

ACCOMMODATIONS TAX ADVISORY COMMITTEE

STAFF REPORT

Department of Finance & Administration



MEETING DATE: August 15, 2023
 SUBJECT: Historic Bluffton Arts & Seafood Festival Inc.
 PROJECT MANAGER: Shannon Milroy, Budget & Procurement Analyst

Summarized below is the application from the Historic Bluffton Arts & Seafood Festival, Inc. for Accommodations Tax grant dollars in support of advertising and promotion, security, fire, and tourist transportation for the annual Historic Bluffton Arts & Seafood Festival.

Requested Amount: \$80,000

Historic Bluffton Arts & Seafood Festival	Total Budget		Requested ATAX Grant (approx. 39% of event budget)
Advertising & Promotion of Tourism:	\$60,000		\$60,000
Municipality & County Services:	15,000	*	6,300
Public Facilities:	30,000	*	11,600
Tourist Transportation:	5,000	*	2,100
Project Expenses:	94,650		N/A
Total	\$204,650		\$80,000

*Based on percentage directly related to tourists at event.

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

Advertising & Promotion:

Total budget \$60,000

- Print ads in magazines and newspapers, posters, the Hilton Head Island-Bluffton Chamber Vacation Planner, as well as digital, social media, radio and TV ads.

Municipality & County Services*:

Total Budget \$15,000

- Security and fire protection

Public Facilities*:

Total Budget: \$30,000

- Rental of tents, stages, tables, chairs, portable toilets and dumpsters and barges for fireworks

Tourist Transportation*:

Total Budget \$5,000

- LRTA Shuttles

*Awarded funds from each category will be based upon percentage of tourists

Project Expenses:

Total Budget: \$94,650

- Insurance, administrative fees, entertainment, donations, 5K walk/run, kids fishing tournament, supplies, printing, soiree dinner, signage/banners and merchandise

Festival/Event: Nine (9) day event held October 14 - 22, 2023

Bluffton Event: Events held throughout Old Town Bluffton

Tourism Draw %: 2023 event reported 42% of attendees were tourists.

Benefit to Tourism: The festival is over a weeklong designed to increase tourism to Bluffton.

Self-Sufficiency % (Financial Need): Requesting approximately 39% of the total budget. With a projected total of \$110,000 to be collected this year from sponsorships, vendor fees, event admissions, merchandise sales, and race registrations. An estimated \$20,000 will be used from the Historic Bluffton Arts & Seafood Festival Reserve Balance to cover the 2023 anticipated expenses.

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

Amount Recommended	Advertising (15)	Festival/ Event (5)	Bluffton Event (5)	Tourism Draw % (5)	Benefit to Tourism (5)	Self-Sufficiency % (5)	Total of 40 possible	Comments
\$80,000	14	5	5	4	5	4	37	

Previous Funding Amounts - Historic Bluffton Arts & Seafood Festival Inc.

Fiscal Year	Amount Requested	% of Budget	Advisory Committee Recommendation	Town Council Approved	Expended	Comments
2023	\$80,000	48%	\$80,000	\$80,000	\$53,528	
2022	70,000	49%	70,000	70,000	69,733	
2021	17,000	43%	17,000	17,000	15,949	
2020	43,000	30%	43,000	43,000	35,094	

Accommodations Tax Committee Recommendations and Comments:

The Committee recommends funding \$80,000 for advertising and promotion of tourism, municipality and county services, public facilities, and tourist transportation expenses.