

# ACCOMMODATIONS TAX ADVISORY COMMITTEE

## STAFF REPORT

### Department of Finance & Administration



MEETING DATE: August 20, 2024  
 SUBJECT: Coastal Conservation Association: Celebrating Conservation Weekend in Bluffton  
 PROJECT MANAGER: Shannon Milroy, Budget, Grants & Procurement Administrator

Summarized below is the application from the Coastal Conservation Association for Accommodations Tax grant dollars to support the 2024 Celebrating Conservation Weekend in Bluffton event.

**Total Budget:** \$77,895

**Requested Amount:** \$10,000

**Percentage of Request^:** 12.84%

^Includes up to 100% for Advertising & Promotion plus up to 50% of remaining expenses

Eligible Tourism-Related Expense Categories (per SC Code of Laws)	Total Budget for Category	Recommended ATAX Funds
Advertising & Promotion of Tourism or Arts and Cultural Events	\$10,000	\$10,000
Facilities for Civic and Cultural Events	18,000	
Public Facilities		*
Municipality and County Services		*
Tourist Transportation		*
Other/Ineligible Project Expenses	49,895	
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$77,895</b>	<b>\$10,000</b>

\*Reimbursement will be based on the estimated percentage of tourists provided for

#### Budgeted Expenses:

##### Advertising & Promotion:

Total budget \$10,000

- Print and digital advertising, radio, TV spots, email blasts and social media

##### Facilities for Civic and Cultural Events:

Total budget \$18,000

- Rentals other than facility

##### Other/Ineligible Project Expenses:

Total budget \$49,895

- Auctioneer, event staff, beverages, food/caterer, raffle/auction items and administrative costs.

**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
\$10,000	8	4	5	1	2	5	25	

Advertising: Of the requested funds, 100% is anticipated to be spent on marketing the event. Where advertising will take place is not identified in the application.

Festival/Event: The banquet is scheduled to take place the weekend of 9/20/2024 - 9/22/2024.

Bluffton Event: The CCA Banquet and Auction will be held in “the heart of the Bluffton Historic District”.

Tourism Draw %: Approximately 5% of attendees were from out of town during the 2023 event.

Benefit to Tourism: The Saturday evening banquet will be promoted as an opportunity to plan a weekend getaway in Bluffton where visitors can patron local restaurants, shops, and galleries and take advantage of activities such as My River boat excursions or one of the ECO tours.

Self-Sufficiency % (Financial Need): Amount requested is approximately 13% of the total budget. Other anticipated revenue streams include sponsorships and proceeds from raffles as well as live and silent auction items.

Previous Funding Amounts						
Fiscal Year	Requested Amount	% of Budget	Advisory Committee Recommendation	Town Council Approved	Expended	Comments
2024	\$10,000	13%	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$8,971.75	Final Report Submitted

Accommodations Tax Committee Recommendations and Comments:

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The Committee recommends funding \$10,000 for advertising and promotion expenses.