

ACCOMMODATIONS TAX ADVISORY COMMITTEE

STAFF REPORT

Department of Finance & Administration



MEETING DATE: May 21, 2024
 SUBJECT: Society of Bluffton Artists: 30th Anniversary
 PROJECT MANAGER: Shannon Milroy, Budget, Grants & Procurement Administrator

Summarized below is the application from the Society of Bluffton Artists (SOBA) for Accommodations Tax grant dollars in support of advertising and promotion for the organization's 30th Anniversary.

Total Budget: \$250,846.85

Requested Amount: \$20,000

Percentage of Request^: 8%

^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	\$40,000	\$20,000
Facilities for Civic and Cultural Events	-	
Public Facilities	-	
Municipality and County Services	-	*
Tourist Transportation	-	*
Other/Ineligible Project Expenses	210,846.85	
Total	\$250,846.85	\$20,00

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

Budgeted Expenses:

Advertising & Promotion:

Total Budget: \$40,000

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

Other/Ineligible Project Expenses:

Total Budget: \$210,846.85

- Includes art class expenses, artist commissions, operating expenses, insurance, rent, and utilities

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

Amount Recommend	Advertising (15)	Tourism Draw % (5)	Benefit to Tourism (5)	Self- Sufficiency % (5)	Misc. (10)	Total of 40 possible	Comments
\$20,000	11	4	4	5	9	33	

Advertising: This request is 100% related to advertising and promotion. Specifics regarding where the advertising will be placed was not indicated in the application.

Tourism Draw %: Over 70% of gallery guests are from out of the area.

Benefit to Tourism: SOBA sponsors or participates in all local festivals, art walks and everything that Old Town Bluffton Merchants Society schedules.

Self-Sufficiency % (Financial Need): The request is approximately 8% of SOBA's total annual projected budget of \$250,847. Other sources of income include membership dues, the Holiday Boutique, Judge Show and art sales.

Previous Funding Amounts						
Fiscal Year	Requested Amount	% of Budget	Advisory Committee Recommendation	Town Council Approved	Expended	Comments
2023	\$15,000	50%	\$15,000	\$15,000	\$14,402.49	
2022	\$16,063	50%	\$16,063	\$16,063	\$15,178.16	
2021	\$20,000	60%	\$18,200	\$18,200	\$18,200	

Accommodations Tax Committee Recommendations and Comments:

The Committee recommends funding \$20,000 for advertising and promotion of tourism.