

ACCOMMODATIONS TAX ADVISORY COMMITTEE

STAFF REPORT

Department of Finance & Administration



MEETING DATE: May 16, 2023
 SUBJECT: Society of Bluffton Artists
 PROJECT MANAGER: Shannon Milroy, Budget & Procurement Analyst

Summarized below is the application from the Society of Bluffton Artists (SOBA) for their "2023/24 Marketing Plan" for Accommodations Tax grant dollars to promote monthly and seasonal community arts events and activities in Bluffton through various media vehicles.

Requested Amount: \$15,000

Society of Bluffton Artists	Total Budget	Recommended ATAX Grant (approx. 50% of event budget)
Advertising & Promotion	\$30,000	\$15,000
Project Expenses	0	0
Total	\$30,000	\$15,000

Eligible "Tourism-Related Expenditures" per South Carolina Code of Laws:

Advertising & Promotion of Tourism:

Total budget: \$30,000

- Regional Marketing via weekly ads in local newspapers, area map, Chamber Vacation Planner, online magazines and social media outlets, ads in LOCAL LIFE Magazine, rack cards placed at hotels and airports, posters, website fees, Google ads and Chamber dues: \$12,000
- Professional Services related to the creation of advertisements and placement of ads, press releases, artist and gallery promotional materials, social media advertisements, content placement and management of SOBA web site: \$16,000
- In-house fees and promotional materials: \$2,000

Tourism Draw %: Sales reflect approximately 60% out-of-town purchases estimated using credit card origins; the guest book register indicates close to 70% out-of-town visitors.

Benefit to Tourism: SOBA collaborates with other local events and festivals like Spring Fling, MayFest, and the Bluffton Arts & Seafood Festival by participating in the events and publicizing them through social media and the SOBA newsletter, which is disbursed to over 1,000 people.

Self-Sufficiency % (Financial Need): Eligible amount requested is 50% of total budget. Additional anticipated revenue of \$15,000 will come from membership dues, art sales and income from classes.

Table Rating (Scores 0-5 with 5 satisfying the qualifications best, exception Advertising 0-15)

Amount Recommended	Advertising (15)	Tourism Draw % (5)	Benefit to Tourism (5)	Self-Sufficiency % (5)	Misc. (10)	Total of 40 possible	Comments
\$15,000	12	4	4	3	10	33	

Fiscal Year	Amount Requested	% of Budget	Advisory Committee Recommendation	Town Council Approved	Expended	Comments
2022	\$16,063	50%	\$16,063	\$16,063	\$8,698	
2021	20,000	60%	18,200	18,200	18,200	
2020	16,000	50%	12,000	12,000	12,000	

Accommodations Tax Committee Recommendations and Comments:

The Committee recommends funding \$15,000 for advertising and promotion expenses.