership with the Town and Orange County.

Chair Pace noted that while some board members hold reservations — both regarding the general value of the investment relative to other contract partners, and questions about the food and hospitality budget — it was not seen as beneficial to revisit the funding commitment at this stage, as most funding had already been secured from other sources by the time the Tourism Board was approached. She indicated that it would not be appropriate to pull funding after making the commitment, as plans were now coming together.

6. Monthly reports and comments

A. Tourism Staff/Visitors Center/OC Visitors Bureau Updates

Campbell reported that the Revolutionary War interpretive sign project, which had been submitted to the America 250 commission in December, received final approval the prior week. The sign is expected to be installed before the end of the current fiscal year. Campbell noted that the America 250 commission is covering the cost of one sign entirely under a cost-match arrangement, and that the project came in under

budget, with remaining funds to roll back into the fund balance. She thanked Dani at the Visitors Center for moving the project along.

B. Tourism Board Member Comments & Updates

Informal discussion took place regarding local food and beverage tax trends, the composition of tax revenue by establishment type, the challenge of tracking and collecting meals tax from food trucks, and the possibility of new restaurant openings in vacant spaces such as the former Pizza Hut location. Campbell noted that sit-down restaurants contribute comparably to fast food establishments in tax revenue, and that a slight slowdown in new restaurant openings and vacant spaces may be a contributing factor to the relatively flat revenues.

7. Adjournment

Chair Pace adjourned the meeting at 6:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Dakotah Kimbrough
Planning Technician
Staff support to the Hillsborough Tourism Board

Approved: Month X, 202X

DRAFT

Minutes

TOURISM BOARD

Regular meeting

5:30 p.m. May 4, 2026

Board Meeting Room of Town Hall Annex, 105 E. Corbin St.



Present: Chair Victoria Pace, Megan Kimball, Rainbow Cabbage, Barney Caton, Meaghun Darab, Scott Czechlewski, Smita Patel, and Spencer Welborn

Absent: Vice Chair Eryk Pruitt

Staff: Planning and Economic Development Manager Shannan Campbell
Planning Technician Dakotah Kimbrough

1. Call to order and confirmation of quorum

Planning and Economic Development Manager Shannan Campbell confirmed the presence of a quorum. Chair Victoria Pace called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

2. Agenda changes and approval

A minor agenda adjustment was made to incorporate an additional item under 6B (Tourism Board Member Comments & Updates). The agenda was approved as amended.

Motion: Member Meaghun Darab moved to approve the agenda as amended. Member Smita Patel seconded.

Vote: 8-0.

3. Minutes

No minutes were presented for review.

4. Presentations

A. Dave McCole- Hillsborough Finance Director, on investing fund balance
Finance Director Dave McCole presented an overview of the legal framework governing how North Carolina governmental entities may invest public funds. He explained that following widespread municipal financial failures during the Great Depression, the state established the Local Government Commission (LGC), which administers N.C. General Statute 159-31. This statute both protects governmental deposits through mandatory bank collateralization and restricts the eligible investment vehicles to four categories: certificates of deposit (CDs), government securities, commercial paper (subject to strict quality requirements), and the North Carolina Capital Management Trust Fund.

McCole confirmed that a portion of the Tourism Board's fund balance is currently held in the North Carolina Capital Management Trust Fund, managed by Fidelity, which invests in a diversified mix of government securities. As of the most recent reporting period, the fund was yielding approximately 3.62–4.32 percent. He noted that CD rates at Truist and PNC were running slightly lower, at approximately 3.5 percent, making the Capital Management Trust the more competitive option at this time. He cautioned that rates can fluctuate

significantly, particularly in the event of an economic crisis, as was witnessed during the 2008 financial crisis and the COVID-19 pandemic.

Board members asked whether the interest earned on the fund balance was being credited back to the Tourism Board. McCole confirmed that interest revenue flows back into the Tourism Board's separate fund from the Town's and, when revenues exceed expenditures, contributes to fund balance growth.

Discussion also touched on whether a portion of fund balance could be formally "committed" by majority board vote to a specific long-term purpose—such as sustaining the grants program—without being legally reserved. McCole said this approach could work as it provides flexibility while demonstrating fiscal discipline and advised keeping funds consolidated in one account to maximize interest earnings.

5. Regular Discussion/Action items

A. Tourism Board Audit Engagement Letter and Audit Contract (FY26)

Campbell presented the audit engagement letter and contract for FY26. She noted that the annual audit is conducted by Preston Douglas & Associates, and that the resulting audit report is made publicly available on the town's website under the Tourism Board section. She explained that auditors review expenditures against the approved budget and any adjustments in the board minutes, and may interview board members as part of the process, this fall.

Motion: Member Megan Kimball moved to approve the audit contract and engagement letter. Member Patel seconded.

Vote: 8-0.

B. Tourism Grant Requests and Scoring Totals

The board reviewed all submitted grant applications against a budgeted grant allocation of \$20,000. Applications were discussed individually.

Hillsborough Garden Club – \$3,000 (Approved)

The Hillsborough Garden Club requested \$3,000 to support its garden tour event received the highest scores. The board discussed the event's long history in the community, its ticketed format, and its role in drawing visitors from outside Orange County—with an estimated 400 out-of-town attendees. Members noted the organization reinvests proceeds into community grants. Some initial questions were raised regarding sustainability and budget line items such as gifts for garden owners and volunteer T-shirts, but the board ultimately concluded that the event represented strong value and satisfied tourism objectives. It was noted this was the applicant's second and final eligible grant application within the permitted cycle, per the grant guidelines.

Motion: Member Kimball moved to approve the Hillsborough Garden Club grant request in the amount of \$3,000 . Member Patel seconded.

Vote: 8-0.

Orange County Arts Commission (UPROAR) – \$10,000 (Approved)

The board moved to fund the Orange County Arts Commission's UPROAR public art event at the maximum grant amount of \$10,000. The event, which is held biennially and spans the month of August, places public artwork at multiple locations throughout Hillsborough, draws visitors from outside the region, and drives pedestrian traffic to local businesses. Members noted that the event checks tourism objectives—including

dispersing visitors across multiple sites, generating out-of-town visitors, and creating memorable experiences. The board acknowledged that this would be the second time the Tourism Board funded UPROAR through grants, and that the organization could subsequently request contract partner status for future years. Campbell clarified that the \$10,000 was being requested in parallel with potential asks to the TDA and the Hillsborough Town Board, with the intent of collectively reaching the \$20,000 threshold needed to fund Hillsborough's full allotment of artwork.

Motion: Member Meaghun Darab moved to approve the Orange County Arts Commission (UPROAR) grant request in the amount of \$10,000. Member Scott Czechlewski seconded.

Vote: 8-0.

Orange Community Players production of "Anything Goes" – \$7,996 (Approved)

The Orange Community Players requested \$7,996 to support their summer theatrical production, which is staged at a local school venue and draws families to Hillsborough over multiple performances. The board discussed whether to fund the full ask or remain within the \$20,000 grant budget by awarding only the remaining \$7,000. Member Darab argued that the additional \$1,000 was worthwhile given the event's consistent track record of bringing families to town, supporting local dining and retail, and contributing to community arts vibrancy. The board agreed to approve the full ask, bringing the total grant expenditure slightly over the budgeted \$20,000.

Motion: Member Caton moved to approve the Orange Community Players grant request in the full amount of \$7,996.00. Member Rainbow Cabbage seconded.

Vote: 8-0.

Chickenfoot Art Collective production of 'Babushka and the boiling frogs' (Puppet Arts) – Not Funded

The board discussed the grant application from an arts organization affiliated with Paper Hand Puppet Intervention, which requested \$10,000 for a ticketed puppet performance. Several concerns were raised: the cost-per-visitor ratio was estimated at approximately \$50 per person; the application did not clarify what matching funds, if any, the organization itself was contributing; the event appeared to be a one-time ticketed performance rather than a recurring community-accessible event; and the application did not sufficiently address sustainability or long-term community benefit. The board agreed not to fund the application this cycle but directed Campbell to provide constructive written feedback encouraging a stronger reapplication in a future year, including clearer budget matching, a more robust sustainability plan, and broader free community engagement and/or repeat performances using the funded puppets.

No formal motion was required to decline; the decision was captured in the minutes and feedback to be communicated by staff.

Humanity International 'Flow Fest' Event – Not Funded

The board reviewed an application for a new event, Flow Fest, a proposed yoga festival. Members raised significant concerns about the application's credibility and completeness, including the applicant's out-of-county address (Holly Springs), apparent confusion with a separately registered national "Flow Fest" brand and an event with the same name in Charlotte, an unclear event location and timeline, a funding request exceeding the board's maximum grant amount, and an operating budget that appeared to equal the grant request. Campbell confirmed the organization does hold 501(c)(3) status with the IRS, as she checks those kinds of things with organizations she's not familiar with. Board members commented that the application

appeared to have been generated with AI assistance and contained repetitive language. The board unanimously agreed not to fund the application, but noted that a yoga themed festival in town could be really great if done well.

C. **Contract Scope of Work Response Updates**

Manager Campbell reported that all contract scope of work responses had now been received. She noted the following updates:

The **Alliance (Visitors Center)** may make minor line-item adjustments due to a higher-than-anticipated health insurance quote but was working to identify offsetting savings.

The **Hillsborough Arts Council** may submit a reduced ask, as the TDA awarded them an additional \$10,000 at its most recent meeting to fund Solstice Lantern Walk, since the walk is on a Saturday night and may produce lodging stays overnight. Their contract proposal of \$75,000 may be adjusted downward accordingly.

Burwell School submitted its \$85,000 proposal, representing a \$20,000 increase over the FY26 contract amount of \$65,000 (the school's paperwork indicated they believed the prior year amount was \$70,000, a discrepancy staff noted). The board engaged in substantive discussion about Burwell's request. Members recalled that a significant funding increase had been granted a few years ago specifically as a one-time bootstrap measure to help the organization hire staff and develop fundraising capacity. At that time, the board made clear expectations that funding would step down over time, not increase again. Questions were raised about specific budget line items including the number of hours billed for a shared finance director and if the payroll line was for software or preparation.

The board formally voted to direct Campbell to communicate a recommendation that Burwell School attempt to reduce their ask closer to the FY26 amount of \$65,000, with written feedback noting the board's expectations regarding some fundraising, and inviting the organization to engage more directly at the public hearing. Campbell indicated that she would put together an email summarizing the board's feedback and send it to Burwell School representatives.

Motion: Member Smita Patel moved to provide formal feedback to Burwell School as outlined in the discussion and ask them to attend the next meeting to discuss more. Member Kimball seconded.

Vote: 8-0. Nays: 0.

Separately, Commissioner Darab informed the board that the Hillsborough Arts Council had approached the Hillsborough Town Board of Commissioners requesting \$17,800 to cover Last Fridays, the Solstice Walk, the town poet laureate program, and the Handmade Parade—several of which are also covered under the Tourism Board's existing contract. Campbell noted that if the Town Board does not fund that request, the Arts Council may return to the Tourism Board or TDA for supplemental support. She indicated that all boards are currently working on their evolving budgets.

D. **Continue to Discuss FY 2027 Draft Budget**

The board discussed the FY 2027 draft budget considering the grant decisions made earlier in the meeting and broader fiscal considerations.

Members discussed the Visit Hillsborough website update, budgeted at \$14,000 from the Tourism Board (with a matching \$14,000 from the TDA, for a total of \$28,000). Campbell explained the funds are intended for back-end repairs, a visual refresh, and ADA accessibility compliance updates required under new Department

of Justice guidelines. She noted that the site's current WordPress theme is no longer supported, causing periodic technical failures, and that the ADA requirements—which include removing text overlaid on images and improving navigability for users with disabilities—may require significant rework. The board expressed some concern about the cost but agreed to retain the line item, noting that if the work could be completed for less, remaining funds could be redirected. Kimball indicated that she had recently worked with a website design company locally that was significantly lower cost than what was being proposed.

Discussion also addressed the Alliance's retirement benefit cost for the Visitors Center staff member, which became effective after the employee reached three years of service. One board member expressed concern that this obligation had not been flagged in advance. Alliance representative Megan Kimball explained that this is a longstanding Alliance HR policy applied uniformly to all employees as an incentive for retention, and that because the staff member works 100 percent on Tourism Board-funded activities, the cost flows through the tourism contract. Campbell noted this mirrors the precedent set for previous Alliance employees in the same role, and indicated that since the Tourism Board and Alliance have had a relationship since the early 1990's this decision may have been brought and approved by a prior board.

The board noted that if revenues continue to trend consistently with the first half of the fiscal year, the amount required from the fund balance would be less than projected, providing additional fiscal flexibility.

6. Monthly reports and comments

A. Tourism Staff/Visitors Center/OC Visitors Bureau Updates

Campbell reported that the Orange County Visitors Bureau is in the process of developing a new strategic plan, following a consultant engagement that included positive feedback about Hillsborough's tourism program. The bureau is focusing on new strategies around partnership with UNC, among other priorities. She also noted that the Visitors Bureau had invested significantly in bringing the Savannah Bananas to the area, with mixed results—some hotel revenue was lost to lower-priced Durham-area accommodations. She shared that the Tourism Board declined to actively compete for Savannah Bananas visitors, preferring a collaborative rather than competitive regional approach.

Food and beverage tax revenue data through December was distributed to board members. While only six months of data was available, revenues were described as tracking better, with August showing a particularly strong performance – a result members attributed in part to the UPROAR public art event.

B. Tourism Board Member Comments & Updates

Member Spencer Wellborn commented on the recent “Zwanze Day” event held at The Wooden Nickel on King Street, describing it as a significant success in drawing out-of-town visitors. He noted that an informal survey of attendees indicated that approximately 20 percent were Hillsborough residents, with the remaining 80 percent coming from other locations, including visitors from Charlottesville, Florida, and Connecticut. He observed that the event required minimal town resources (simply closing a parking lot entrance area) and generated substantial organic tourism activity.

7. Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:33 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Dakotah Kimbrough
Planning Technician

Staff support to the Hillsborough Tourism Board

Approved: Month X, 202X

DRAFT



FY 2027 Contract Scope of Work Response- Burwell School Historic Site - Visitor Services And Operations

Organization Information

Organization Name: Historic Hillsborough Commission – Burwell School Historic Site

Contact Person and Title: Katherine A. Kirschner, Finance Director

Contact Person Email: director@burwellschool.org

Contact Person Phone: 919-732-7451

Organization Street Address: 319 N. Churton Street

City: Hillsborough

State: NC

ZIP Code: 27278

Organization's Annual Operating Budget: \$171,937.00

General Contract Information

Contract Name: Burwell School Historic Site-Visitor Services & Operations

Month(s) or Date(s) in which Proposal Project/Services will take place: **JULY 1st, 2026- JUNE 30th, 2027**

Outline/Overview of Scope of Work

The Historic Hillsborough Commission is a non-profit board, appointed by -but NOT FUNDED BY – the Governor of North Carolina. The HHC is fully committed to carrying out the tenets of the Scope of Work outlined in the 2026-2027 Tourism Board Contract. This action involves the continued coordinated efforts of HHC members, community volunteers and partners, as well as paid staff dedicated to preserving this historic site.

Please explain generally how the organization is going to perform the duties requested in the FY2027 Contract Scope of Work Update during Q1(July-Sept):

- Visitor Services: Continue as detailed in the Outline/Overview of Job Tasks and Schedules.
- Staffing: Continue as detailed in the Outline/Overview of Job Tasks and Schedules.
- Volunteers: Continue as detailed in the Outline/Overview of Job Tasks and Schedules.
- Marketing: Continue as detailed in the Outline/Overview of Job Tasks and Schedules.
- Budgeting: Continue as detailed in the Outline/Overview of Job Tasks and Schedules.
- Events/Exhibits:
 1. **JULY/AUGUST TBD: Camp Burwell** – The Burwell School Historic Site (BSHS) will offer afternoon programming for school-aged children. Activities to possibly include historic children's games, crafts, community partnerships, "lessons" in the historic schoolhouse, scavenger hunts, detective work with historic documents, etc.
 2. **JULY 31, AUGUST 28, SEPTEMBER 25: Last Friday Extended Hours** - BSHS will continue to offer extended tours and guided tours in partnership with the Hillsborough Arts Count's Last Friday events. These will be free and open to all.
 3. **AUGUST TBD: Star Party** – Weather-permitting, BSHS will hold its popular Star Party event on the site's front lawn. We hope to continue our partnership with local groups such as CHAOS and Whit's

Frozen Custard to offer astronomical education and sweet treats to our guests. This event will be free and open to all.

Please explain generally how the organization is going to perform the duties requested in the FY2027 Contract Scope of Work Update during Q2 (Oct-Dec):

- Visitor Services: Continue as detailed in the Outline/Overview of Job Tasks and Schedules.
- Staffing: Continue as detailed in the Outline/Overview of Job Tasks and Schedules.
- Volunteers: Continue as detailed in the Outline/Overview of Job Tasks and Schedules.
- Marketing: Continue as detailed in the Outline/Overview of Job Tasks and Schedules.
- Budgeting: Continue as detailed in the Outline/Overview of Job Tasks and Schedules.
- Events/Exhibits:
 1. **OCTOBER: ANNUAL FUND CAMPAIGN** – This fundraising campaign commences during this month. Led by the Finance Committee, the campaign will include mailings to commissioners, donors, visitors, and other friends of BSHS. We also advertise the annual fund campaign on our website, social media platforms, and email marketing platforms.
 2. **OCTOBER TBD: FALL FESTIVAL** – With the success of past Fall Festivals as community events, we look forward to building on its capacity as an integral fundraiser. We will continue to partner with local vendors to offer a community market on the front lawn. Additionally, we plan to offer baked goods, fall activities, and more. This event will be ticketed, but free to the public.
 3. **OCTOBER TBD: HALLOWEEN EVENT** – Special “Haunted” Tours of Burwell will be offered. Treats, as well as crafts, will be available for kids as well. This event will be free to the public.
 4. **NOVEMBER 28: SMALL BUSINESS SATURDAY** – BSHS Gift Shop will again partner with our local agencies and merchants to promote small business and tourism in Hillsborough, as well as increase gift shop revenue for our site.
 5. **DECEMBER 1: #GIVING TUESDAY** – This online fundraising campaign will again be promoted via our website, social media, and email marketing platforms.
 6. **DECEMBER TBD: HILLSBOROUGH HOLIDAY PARADE** – Our expansive lawn will be open to the public for prime parade viewing. We plan to host our annual cookie and cocoa stand as a fundraiser and means to engage with the community.
 7. **DECEMBER TBD: HOLIDAY OPEN HOUSE** – BSHS plans to bring back our popular Holiday Open House event in 2026, hopefully in coordination with the Chamber’s Candlelight Tour. Possible offerings will include live music, candlelit tours, holiday sweets, and non-alcoholic beverages. This event will be free to the public.

Please explain generally how the organization is going to perform the duties requested in the FY2027 Contract Scope of Work Update during Q3 (Jan-March):

- Visitor Services: Continue as detailed in the Outline/Overview of Job Tasks and Schedules.
- Staffing: Continue as detailed in the Outline/Overview of Job Tasks and Schedules.
- Volunteers: Continue as detailed in the Outline/Overview of Job Tasks and Schedules.
- Marketing: Continue as detailed in the Outline/Overview of Job Tasks and Schedules.
- Budgeting: Continue as detailed in the Outline/Overview of Job Tasks and Schedules.

- Events/Exhibits:
 1. **FEBRUARY TBD - BLACK HISTORY MONTH PROGRAMMING** – In honor of both Black History and Elizabeth Keckley, BSHS will present a minimum of one educational program in conjunction with Mt. Bright Baptist Church. Details will be forthcoming. This event will be free and open to the public.
 2. **MARCH TBD: ANNUAL AUCTION GALA** - Our largest fundraiser of the year features delicious food and beverages, live and silent auctions, raffles, music, and festive themes. This event will be ticketed, with ticket price to include the cost of the meal and beverages. We plan to continue partnering with local businesses, like Eno River Brewing, as our vendors, sponsors, and donors with this event.

Please explain generally how the organization is going to perform the duties requested in the FY2027 Contract Scope of Work Update during Q4 (April-June):

- Visitor Services: Continue as detailed in the Outline/Overview of Job Tasks and Schedules.
- Staffing: Continue as detailed in the Outline/Overview of Job Tasks and Schedules.
- Volunteers: Continue as detailed in the Outline/Overview of Job Tasks and Schedules.
- Marketing: Continue as detailed in the Outline/Overview of Job Tasks and Schedules.
- Budgeting: Continue as detailed in the Outline/Overview of Job Tasks and Schedules.
- Events/Exhibits:
 1. **APRIL TBD: REVOLUTIONARY WAR LIVING HISTORY DAY** – BSHS looks forward to again participating in the annual town-wide “Rev War Day,” hosting interpreters and offering special tours free of charge to all visitors.
 2. **APRIL, MAY, JUNE TBD – COMMUNITY CONVERSATION SERIES** – We plan to offer a monthly series (with a minimum of two programs) featuring scholars and community leaders as they invite guests to reflect on their own relationships with history. The series will launch in April and continue throughout the quarter. This event will be free to the public.

Outline/Overview of Job Tasks and Schedules

Please explain generally how the organization plans to accomplish all goals associated with the scope of work, including but not limited to, marketing, hiring, volunteer recruitment, exhibit development, event tasks, etc.

1. Visitor Services
 - a. Admission to the Burwell School Historic Site (BSHS) will continue to be free for walk-in visitors, as well as to school tour participants. Donations are always encouraged.
 - b. The site is staffed by our Visitor Services Coordinator and/or Site Coordinator during the week, with paid docent staffing during the weekends. Volunteer greeters are used as needed.
 - c. Staff and volunteers will continue to refer all visitors to our local partner agencies (The Alliance for Historic Hillsborough, Orange County Historical Museum, Hillsborough Arts Council) as well as local businesses. Relevant visitor services materials (i.e. brochures, maps, event listings, etc.) will be displayed on-site as a resource for visitors and distributed through monthly email marketing.

- d. Group tours, Girl Scout Merit Badge groups, and tours scheduled outside of normal business hours will incur a small fee based on the specifics of each group. These tours are directed by the Visitor Services coordinator, with assistance from the Site Coordinator, paid docents, and trained community volunteers. As of FY2023, the Burwell School no longer charges for school trips, to keep with our mission of accessible education.
- e. Normal Hours of Operation will continue to be Wednesday-Saturday from 11:00am to 4:00pm and Sunday from 1:00pm to 4:00pm. The BSHS will be closed during federal holidays, as well as a longer closure from mid-December through the New Year in observance of several holidays. Due to the reduction in our contract amount in FY26, BSHS followed the HTB's recommendation and closed for an extended winter break as a cost savings measure. We plan to resume operating with normal business hours during this same time period in winter of FY27, anticipating additional cost to do so to be an estimated \$5,000.00.
- f. All weekday tours will remain self-guided unless by advance appointment. Guided docent tours remain available for free upon request every Saturday and Sunday during normal operating hours.
- g. The BSHS will extend hours of operation in conjunction with the HAC's summertime Last Friday events and the AHH's Rev War Day, as outlined above. We will review opportunities to extend hours in conjunction with town-wide events as they arise.

2. Staffing

- a. Site Coordinator (FULL-TIME for FY26) – The Site Coordinator handles daily site operations, including but not limited to marketing, scheduling of staff, administrative tasks for the HHC, report preparation, grant writing, and community partnerships. The SC also helps to oversee the planning and execution of BSHS events, including the annual auction gala, and meets regularly with staff, commissioners, and partners. Prior to 2019, this position was full-time. With the generosity of the HTB, the Burwell School hired a full-time Site Director in FY24. It is in the best interest of the BSHS that this position remains at full-time.
- b. Finance Director (PART-TIME for FY26) - The Finance Director is responsible for the proper financial management of the BSHS, to include payroll, tax filings and payments, bill payments, financial reports, Sales & Use Tax payments, etc. The FD will continue to work closely with our CPA, chair, treasurer, finance committee, and Site Coordinator to ensure all financial tasks are handled appropriately and transparently in accordance with GAAP, maintain sound financial management practices, assure a system of checks and balances, and prepare for both monthly reconciliations and official financial audits every 3 years. The FD meets monthly with the treasurer, finance committee, and SC and prepares monthly Profit & Loss statements and balance statements which are shared with the full commission. This position reports directly to the HHC chair.
- c. Visitor Services (PART-TIME for FY26) – The VSC oversees volunteers and docents, to ensure training, as well as staffing. The VSC coordinates all special group tours and is the primary staff member onsite during weekdays. This position also supervises the site's gift shop.
- d. Historic Coordinator (PART-TIME for FY26) – This position is responsible for presenting an accurate and respectful interpretation of the history of the site. The HC meets regularly with the Research Committee and oversees exhibits, programming, and tour scripts.

- e. Docents (PART-TIME for FY26) – Our docents operate the site on weekends, greeting visitors, offering guided tours upon request, facilitating sales at the gift shop, and referring guests to our partners around town. Upon request, they also assist with special events and tours.

3. Financial Management

- a. The Finance Director continues to be responsible for the daily financial transactions of the BSHS, with oversight from the chair, the treasurer, the finance committee, and our CPA. We will continue to work with a third-party firm to conduct an official audit every 3 years.
- b. We have engaged CPA Tom Presley to conduct our official audit. This audit will be completed in FY26.

4. Events/Exhibits

- a. The site will coordinate at least five special events per year during or outside of normal business hours. This will include extended hours of operation during Last Friday events, as well as the town's Revolutionary War Day event.
- b. We will continue to offer a minimum of 1 exhibit complementing the events offered throughout the year, with the goal of opening a new exhibit every 6 months.
- c. The Site Coordinator, HHC chair, or other representative will present information to the Hillsborough Tourism Board at their quarterly meetings to include upcoming events, exhibits, and any planned improvements or changes to the BSHS. They will also complete and submit the bi-annual written Contract Partner report to be shared with Tourism Board, including any needed mid-year budget adjustments.
- d. Each event will have a specialized marketing plan created for and targeted towards the specific event and its likely audience. All marketing materials will include the Hillsborough Tourism logo where practical and logical.

5. Marketing

- a. Rack Cards: The HHC will continue to produce rack cards highlighting important aspects of the BSHS, including the logo of the Hillsborough Tourism Board. Additional brochures or flyers will be provided for special events as needed. Copies of these rack cards and/or flyers will be shared with the Town of Hillsborough, the Hillsborough Visitors Center, the Orange County Historical Museum, the Hillsborough Arts Council, and other relevant local entities.
- b. Email Marketing: The HHC will continue to update and communicate with its extensive email distribution list as a cost-effective means of raising awareness of upcoming events, exhibits, and other BSHS happenings. Guests can subscribe to the newsletter through several means, including an embed on our website, our in-person guestbook, and registration for Burwell events.
- c. Website: The HHC will continue to offer a robust website that is updated often, highlighting upcoming events, site history, and volunteer opportunities. The site also includes the "People of the Past" research database. This free resource provides research on the Burwell family, students, free and enslaved people of color, and historic patrons of the school. We will also continue to offer and expand our interactive virtual exhibits, such as our brand-new Elizabeth Keckly interactive map. Pages on site history are beginning to undergo much-needed updates to align with current site interpretation.
- d. Social media: The HHC will continue to utilize Facebook and Instagram to promote the site and its events. Our Site Coordinator has linked the accounts via Meta Business Suite so that

they function in tandem. These platforms continue to show the most success for the BSHS, with our Instagram audience skewing younger than our Facebook audience. We will continue to focus our efforts on these two platforms in FY27.

- e. Print/Electronic/Radio Marketing: The HHC will continue to submit press releases to local area news sources to distribute to readers. The HHC also hopes to collaborate with local radio stations. We submit BSHS events to local calendars such as WRAL's Out and About and INDY Weekly.
- f. Marketing information will be included in quarterly presentations to the HTB.

6. Volunteers

- a. Recruitment: Under the supervision of the HHC Chair, the Site Coordinator, and the Visitor Services Coordinator, the HHC recruits volunteers from the community to serve in a variety of capacities, including event assistance, greeting, special projects, etc. The Finance Director ensures that all volunteers, as well as commissioners, receive a complete background check before working with the BSHS.
- b. Fill-in Weekday Greeters: If staff is unavailable or needs additional assistance, trained volunteer greeters will be called upon to assist. Greeters are trained by the VSC and will welcome guests, answer general questions, maintain visitor logs, and refer visitors to our partner agencies.
- c. Additional Volunteers: Drawing from the community and former commissioners, the HHC utilizes volunteers on standing committees including, but not limited to, research, events, gala, etc.

Please explain how the organization is going to fundraise and build sustainability in FY27:

1. Fundraising

- a. Burwell has seen success hosting a fall fundraising event in past years, so we plan to continue this in FY27. We continue to brainstorm ways to increase our profits, including expanding vendor outreach efforts.
- b. The Burwell Annual Fund campaign will continue to serve as our major year-round fundraising campaign in FY27. We hope to build on our relationships with existing donors while reaching out to new potential donors through expanded digital presence and in-person programming. We plan to add a spring mailing in addition to the traditional fall mailing to remind donors to help us reach our goal.
- c. In FY24, our Site Coordinator created and launched the Burwell Sustainer Program, an easy-to-use program that allows donors to give monthly to the BSHS through a one-time sign-up. Sustainers receive a Sustainer bumper sticker as well as priority access to all ticketed Burwell events. We plan to continue marketing this program in FY27.
- d. The Burwell School Auction Gala will continue to serve as our primary fundraising event in FY27. Our 2025 event raised just under \$30,000, one of our most successful years to date. We look forward to making the event bigger and better by building on existing relationships and reaching out to new potential donors and vendors.

- e. Inspired by the Hillsborough Arts Council, we have added optional registration to all Burwell events. This includes an optional donation to the site.

2. Sustainability

- a. In FY25, we switched to Zeffy, a fundraising platform for nonprofits that is free of fees. This has significantly improved our profit margins on fundraising events like the gala, saving us hundreds in processing fees.
- b. The stability of our staffing has allowed the Burwell School to continue its progress towards financial self-sufficiency in FY27. We plan to continue building on the success of our paid group tours, gift shop, fundraising events, and Sustainer program in FY27.
- c. Our Site Coordinator intends to continue pursuing capacity-building grants in FY27. We also hope to continue exploring corporate sponsorships and community partnerships.

3. Grants

- a. In FY26, we received a grant from the Hillsborough Garden Club to revitalize our grounds. This work included the planting of several new trees, additions to the pollinator garden, and much-needed weeding. Additionally, the garden club has graciously volunteered their time to assist with the physical labor in the garden. We hope to apply for another HGC grant in 2027.
- b. We also successfully applied for and completed an IMLS grant to finance the production of 4 new historic comic books. This work continued into FY26. With the uncertainty of federal funding and the status of IMLS, our Finance Director implemented steps to secure the funding in advance to ensure this project will be completed.
- c. We intend to research and apply for grants to fund our proposed Community Conversations series in 2027. This money will allow us to pay for speaker fees, travel, venue rentals, staff hours, etc.
- d. We also plan to research available grant opportunities to pay for exterior painting of the site.

Please explain how the organization plan to grow tourism in Hillsborough in FY27:

1. Programs

- a. The Burwell School will continue offering programs that create experiences intended to draw in visitors from surrounding areas. In FY27, we intend to return to proven popular programming like the Star Party, Fall Festival, and annual auction gala. We also have exciting new ideas like our Community Conversations series that will bring in a diverse group of speakers and invite participation from Hillsborough and beyond. The BSHS will continue to plan high quality programs that encourage travel to Hillsborough.
- b. Our programs tend to be planned for the early afternoon on weekends, leaving plenty of time for shopping, dining, and exploring. Our staff and volunteers are trained to recommend local businesses for guests to patronize after the event. We will also begin offering "Suggested Itineraries" in pre-event communication to encourage visitors to make a full day out of their trip to Hillsborough.
- c. We are proud to participate in a number of collaborative programs, including Rev War Day, Last Fridays, A250 events, and more.

2. Tours/Exhibits

- a. We continue to evaluate and improve our site interpretation. In FY25, we committed to installing a new exhibit every 6 months, ensuring there is always something new and different to encourage visitors to return to the site. This plan continues.
- b. Increased national attention on Elizabeth Keckly has led to an increase in guests specifically visiting the BSHS to learn about her story. We have recently unveiled an online interactive resource mapping her travels throughout her life. Additionally, our self-guided tour cards have been reimagined to include more of Madam Keckly's story throughout the house. We hope to continue as a destination for those seeking out more of this incredible woman's story.
- c. We continue to offer free school group tours and organized group tours for a small fee. This program has seen large numbers of visitors from beyond Hillsborough. We plan to continue offering and marketing our group tour program to encourage tourism.

3. Preservation

- a. The BSHS is proud to steward several rare buildings, including our brick schoolhouse, 3-seat brick necessary, and of course the house itself. We recently completed repointing on the schoolhouse and necessary, as well as installing protective gutters on the schoolhouse. Work is also planned to replaster the interior of the schoolhouse and conduct repairs on the front porch of the house. These examples of historic preservation are a draw for any enthusiast.

Marketing Plan

Please explain generally how the organization is going to provide the minimum requested marketing materials as well as any additional marketing and materials that will ensure the events/programs/projects/service/historic sites' success for Q1(July-Sept):

- The Burwell School regularly communicates with partner organizations to maintain stock of rack cards and necessary flyers/brochures. We provide a monthly newsletter with upcoming event information and other site-related updates. In addition, we list Burwell events in various area calendars, including INDY Weekly, WRAL's Out and About, and the Hillsborough Town Calendar. We also continue to use social media to promote the BSHS and reach visitors beyond Hillsborough.
- We include the Hillsborough Tourism logo on all printed and promotional materials where practical. This includes event graphics, rack cards, website, sponsor listings, and more.
- The BSHS displays Visitor Services materials (brochures, maps, rack cards, etc.) on-site. We also maintain a community bulletin board where partner organizations can display event information.
- The Site Director produces a marketing plan for each event. Each plan includes the production of flyers, social media posts, email marketing, press releases, and event listings on our website and other relevant online and print calendars.
- For specific event information, please see the corresponding quarter section above in the Outline/Overview Scope of Work.

Please explain generally how the organization is going to provide the minimum requested marketing materials as well as any additional marketing and materials that will ensure the events/programs/projects/service/historic sites' success for Q2 (Oct-Dec):

- Same as above

Please explain generally how the organization is going to provide the minimum requested marketing materials as well as any additional marketing and materials that will ensure the events/programs/projects/service/historic sites' success for Q3 (Jan-March):

- Same as above

Please explain generally how the organization is going to provide the minimum requested marketing materials as well as any additional marketing and materials that will ensure the events/programs/projects/service/historic sites' success for Q4 (April-June):

- Same as above

Detailed Proposed Budget

a. Item	b. Amount Needed via Contract Funding in FY26 (for each item)	c. Amount Contributed by Organization (for each item)	d. Other Funding Sources		e. Total Contract Budget (add columns b-d)
			Amount	Source	
1. Personnel Expense-7000 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 7001- Site Coordinator (full-time) 30 hours p/w @ \$22=\$34,320 • 7010-Finance Director 15 hours p/w @ \$21=\$16,380 • 7002-Visitor Services Coordinator 15 hours p/w @ \$21=\$16,380 • 7003-Historical Coordinator 10 hours p/w @ \$17.65=\$9,178 • 7004-Docent Wages 8 hours p/w @ \$17.65=\$7,342 • 7006-Benefits 15% X wages medial stipend=\$10,062 • 7007-Payroll Tax Company paid=\$7,500 • 7008-Payroll Service fee=\$1,100 	\$85,000.00	\$17,262.00	\$0.00	N/A	\$102,262.00

<p>2. General Admin-8100</p> <p>8101-Advertising=\$1,000 8102-Computer/Software Maintenance=\$1,000 8111-Printing/Copying=\$1,000 8112-Office Equipment=\$1,000 8113-Office Supplies=\$1,000 8116-Staff Expenses=\$200 8118-NC Charitable Solicitation License=\$150 8120-Professional Fees=\$3,000.00</p>	\$0.00	\$8,350.00	\$0.00	N/A	\$8,350.00
<p>3. Fundraising Costs-8200</p> <p>8201-Auction=\$15,000 8203-Other Fundraisers=\$2,500</p>	\$0.00	\$17,500.00	\$0.00	N/A	\$17,500.00
<p>4. Programs-8300</p> <p>8301-Exhibits=\$500 8302-Research/Collections=\$500 8303-Catelogit=\$540 8305-Ancestry=\$300 8307-Newspapers.com=\$150 8308-Events (non-fundraising)=\$1,000</p>	\$0.00	\$2,990.00	\$0.00	N/A	\$2,990.00
<p>5. Gift Shop-8400</p> <p>8401-Cost of Goods Sold=\$500 8402-Sales Tax Due (pass thru only)=\$75</p>	\$0.00	\$575.00	\$0.00	N/A	\$575.00


6. Facility (Utilities & Maintenance)-8500 8501-Electricity/Gas=\$8,000 8502-Water/Sewer=\$1,500 8503-Telephone/Internet=\$2,300 8504-Groundskeeping=\$8,500 8505-Pest Control=\$500 8506-Site Maintenance=\$20,000 8508-Safety/Security (Alarm System) =\$500 8509-Property Tax=\$475 8510-Insurance=\$12,000	\$0.00	\$42,975.00	\$10,800.00	Orange County Outside Agency Applied for (awaiting award notification)	\$53,775.00
7. Other Expenses-8600 8603-Bank fees=\$50.00 8605-Merchant Processing fees=\$500.00 8606-Storage Unit Rental=\$1,320 8607-Misc.=\$150	\$0.00	\$2,020.00	\$0.00	N/A	\$2020.00
TOTALS (sum of each column)	\$85,000.00	\$91,672.00	\$10,800.00		\$187,472.00

** PLEASE ADD ROWS AND/OR PROVIDE ADDITIONAL SHEETS IF THERE IS NOT ENOUGH ROOM TO ACCOMMODATE YOUR FULL BUDGET **

Signatures

I hereby certify that the information contained in this proposal is true and accurate to the best of my knowledge and that I have reviewed the Town of Hillsborough's Non-profit Guidelines and our organization is in compliance.

FINANCE DIRECTOR

Signature: 

Date: 4/9/26

Printed Name: Katherine A. Kirschner

BOARD CHAIRPERSON

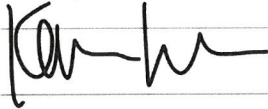
Signature:
Matt Hughes

Date:

Printed Name:

CONTACT PERSON (if different than Executive Director)

Signature:



Date:

April 9, 2026

Printed Name:

Katherine A. Kirschner

02020.0

Signature:



Matthew Hughes (Apr 9, 2026 19:38:41 CDT)

Email: mghughesnc@gmail.com

FY27 Tourism Contract Budget Increase Justification Form:

Explain any increase in the requested contract line item amounts or any added line items from the previous fiscal year. **Use multiple sheets for multiple budget increases or requests.** For example, if you're asking for additional funds for marketing AND additional funding for a new staff member, you would submit two separate budget justification forms, one for each line item.

Request Overview: The BSHS requests an additional \$15,000 for FY27 in order to keep a full-time Site Coordinator on staff. Please note this position is the only full-time staff member as BSHS.

Prioritize Requests as 1, 2, or 3 (1=Must do; 2=Should do; and 3=Could do):

Personnel=1: Must do

Line-item where funds are requested (number from budget and description of line-item):

1. Personnel Expense – requesting \$15,000 increase

Describe request:

Burwell respectfully requests an increase in funding of \$15,000 to support personnel costs. This increase should be temporary for this fiscal year only. Our previous Site Coordinator took another job with full health benefits in February so our largest fundraiser had to be put on hold (due to lack of full-time staff). We are in the process of hiring a new Site Coordinator, scheduled to onboard full-time in June of this fiscal year. That staff member will take over the planning and execution of our fundraiser for FY27, so we anticipate holding this fundraiser in FY27, after which time, our financial needs should lower to FY25 or FY26 levels.

Alternatives & impact if request is not funded:

The Site Coordinator position must remain a full-time position. This individual is responsible for handling administrative tasks and marketing, overseeing site organization and maintenance, community partnerships, and most importantly, fundraising. We have been successfully rebuilding our small non-profit since Covid and need this position to help us work toward achieving financial sustainability. If our request is not funded, we will need to reduce Site Coordinator hours, and/or cut other staff hours. We would also need to close for a longer period during the winter months, which affects our tourist traffic and our on-site donations.

Additional information:

N/A



STAFF REPORT
Hillsborough Tourism Board
June 1, 2026

PRESENTER/INFORMATION CONTACT

Tourism Program Manager, Shannan Campbell

ITEM TO BE CONSIDERED

Subject: FY 2027 Contract Scope Responses and Updates (highlighted in green), Grant funding re-cap from last meeting

Attachments:

1. Alliance for Historic Hillsborough (Visitors Center Operations/Services & Events) + budget justification form (revised budget included in this packet)
2. Hillsborough Arts Council (Visitors Services & Events) + budget justification form
3. Orange County Historical Museum (Visitors Services) (revised budget included in this packet)
4. Hillsborough Chamber of Commerce (Visitors Services & Events)
5. Burwell School (Visitors Services & Events) Response received in May

Background:

The Tourism Program has contracted with local organizations since FY17 to provide visitor services, operations of historic sites, and to put on annual events. Going to contracted services was in lieu of having every regularly funded partner competing for grants every year and not being sure if they would have funding the next year or not. Contracting ensures a more defined level of funding year after year. Contract partners have expressed a desire for longer contract periods (2-5 years?) now that the Tourism Board has done contracting and reporting with contract partners for a few years. We will further explore this in the Fall.

Summary, key points, and questions:

- The Alliance was initially asking for \$271,922 in FY27, a \$5,618 increase over the FY26 contract amount of \$266,304. Budget Justification Forms are included explaining expanded needs in the following budget lines:
 - Increase for staff COLA and retirement benefits
 - Increase of professional dues and fees

Update: The Alliance has reached out since the last meeting after receiving information from their health insurance carrier about unforeseen rate increases. Their modified ask is for \$272,984.90 however they could reduce down to \$270,157.64 if they cut the event shuttle for Solstice Lantern Walk for FY27.

- HAC was asking for \$75,000 in FY27, a \$5,000 increase over the FY26 contract amount of \$70,000. Budget Justification Forms are included explaining expanded needs in the following budget lines:
 - Increase for puppets and production of Handmade Parade in 2027

Update: The HAC was granted an additional \$10,000 from the Tourism Development Authority to support Solstice Lantern Walk, so they have reduced their ask to \$65,000, however the Hillsborough Town Board may need to reduce their contribution for HAC programming due to budgetary constraints and HAC may have additional funding needs based on the outcome of the Hillsborough Town Board meeting on 5/27. More information forthcoming.
- Orange County Historical Museum is asking for \$59,500 in FY27, with no increases requested over the previous fiscal year.
- Chamber of Commerce is asking for \$14,600 in FY 27, with no increases over the previous fiscal year.
- Burwell School is asking for \$85,000 in FY 27, a \$15,000 increase over the FY26 contract amount of \$70,000. Budget Justification Form is included explaining expanded personnel needs in salary.

Update: Burwell School representatives will be present at the meeting to ask questions that came up about their contract response.

Staff recommendation and comments:

None. Staff has simplified the requests for the purposes of summary in the staff report. Staff encourages board members to read through the full proposals and budgets and ask questions of the contract partners during their presentations as needed to understand the full picture and requests for FY27.

Burwell Schools’ response was received since the April meeting and is in the packet. The April packet has the full responses from the other contract partners and is available online here:

<https://mccmeetings.blob.core.usgovcloudapi.net/hillsbronc-pubu/MEET-Packet-e192e96e6a294299a385d81efa127666.pdf>

Grants Summary from last meeting:

Grant Requests Summary 2026 (FY27)				
	Organization	Project Name/General Description	Grant Request Amount	DRAFT SCORE
1	Hillsborough Garden Club	Hillsborough Garden Tour 2027	\$3,000.00	98
2	Orange County Arts Commission	Uproar Festival of Public Art	\$10,000.00	93.7
3	Orange Community Players	Anything Goes Production	\$7,996.00	75
4	Humanity International	Flow Fest	\$15,000.00	51
5	Chickenfoot Art Collective	Babushka and the boiling frogs	\$10,000.00	40.3
6				
7				
8				
Total Amount of Grant Funding Requested:			\$45,996.00	

INCOME		FY 25-26 budget	FY 26-27 budget	Notes
Tourism	Meals Tax	\$ 264,157.84	\$ 267,857.64	
Tourism	Miscellaneous Income Tourism Board	\$ 2,300.00	\$ 2,300.00	Storage unit
	Miscellaneous Income-Tourism board	\$ 2,827.26	\$ 2,827.26	Event bus = \$2,827.26 PER event for a 34 + 2 wheelchair & 28 + 1 wheelchair bus. This covers ONE event per fiscal year
	Misc Special Events Income - Tourism Board	\$ 2,680.00	\$ -	Special Events Grant - Tinsel & Traditions
Tourism	Interest Earned	\$ 100.00	\$ 100.00	MM accounts (Friends account transfer)
Tourism	Gift Shop Sales	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 5,000.00	
	less Costs of Goods	-\$ 3,000.00	\$ (3,000.00)	
	less Sales Tax	-\$ 375.00	\$ (375.00)	tax 7.5%
	Net Gift Shop Sales	\$ 1,625.00	\$ 1,625.00	
Total Tourism		\$ 273,690.10	\$ 274,709.90	Original Ask - \$271,921.38, New Ask - \$272,984.90, New Ask Without Shuttle - \$270,157.64
EXPENSES		FY 25-26 budget	FY 26-27 budget	
Personnel - Tourism	Salaries	\$ 133,957.23	\$ 135,654.66	COL 3% See COL tab
	Health Insurance	\$ 18,811.00	\$ 19,656.52	New Chamber Health Plan
	Retirement	\$ 0.00	\$ 1,755.00	Ben's retirement benefits begin FY 26-27
	Phone Stipend - FT only	\$ 1,800.00	\$ 1,800.00	
	Payroll Taxes	\$ 10,247.61	\$ 10,377.46	
	Subtotal	\$ 164,815.84	\$ 169,243.64	
Programs - Tourism	Visitor Services	\$ 6,000.00	\$ 6,000.00	Map prints and handouts
	Holiday Event Grant Spending	\$ 2,680.00	\$ -	No Tinsel & Traditions
	Special Events	\$ 3,500.00	\$ 3,500.00	Rev War Day & Holiday Fair
	Volunteer Management	\$ 300.00	\$ 300.00	
	Cultural Heritage Tourism	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 5,000.00	Village - Changing to Cultural Heritage Tourism
	Subtotal	\$ 17,480.00	\$ 14,800.00	
Marketing- Tourism	Marketing	\$ 40,000.00	\$ 40,000.00	See Ad Plan
	Subtotal	\$ 40,000.00	\$ 40,000.00	
Overhead - Tourism	Rent	\$ 3,120.00	\$ 3,120.00	
	Utilities	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 5,600.00	Energy - \$2,810 Water for Dickson & Bathrooms - \$1,440, Enbridge - \$1,320
	Phone/Internet	\$ 2,500.00	\$ 2,500.00	
	Miscellaneous	\$ 750.00	\$ 750.00	
	Subtotal	\$ 11,370.00	\$ 11,970.00	
Capital Expenses - Tourism	Computers			
	Copier			
	Furniture			
	Storage	\$ 2,300.00	\$ 2,300.00	Storage
	Transportation Services	\$ 2,827.26	\$ 2,827.26	Transportation Services - 2 large buses for one event
	Subtotal	\$ 5,127.26	\$ 5,127.26	
Admin/Operations - Tourism	Credit Card Processing Fees	\$ 250.00	\$ 250.00	Square fees per purchase
	Dues/Subscriptions	\$ 3,283.00	\$ 3,485.00	Chamber: \$300- News of Orange: \$66 - NcNonprofit \$360- Square Marketing: \$90 per month = \$1080 - Zoom: Annual renewal \$170 - 129 Amazon Prime, Intuit - \$115 / \$1,380
	Insurance	\$ 1,974.00	\$ 1,974.00	Liability/Event/Workers Comp with Auto-Owners
	Office Supplies	\$ 500.00	\$ 500.00	
	Partnerships and Visibility			
	Professional Development	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00	Tourism conference
	Professional Fees	\$ 9,485.00	\$ 10,635.00	CPA fees(7600), PrimePay(2935), IT support(100)
	Software & Technology			Line item deleted and combined with dues & subscriptions
	Subtotal	\$ 16,492.00	\$ 17,844.00	
Maintenance	Building	\$ 500.00	\$ 500.00	
	Cleaning	\$ 6,700.00	\$ 6,700.00	
	Grounds	\$ 6,000.00	\$ 6,000.00	
	Pest Control	\$ 250.00	\$ 250.00	
	Public Restroom Supplies	\$ 550.00	\$ 550.00	
	Subtotal	\$ 14,000.00	\$ 14,000.00	
TOTAL EXPENSES TOURISM		\$ 269,285.10	\$ 272,984.90	
Total Net Tourism		\$ 4,405.00	\$ 1,725.00	



FY 2027 Contract Scope of Work Response: Hillsborough Arts Council - Visitor Services & Events

Organization Information		
Organization Name: Hillsborough Arts Council		
Contact Person and Title: Heather Tatreau, Executive Director		
Contact Person Email: director@hillsboroughartscouncil.org	Contact Person Phone: 919-593-4295	
Organization Street Address: 102 N Churton St		
City: Hillsborough	State: NC	ZIP Code: 27278
Organization's Annual Operating Budget: \$371,760		
General Contract Information		
Contract Name: Hillsborough Arts Council's Last Fridays & the Art Walk, Handmade Parade, and Gallery & Gift Shop		
Month(s) or Date(s) in which Proposal Project/Services will take place: JULY 1 st , 2026- JUNE 30th, 2027 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Art Walk (AW): year round on the last Friday of each month • Last Fridays & the Art Walk (LFAW): full performance programming and Makers Markets on the Old Courthouse Lawn occur May-October • The Handmade Parade (HMP): 4/17/2027 with a rain date of 4/24/2027; multiple puppet making workshops leading up to the event • Gallery & Gift Shop (G&GS): operating 6 days per week year-round, Tues-Sun 11am-6pm with extended hours on Last Fridays and some holidays 		
Outline/Overview of Scope of Work		
<p><i>Please explain generally how the organization is going to perform the duties requested in the FY2027 Contract Scope of Work Update during Q1(July-Sept):</i></p> <p>LFAW Q1: <i>Each LFAW season straddles two fiscal years, so Q1 of this program begins half way through the 2026 calendar year/LFAW season. Also note that we are focusing on traditional galleries and performance venues for the Art Walk this season. We will work with the Chamber to include local merchants rather than each merchant individually.</i></p> <p>LFAW programming will include unique, rotating entertainment, including components like:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Special exhibitions, receptions, and gallery openings at 19 participating venues on the Art Walk, including 2 venues in West Hillsborough • A variety of live music performances at local venues around downtown and in West Hillsborough 		

- Makers Markets each month with 30 artist vendors and 3 community booths on the north side of the Old Courthouse lawn
- Live on the Lawn Performance Series on the south side of the Old Courthouse Lawn featuring live music, dance performances, comedy shows, puppetry, and a fashion show
- Showcases of poetry, prose, and spoken word in connection with the Hillsborough Poet Laureate program
- Opportunities for all ages participate in art making at the Creation Station and the Community Loom on the Lawn
- Performance and circus artists
- Community collaborations and nonprofit showcases
- HAC & LFAW info tent/tourism services booth on the Old Courthouse lawn providing one-pager itineraries, maps, and an opportunity to collect geographical data

Administrative efforts will include:

- Planning, designing, and implementing strategic marketing of the events and participating local businesses/partners
- Maintaining communications with artists, stakeholders, collaborators, and partnering venues
- Collecting data, conducting assessments, and making minor adjustments of programming to ensure ROI and maximum impact

HMP Q1:

We will partner with Sol Ramirez of 1,2,3 Puppetry to host 2 puppetry workshops at the Scrap Exchange in Durham, building excitement for community participation in the Parade and extending reach into Durham. We will also begin to contract performing artists for the parade.

G&GS Q1:

Each quarter, the G&GS accepts applications from local artists for the opportunity to showcase their work in-store. The G&GS consignment partnership provides income and stability to local artists (60/40 sales split) and entices visitors to stop in to learn about HAC's programmatic activities throughout the year.

Q1 is the heat of the summer, which means visitation and sales to Hillsborough businesses can suffer a dip. During Q1, HAC and the G&GS will execute duties outlined in this grant by:

- Making strategic efforts to entice tourism including artist demonstrations, sales and promotions, and new interactive elements in the shop such as a community corner in the gallery that encourages art participation
- Based on the success of Solstice Lantern Kits, the G&GS manager creates and sells art making kits year round that allow patrons to have a hands-on arts experience at home; She also partners with local businesses to host kit making parties once per quarter
- Gallery receptions and artist demos in the window with opportunities to meet artists during each LFAW

- Partnering with other local tourism-driving groups, including OCAC, OCHM, Burwell, and the Alliance/Visit Hillsborough to collaborate on summer events and cross-promote events whenever possible
- Collect demographic data from patrons
- Display artist process videos on an iPad to increase patron engagement and artist appreciation

Seasonal window displays are refreshed at the shop to attract repeat customers. Also, the gallery in the shop has been refreshed and professionalized to support local artists in rotating gallery exhibitions.

Please explain generally how the organization is going to perform the duties requested in the FY2026 Contract Scope of Work Update during Q2 (Oct-Dec):

LFAW Q2:

October LFAW is our season finale and always one of the highest attended months due to its alignment with Halloween. We particularly see a surge in families visiting Hillsborough. Q2 LFAW programming will include all the same components as in Q1, plus special halloween-themed activities: a Witch's Flash Mob, hayrides, a haunted house, and merchant trick-or-treat collaborations.

November's Art Walk will promote Shop Small Weekend, artist Sunday, holiday season activities, and other winter traditions, including the Solstice Lantern Walk. We will hold a free make and take lantern craft indoors at Snow Approach Foundation again this year. It is a very popular event and offers an accessible way for community members to make a lantern for the upcoming SLW.

December marks the beginning of the "off season" for Last Fridays, allowing staff to focus heavily on a debrief of the 2026 calendar year/LFAW season, survey participants and stakeholders, and adjust strategies for the 2027 calendar year/LFAW season. Other tourism-driving activities hosted by HAC continue during this time, including the Solstice Lantern Walk, Gallery & Gift Shop, etc.

Administrative efforts will include:

- Planning, designing, and implementing strategic marketing of the events and participating local businesses/partners
- Maintaining communications with artists, stakeholders, collaborators, and partnering venues
- Collecting data, conducting assessments, and making minor adjustments of programming to ensure ROI and maximum impact
- Surveying participating venues and contracted artists for feedback, debriefing all elements of the 2026 season with internal and external stakeholders
- Beginning to outline strategy for the 2027 season
- Directing tourism and visitation to other special fall, holiday, and winter

traditions that occur around Hillsborough and supporting the marketing efforts of these groups/activities

HMP Q2:

We will continue to contract performers and start to plan our marketing efforts.

G&GS Q2:

Q2 occurs over the holiday season. Fifty percent of our total annual sales occur in this quarter, so it's the busiest time of year for our team. The G&GS experiences significant uptick in visitation from out of town and thus an increased need for HAC/G&GS volunteers to provide suggestions of places to shop, dine, and explore while they are in town for the holidays. The success of the Solstice Lantern Walk also depends on the G&GS to be highly operational - we sell over 400 lantern kits, host lantern workshops, and help people get signed up/learn about the event.

For Q2, the G&GS contributes to Tourism Board objectives by:

- Providing visitation information for increased tourist traffic.
- Selling lantern kits and leading workshops for those participating in the Solstice Lantern Walk, which occurs at the end of December.
- Accepting new quarterly artist consignment applications.
- Collaborating and cross-promoting other holiday happenings around town, including the Holiday Parade, Gingerbread Exhibition, and more.

Please explain generally how the organization is going to perform the duties requested in the FY2026 Contract Scope of Work Update during Q3 (Jan-March):

LFAW Q3:

In Q3, HAC supports the Art Walk around town through website marketing of participating venues and providing cross-promotion of efforts such as:

- Special exhibitions, receptions, and gallery openings
- Live music performances
- Family-friendly activities and crafts
- Opportunities to connect and interact with local history and the arts

Q3 allows staff to focus heavily on reviewing feedback from the 2026 calendar year/LFAW season, outlining strategies for the 2027 calendar year/LFAW season, and initiating plans to ensure public awareness of the return of full programming. Communications with venues to confirm their participation in 2027 pick up by early February.

Administrative efforts will include:

- Maintaining communications with artists, stakeholders, collaborators, and partnering venues
- Collecting data, conducting assessments, and making minor adjustments of programming to ensure ROI and maximum impact

- Surveying participating venues and contracted artists for feedback, debriefing all elements of the 2026 season with internal and external stakeholders
- Finalizing strategy for the 2027 season and sharing an outline with stakeholders
- Directing tourism and visitation to the Art Walk and other activities that occur around Hillsborough; supporting the marketing efforts of these activities
- Confirming themes, community collaborations, and artistic partnerships for 2027 LFAW season
- Securing permits and developing updated marketing materials and planning resources
- Planning, designing, and implementing strategic marketing of the upcoming 2027 LFAW season and participating local businesses/partners

HMP Q3:

Handmade Parade planning will be in full swing this quarter:

- Securing town permits
- Finalizing performer contracts
- Creating a day-of logistics and safety plan
- Creating signage and ordering supplies
- Securing and training event volunteers
- Holding at least one puppet making workshop
- Marketing the event widely through regional advertisements, radio interviews, and community engagement activities

G&GS Q3:

During Q3, the G&GS will close to the public for the first week in January. During this time, the gallery is rotated to showcase new work and the shop is restocked and reorganized for a fresh look. Any renovation projects or necessary upgrades/improvements to our physical space and operations are also addressed during this time. During January, quarterly applications for consignment are accepted for prospective artists to showcase their works in the G&GS. Valentine's Day, black history month, women's history month, and other seasonal holidays or important celebrations are promoted. Seasonal window displays are refreshed. Collaborations with students from Cedar Ridge High School's IB program are finalized and multiple student art exhibitions are held, which have proven to be extremely popular with visitors and community members alike. Gallery artists are confirmed for the upcoming calendar year.

Please explain generally how the organization is going to perform the duties requested in the FY2026 Contract Scope of Work Update during Q4 (April-June):

LFAW Q4:

In April, we continue to promote the Art Walk. In May and June, full LFAW programming on the Old Courthouse Lawn will pick back up with the Maker's Market, Live on the Lawn

Performance Series, and the Creation Station. These activities follow the model established in Q1.

Administrative efforts will include:

- Planning, designing, and implementing strategic marketing of the events and participating local businesses/partners
- Maintaining communications with artists, stakeholders, collaborators, and partnering venues
- Collecting data, conducting assessments, and making minor adjustments of programming to ensure ROI and maximum impact
- Finalizing process for Makers Market applications and preparing vendors for the re-launch of that component

HMPQ4:

The Handmade Parade will take place on April 17, 2027 (rain date 4/24). Traditionally, HAC had our own giant puppets to bring to the parade. However, these large puppets were lost to mold and flooding in our storage facility. As a result, we will contract Paperhand Puppet Intervention and 1,2,3 Puppetry to bring their puppets to the event. We have also been hosting multiple puppet making workshops to engage community members to build their own and participate in the parade. We will also hire musical groups, such as Batala drummers, to walk in the parade and create a festive mood.

The event will be staged on the lawn of the Burwell school and proceed down Churton St to the Old Courthouse Lawn. On the lawn, we will host a puppet pageant where community participants can showcase their creations.

G&GS Q4:

Standard operations continue and we see a spike in the late spring with more visitors in town as the weather improves. Monthly Last Fridays & the Art Walk receptions, artist talks, and demonstrations are held. Special promotions are advertised for Mother’s Day and other popular shopping holidays. Quarterly acceptance of new artists and cross-promotion of other major cultural events occurs. Seasonal window displays are refreshed.

Outline/Overview of Job Tasks and Schedules

Please explain generally how the organization plans to accomplish all goals associated with the scope of work, including but not limited to, marketing, hiring, volunteer recruitment, exhibit development, event tasks, etc.

HAC is committed to building and enriching the Hillsborough community through the arts. The primary way we fulfill this mission each year is by offering 8 large scale public programs and many smaller events year-round. Doing so requires coordination and collaboration between staff, board, and volunteers 365 days per year.

Our staff has been slowly growing over the past 5 years as HAC transitioned from a volunteer run organization to a staff led one. The staff structure for FY27 has grown to a place where we feel we can now maintain a sufficient delegation of duties between Executive Director (FT), Gallery & Gift Shop Manager (FT), Marketing Coordinator (FT), Events Coordinator (PT), and Bookkeeper (PT). Additionally, we continue to take on interns to support our staff. The growth of staff positions allow HAC events to be appropriately staffed and allow greater bandwidth to take on projects like expanding programming to West Hillsborough, addressing event accessibility needs, and expanding fundraising efforts.

The Executive Director is responsible for fundraising, grant writing, oversight of staff and programs, strategic planning, community relationships, and is the liaison with the Board of Directors. The Gallery & Gift Shop Manager oversees the Gallery & Gift Shop, ensuring this vibrant shopping destination is open 6 days a week year-round, and is responsible for the behind-the-scenes and administrative aspects of the G&GS. She also recruits, trains, and manages shop volunteers. The Marketing Coordinator oversees all day-to-day marketing efforts, develops and executes strategies to boost visibility of arts and culture in Hillsborough, and supports all public-facing and communications efforts of HAC. The Events Coordinator takes the lead on day-to-day programming efforts, including permitting, contracting, and event planning. She also assists in recruitment, training, and management of event volunteers. The Bookkeeper manages payroll, initiates payments, and reconciles cash flow. She works with the Treasurer of the Board, a contracted CPA, the Executive Director, and Board Chair to maintain financial oversight, budget preparation and compliance, and daily financial procedures.

Our G&GS volunteer program is well established and meets our needs. Our G&GS Manager relies on volunteer support to help run the shop on the weekends and assist with shop maintenance and special projects. However, our event volunteers have never been sufficient to support staff. The Event Coordinator and Executive Director are creating an event volunteer program that will utilize service groups to assist with set up and clean up at events. This is a crucial next step to mitigate staff burnout and run our large events more efficiently. We will be trying out this new model at the end of FY26 during LFAWs and hope to have it running smoothly by the start of FY27.

The HAC board has been gradually transitioning from a working board to a governing board that is focused on short and long term strategic planning and overall mission compliance. Board Chair, Julia Workman, has done a comprehensive overhaul of board committees and assigned specific strategic goals to each one for FY27. We have a full board of 15 members with diverse skill sets.

In FY27, HAC programs will be run by staff, with assistance from volunteers as described above, and oversight and support from the Executive Committee and Board. This cooperative system allows for an equitable distribution of work and a team effort that utilizes each individual's skills. Major programmatic decisions are ultimately made by the staff, with the board ensuring compliance with strategic plans. This includes the programs

in this contract proposal. The Executive Committee monitors and reviews progress of staff and volunteers through regular reports submitted by the Executive Director. The Executive Committee utilizes board members and board committees for advice and insight on governing responsibilities. There are no plans to add staff members in FY27. We are committed to finding a sustainable way to maintain our new staff structure.

Please explain how the organization is going to fundraise and build sustainability in FY27:

The bulk of fundraising responsibilities lies with HAC's Executive Director. She has been attending trainings to stay up to date with current fundraising trends and best practices. With a competitive national grant landscape, she has been focusing on building relationships with two local foundations: Mary Duke Biddle and Triangle Community Foundation. HAC has received some funding from these organizations in the past and will continue to apply for more substantial funding in FY27.

The board has a very active Development Committee that has been working with the Executive Director and Board Chair to increase donations through a revitalized sustainer program and corporate sponsorship drives. We relaunched the House Concert Series in FY26, formerly known as the Parlor Concerts, as a fundraiser. We hold three concerts a year that each raise a net profit of \$1,000. We have also been able to re-engage past donors and attract new ones, gaining at least three new sustainers each time we host a concert. We continue to thank our sustainers and invite them to events like the Gallery After Hours event at the Gallery & Gift Shop. We solidified a comprehensive business sponsorship package in FY25 that has been attracting new businesses and the ED continues to build sponsor relationships throughout the year. It takes time and persistence to build donor relations but we are seeing increases in support each year.

Having a clear budgeting process is also key to sustainability. The Executive Director, Board Chair, Treasurer, and Bookkeeper work with HAC staff to set annual program budgets and determine overall needs. These budgets are set during the late spring budget cycle and staff are required to adhere to these budgets throughout the fiscal year. Any changes to this budget must be submitted to the Executive Committee for review, followed by approval from the board of directors prior to allocation of additional funds or budgetary adjustments. In FY23, HAC began implementing a re-forecasting process for the annual budget based on actual revenue and expenses, in an effort to be more responsive to any major changes or deviations that may occur during the fiscal year. Adopting full-cost budgeting and operations methods, an emerging best practice in the non-profit sector, is allowing us to improve our communications with funders about the comprehensive costs of running our programs.

Please explain how the organization plans to grow tourism in Hillsborough in FY27:

The year-round flagship HAC events continue to see growth each year, bringing thousands of tourists to Hillsborough. Our staff approaches each event strategically, notices growth trends, and plans accordingly. We have started to explore new geographical data collection

methods that should give us more information about the number of tourists attending our events. Based upon this data, we can strategize how and where we advertise outside of Hillsborough. According to data collected at registration, 25% of Solstice Lantern Walk attendees came from Durham County. We plan to lean into this trend by focusing more marketing efforts in Durham this year. The Handmade Parade is a regional favorite and will give us an opportunity to reach beyond Hillsborough to attract event participants. We have had folks from as far away as California contact us to find out when the next HMP will be held so they can schedule a visit to Hillsborough!

Marketing Plan

All HAC programs are promoted via strategic, organic, and paid marketing efforts that include:

- HAC website: 21,000+ views/year; 10,000+ site sessions/year
- HAC social media (unpaid/organic): 45,000+ average reach/year
- HAC monthly newsletter: 6,100+ distribution list with 45% open rate
- HAC quarterly donor newsletter: 100+ highly engaged distribution list
- On-site marketing at events and at the G&GS: 31,500+ visitors/year
- Printed signage and flyers
- Radio and print interviews about upcoming events
- Postings to 20+ community calendars to ensure inclusion and awareness of tourism-driving events
- Collaborative cross-promotions with local businesses and community groups
- Radio and/or TV advertising as budget allows
- Print advertising or features in print publications as budget allows
- Paid social media advertising as budget allows

Please explain generally how the organization is going to provide the minimum requested marketing materials as well as any additional marketing and materials that will ensure the events/programs/projects/service/historic sites' success for Q1(July-Sept):

LFAW Q1:

- The LFAW season bridges our fiscal years. We create a comprehensive marketing plan for each LFAW season to ensure consistency of event promotion and carry it through the calendar year. The marketing plan established in spring 2026 will be carried across FY26 to FY27. Tweaks may be made based on progression of the season so far and any feedback received from key stakeholders.
- Marketing and advertising efforts, such as radio ads, e-newsletters, and social media posts include detailed information about:
 - Each month's special entertainment and programming, such as artists, live music, and activities occurring around town.
 - 19 art walk venues / local businesses actively engaged in LFAW programming
 - Recaps of previous month's arts programming and sneak peeks of what's to come for the next month, to entice repeat visitation and create urgency for returning
- An interactive map on the website will be updated and maintained to help event attendees find the various elements of entertainment during each LFAW
- A monthly one-pager with overview of entertainment offerings and QR code linking back to website for interactive map and art walk venue listing details
- Distribution and restocking of the LFAW tri-fold brochure with map designed at the beginning of the season to keep nearby visitors centers and other destinations receiving tourists aware of the program

HMP Q1:

Our Marketing Coordinator will utilize all of our marketing channels to promote Puppetry Workshops and let the public know the date of the parade.

G&GS Q1:

The G&GS serves as an essential hub and resource for marketing material distribution, event information, and other tourism services - both for HAC programs and for Hillsborough's arts and culture events at large.

Please explain generally how the organization is going to provide the minimum requested marketing materials as well as any additional marketing and materials that will ensure the events/programs/projects/service/historic sites' success for Q2 (Oct-Dec):

LFAW Q2:

In addition to the efforts described for Q1, Q2 will feature special attention on holidays and seasonal marketing strategies. Collaboration with other groups driving tourism and providing signature events during the holiday season, such as Visit Hillsborough, the Alliance for Historic Hillsborough, the Gingerbread Competition Team, and the Chamber. Q2 will round out the 2025 LFAW season. Other Q2 marketing efforts will communicate details about the October "season finale" and a sneak peek/reminder to join us in Q3 for the 2026 LFAW season.

HMP Q2:

Website updates will be made to begin promoting the Parade.

G&GS Q2:

The G&GS serves as an essential hub and resource for marketing material distribution, event information, and other tourism services - both for HAC programs and for Hillsborough's arts and culture events at large. During our busiest time of year and the holiday season, there is more information to be shared about special promotions and events occurring around town. The Gallery & Gift Shop Manager ensures that all volunteers are updated on current Hillsborough happenings so they can relay information to customers and answer questions.

Please explain generally how the organization is going to provide the minimum requested marketing materials as well as any additional marketing and materials that will ensure the events/programs/projects/service/historic sites' success for Q3 (Jan-March):

LFAW Q3:

In Q3, HAC develops updated branding, print materials, maps, and other marketing resources for venues to use as they finalize plans for the upcoming LFAW season. This quarter requires a lot of behind-the-scenes planning, communications, and alignment with LFAW partners and venues to ensure marketing materials are developed with accurate information and strategies to drive tourism. Artist contracts are signed for the 2027 season, when appropriate, and entertainment will be mapped out to build momentum strategically.

In January and February, the activities of participating Art Walk venues are cross-promoted on HAC social media and e-news channels, and the HAC website is updated to reflect this quieter, but still active, time period.

Towards the end of February, HAC will roll out the new marketing program for the upcoming 2027 season. This includes tri-fold brochures, posters, flyers, as well as other print and online materials. Community event calendars will be updated and press tours will be scheduled. Artist applications for the Makers Market open up through online, e-news, and social media promotions.

Ramping up in March, marketing and advertising efforts include detailed information about:

- Themes and priorities for special entertainment and programming, such as artists, live music, and activities occurring around town
- 19 art walk venues / local businesses actively engaged in LFAW programming
- Sneak peeks of what's to come this season, to entice repeat visitation and create urgency for joining each month
- An interactive map on the website will be updated and maintained to help event attendees find the various elements of entertainment during each LFAW
- A monthly one-pager with high-level overview of entertainment offerings and QR code linking back to website for interactive map and art walk venue listing details
- Distribution of the 2027 LFAW tri-fold brochure with map to inform nearby visitors centers and other destinations receiving tourists about the upcoming season

HMP Q3:

Marketing will be heightened during Q3 as we lead up to the April event. Flyers, e-newsletters, social media posts, calendar listings, and press tours will be utilized. The Marketing Coordinator will lean into the playfulness of the Handmade Parade by posting fun and engaging social media content to drive interest. If funds allow, we would like to explore billboard advertisements.

G&GS Q3:

Once reopened from a brief winter break, reengagement activities with the public will commence to drive traffic back to the G&GS and around historic Hillsborough. This reengagement will whet the public's appetite for HAC's 2027 calendar year programmatic activities with LFAW. Advertising regarding the new gallery exhibitions and a refreshed shop layout will also be implemented.

Please explain generally how the organization is going to provide the minimum requested marketing materials as well as any additional marketing and materials that will ensure the events/programs/projects/service/historic sites' success for Q4 (April-June):

LFAW Q4:

Continued marketing and advertising efforts include detailed information about:

- Each month's special entertainment and programming, such as artists, live music, and activities occurring around town
- 19 art walk venues / local businesses actively engaged in LFAW programming
- Recaps of previous month's arts programming and sneak peeks of what's to come for the next month, to entice repeat visitation and create urgency for returning each month
- An interactive map on the website will be updated and maintained to help event attendees find the various elements of entertainment during each LFAW.
- A monthly one-pager with high-level overview of entertainment offerings and QR code linking back to the website for interactive map and art walk venue listing details
- Distribution and restocking of the LFAW tri-folds designed at the beginning of the season to keep nearby visitors centers and other destinations receiving tourists aware of the program.

HMP Q4:

The beginning of April will focus on a last minute push for the event on the 17th. We will ramp up social posts and fun teasers to attract a wide audience throughout the region. In-town signage will be used to alert local residents of the event.

G&GS Q4:

Marketing efforts in Q4 will be focused on driving tourism to Hillsborough for LFAW, other town-wide summer events/activities, and the continually revamped array of local artwork available for sale.

Detailed Proposed Budget: Last Fridays & the Art Walk

a. Item	b. Amount Needed via Contract Funding in FY26 (for each item)	c. Amount Contributed by Organization (for each item) <i>*Info provided here reflects all other earned & contributed revenue sources from HAC budget</i>	d. Other Funding Sources		e. Total Contract Budget (add columns b-d)
			Amount	Source	
1. LFAW Performance Services (6 months of entertainment, \$800-\$1500 per month)	\$5,500	\$0	\$2,000	Town of Hillsborough	\$7,500
2. LFAW Makers Market Port-a-lets (6 months at \$269 each)	\$0	\$0	\$1,614	Town of Hillsborough	\$1,614
3. LFAW Licenses & Permits (venue reservations, signage permits, vendor fees)	\$154	\$0	\$886	Town of Hillsborough	\$1,040
4. LFAW Advertising - paid, print and digital/online	\$1,000	\$700	\$0		\$1700
5. LFAW Marketing - Signage, Trifolds, Flyers; branded materials	\$500	\$500	\$0		\$1000

6. Contracted services & Equipment for capturing High-quality photography & videography of tourism-driving activities	\$900	\$300	\$0		\$1200
7. Equipment rental - lighting (GetLit), sound	\$0	\$0	\$2,500	Town of Hillsborough	\$2,500
8. Supplies for workshops & art-making activity table sat LFAW	\$400	\$0	\$0		\$400
9. Personnel & payroll for year-round LFAW program coordination & fulfillment of tourism services (allocated personal costs assoc. with sustaining operations of this program: 40% of ED's time, 60% of Marketing Coordinator's time, 15% of Gallery & Gift Shop Manager's time, 25% of Bookkeeper's time, 60% of Event Coordinator's time)	\$40,000	\$40,337	\$4,000	NC Arts Council	\$84,337

10. Administrative expenses & overhead allocated for year-round LFAW program coordination & fulfillment of tourism services (including volunteer stewardship, web services & subscriptions, office supplies, occupancy & storage, insurance, etc.)	\$6,546	\$7,689	\$0		\$14,235
<i>LFAW Volunteer hours Est. 500 hrs./FY @ \$29.95 (Nat. Average)</i>		\$14,975			<i>Information shared for awareness of volunteer investment, not added into budget totals</i>
TOTALS (sum of each column)	\$55,000 (9 months of full Last Fridays & the Art Walk programming, 12 months of services)	\$49,526	\$11,000	Town of Hillsborough, NC Arts Council	\$115,526 TOTAL PROGRAM INVESTMENT COSTS

Detailed Proposed Budget: Handmade Parade

a. Item	b. Amount Needed via Contract Funding in FY26 (for each item)	c. Amount Contributed by Organization (for each item) <i>*Info provided here reflects all other earned & contributed revenue sources from HAC budget</i>	d. Other funding sources: Amount	d. Other funding sources: Source	e. Total Contract Budget (add columns b-d)
1. Sanitation	0	0	\$450	Town	\$450
2. Workshop fees	0	\$800	0		\$800

3. Permits / Security	0	0	\$150	Town	\$150
4. Performance Services	\$2,000	0	\$6,000	Town; OCAC	\$8,000
5. Supplies	0	0	\$400	Town	\$400
6. Marketing Services, Advertising, & Promotions	\$920	0	\$1,000	TDA	\$1,920
7. Portion of Staff Salaries Specifically Required to Operate HMP	\$2,080	\$5,677	\$9,000	TDA	\$16,757
TOTALS (sum of each column)	\$5,000	\$6,477	\$17,000	Town; OCAC; TDA	\$28,477 TOTAL PROGRAM INVESTMENT COSTS

Detailed Proposed Budget: Gallery & the Gift Shop

a. Item	b. Amount Needed via Contract Funding in FY26 (for each item)	c. Amount Contributed by Organization (for each item) <i>*Info provided here reflects all other earned & contributed revenue sources from HAC budget</i>	d. Other funding sources: Amount	d. Other funding sources: Source	e. Total Contract Budget (add columns b-d)
1. Marketing & Operations (physical signage, displays, materials, advertising, etc)	\$1,000	\$2,535	0		\$3,535
2. Retail Services Supplies & Equipment (merchandising supplies, technical upgrades, fees)	0	\$6,057	0		\$6,057
3. Personnel & Payroll for G&GS program coordination & fulfillment of tourism services (allocated personnel costs associated with sustaining operations of this program: 25% of ED's time, 3% of Marketing Coordinator's time, 70% of Gallery & Gift Shop Manager's time, 60% of Bookkeeper's time, 2% of Event Coordinator's time)	\$2,000	\$47,293	\$6,800	NCAC	\$56,093

4. Administrative expenses & overhead allocations for year-round G&GS program coordination & fulfillment of tourism services (including volunteer stewardship, web services/subscriptions, office supplies, occupancy, storage, insurance, etc)	\$2,000	\$21,112	0		\$23,112
<i>Volunteer hours est, 1200 hrs @ \$29.95 (Nat. Average)</i>		\$35,940			<i>Information shared for awareness of volunteer investment, not added into budget totals</i>
TOTALS (sum of each column)	\$5,000 (for year-round operations of G&GS)	\$76,997	\$6,800	NCAC	\$88,797 TOTAL PROGRAM INVESTMENT COSTS (Does not include artist commissions covered through consignment sales of artwork)

Signatures

I hereby certify that the information contained in this proposal is true and accurate to the best of my knowledge and that I have reviewed the Town of Hillsborough's Non-profit Guidelines and our organization is in compliance.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Signature: 	Date: 5/12/26
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Printed Name: Heather Tatreau

BOARD CHAIRPERSON

Signature: 	Date: 5/12/26
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Printed Name: Julia Workman

CONTACT PERSON (if different than Executive Director)

Signature:	Date:
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TOURISM BOARD- DRAFT FY27 BUDGET			
OBJECT	FY26 BUDGET	FY27 BUDGET	FY28 BUDGET
Audit Fees	8,000	10,500	10,500
Attorney Fees	200	300	300
Training/Conferences/Conventions	2,500	2,600	2,700
Advertising	300	300	300
<i>Public Hearing Notice for Budget</i>	300	300	300
Data Processing Services	4,500	4,650	4,650
<i>Submittable Online Platform Fees</i>	2,000	2,200	2,200
<i>Website Hosting & Maintenance</i>	2,500	2,450	2,450
C.S./Other	209,100	224,100	225,000
<i>Arts Council Events & Visitor Services</i>	70,000	65,000	-
<i>Burwell School Visitor Services</i>	65,000	85,000	-
<i>Hillsborough Chamber Holiday Parade</i>	10,000	10,000	-
<i>Hillsborough Chamber Holiday Tree Lighting</i>	4,600	4,600	-
<i>Orange County Museum Visitor Services</i>	59,500	59,500	-
<i>Unassigned</i>	-	-	-
C.S./Alliance For Historic Hillsborough			
<i>Visitors Center Operations</i>	266,304	272,985	275,000
C.S./Town Of Hillsborough	26,000	26,000	30,000
<i>Board Staffing</i>	26,000	26,000	30,000
Insurance	1,250	1,250	1,250
<i>Bond Insurance</i>	200	200	200
<i>Liability Insurance</i>	1,050	1,050	1,050
Miscellaneous	3,000	2,000	4,000
<i>Miscellaneous</i>	3,000	2,000	4,000
Special Projects/Partnerships	18,500	14,000	20,000
<i>Revolutionary War Interpretive Sign (2)</i>	6,000	-	-
<i>VisitHillsborough Website Update (TB, TDA)</i>		14,000	
<i>A250 Event Sponsorship</i>	12,500		
<i>Unassigned</i>	-	-	20,000
Grants Expense	12,025	20,996	20,000
<i>Alliance Holiday Nights (FY26)</i>	5,000	-	-
<i>OCP - Suessical (FY26); OCP- Anything Goes</i>	7,025	7,996	-
<i>Uproar Festival of Public Art</i>		10,000	
<i>Hillsborough Garden Club Garden Tour</i>		3,000	
<i>Unassigned</i>	-	-	20,000
6% Holdback	-	-	-
Starting in FY26 finance holding at revenue collection			
GRAND TOTAL	551,679	579,681	593,700
Assumed Revenues:	485,000	525,000	525,000
Fund Balance Needed:	66,679	54,681	

Gross Receipts Revenues- 1% Prepared Food and Beverage Tax
Hillsborough Tourism Board

Month	FY17	FY18	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24	FY25**	FY26	% change	\$ change
July	\$30,453.70	\$31,257.81	\$30,716.14	\$33,289.37	\$30,141.73	\$36,934.94	\$39,681.23	\$50,598.52	\$43,607.55	\$41,762.48	-4%	-\$1,845.07
August	\$28,976.05	\$30,831.82	\$33,373.27	\$32,927.99	\$27,747.34	\$34,194.86	\$42,952.36	\$44,315.18	\$43,734.23	\$54,951.22	26%	\$11,216.99
September	\$27,050.52	\$30,232.18	\$30,144.31	\$31,530.78	\$28,978.57	\$32,071.32	\$41,000.07	\$40,292.48	\$45,549.93	\$46,487.95	2%	\$938.02
October	\$29,910.50	\$30,910.25	\$31,212.46	\$32,507.15	\$32,439.75	\$42,225.31	\$47,306.55	\$42,885.73	\$42,100.79	\$39,044.25	-7%	-\$3,056.54
November	\$28,563.38	\$28,064.84	\$27,845.69	\$32,791.66	\$26,556.92	\$33,296.27	\$38,487.16	\$31,463.71	\$43,976.03	\$50,019.95	14%	\$6,043.92
December	\$29,221.43	\$33,632.97	\$34,700.52	\$35,102.52	\$32,051.89	\$32,841.50	\$43,540.72	\$50,623.98	\$46,152.11	\$43,056.43	-7%	-\$3,095.68
January	\$24,142.18	\$24,189.98	\$30,528.22	\$33,471.34	\$27,658.67	\$31,213.91	\$35,566.32	\$38,269.81	\$40,969.91	\$41,676.38	2%	\$706.47
Feburay	\$26,610.30	\$29,746.09	\$27,012.88	\$27,360.99	\$27,666.32	\$33,829.54	\$45,426.08	\$41,900.67	\$41,065.58	\$39,282.76	-4%	-\$1,782.82
March	\$31,319.16	\$35,203.76	\$32,737.49	\$26,125.77	\$33,038.95	\$36,250.16	\$39,965.61	\$42,895.16	\$39,988.80	\$46,081.70	15%	\$6,092.90
April	\$28,317.73	\$31,415.35	\$31,713.63	\$27,325.30	\$34,293.11	\$44,108.70	\$46,018.28	\$57,121.69	\$46,021.65			
May	\$33,371.01	\$31,731.17	\$31,266.83	\$26,026.84	\$34,501.60	\$41,870.82	\$43,563.55	\$53,602.69	\$46,813.42			
June	\$29,256.32	\$35,870.73	\$31,034.18	\$27,227.52	\$33,630.05	\$39,865.00	\$38,687.15	\$43,771.74	\$46,944.61			
YTD total	\$347,192.28	\$373,086.95	\$372,285.62	\$365,687.23	\$368,704.90	\$438,702.33	\$502,195.08	\$537,741.36	\$526,924.61	\$402,363.12		\$15,218.19

*** BEGINNING FY25 THE 6% HOLDBACK IS DEDUCTED FROM OUR MONTHLY PAYMENT.
AMOUNT ON CHART IS THE TAX COLLECTED FOR THE MONTH.**