

ACCOMMODATIONS TAX ADVISORY COMMITTEE

STAFF REPORT

Department of Finance & Administration



MEETING DATE: May 21, 2024
 SUBJECT: Hilton Head Symphony Orchestra: 2024 Bluffton Concerts
 PROJECT MANAGER: Shannon Milroy, Budget, Grants & Procurement Administrator

Summarized below is the application from the Hilton Head Symphony Orchestra for Accommodations Tax grant dollars in support of advertising and facilities for their 2024 Bluffton Concerts.

Total Budget: \$89,709

Requested Amount: \$43,632

Percentage of Request^: 48.64%

^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	\$16,423	\$16,423
Facilities for Civic and Cultural Events	26,950	26,950
Public Facilities	259	259
Municipality and County Services	-	*
Tourist Transportation	-	*
Other/Ineligible Project Expenses	46,077	
Total	\$89,709	\$43,632

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

Budgeted Expenses:

Advertising & Promotion:

Total budget \$16,423

- Includes an advertising blitz, social media and news articles with interviews and photos throughout South Carolina as well as adjoining states media contacts.

Facilities for Civic and Cultural Events:

Total budget \$26,950

- Includes venue, tent, stage, HVAC, sound and lighting equipment rentals.

Public Facilities:

Total budget \$259

- Port-o-Lets rental; amount requested is prorated at the estimated tourist percentage.

Other/Ineligible Project Expenses:

Total budget \$46,077

- Guest artist and orchestra musician expenses, production labor and security, music library and general/administrative 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
\$43,632	9	4	5	3	4	4	29	

Advertising: Of the requested funds, approximately 38% is related to advertising and promotion. Advertising is typically printed in the Bluffton Sun, Hilton Head Sun, Local Life Magazine and on Social Media, broadcast on WTOG and WHHI and South Carolina Radio, via email blasts and brochures and rack cards placed at the Savannah/Hilton Head Airport as well as Bluffton hotels and downtown businesses.

Festival/Event: The HHSO will perform two separate concerts in Bluffton; one in October during the Arts & Seafood Festival and one in November.

Bluffton Event: The October Outdoor Pops Concert will be held at Martin Family Park; in November, the Holiday Pops Concert will be held at the St. Gregory the Great Catholic Church Parish Life Center.

Tourism Draw %: HHSO collaborates with the Arts & Seafood Festival to hold the October concert during the 9-day event; 20% of the anticipated 1,100 attendees are tourists. The Holiday Pops Concert is held at a time when out-of-town guests are visiting and attend with family and friends who are local residents.

Benefit to Tourism: The October show enhances the Arts & Seafood Festival by offering a free show to attendees while the November performance provides an event for out-of-town guests, some of whom may stay in Bluffton hotels, that are here for the holiday season.

Self-Sufficiency % (Financial Need): The request is approximately 49% of HHSO's total projected events budget of \$89,709. Other sources of income include ticket sales, private support and additional public support.

Previous Funding Amounts						
Fiscal Year	Requested Amount	% of Budget	Advisory Committee Recommendation	Town Council Approved	Expended	Comments
2023	\$48,628	54%	\$48,628	\$48,628	\$40,496.85	2023 Bluffton Concerts
2022	\$38,374	45%	\$38,374	\$38,374	\$33,499	2022 Bluffton Concerts

Accommodations Tax Committee Recommendations and Comments:

The Committee recommends funding \$43,632 for advertising and promotion and facilities for civic and cultural events expenses.