

Print**Accommodations Tax Grant Application - Submission #3370****Date Submitted: 12/22/2023****TOWN OF BLUFFTON ACCOMMODATIONS TAX GRANT APPLICATION****Accommodations Tax Grant Application Instructions**[Accommodations Tax Grant Application Instructions](#)**Accommodations Tax Grant Application Instructions***

☒ I have read and acknowledged the Town of Bluffton, SC Accommodations Tax Grant Application Instructions.

Application Date*

12/22/2023

Full Legal Organization Name*

Gullah Traveling Theater, Inc.

Project Name*

Gullah Kinfolk Come to Bluffton

Total Project Costs*

42291

Total ATAX Funds Requested*

26841

Percent of Total Budget

63%

Address*

711 Bladen Street

Street Address Line 2

Suite #310

City*

Beaufort

State*

SC

Zip Code*

29902

Applicant must be designated as a non-profit entity to receive ATAX funds. Please include a copy of your organization's non-profit status, such as your IRS Designation Letter.*

IRS Exemption Ltr.jpg

Please upload a copy of your current Town of Bluffton Business License, which is required of all applicants.*

GTI- 2023 Bluffton bus license.pdf

Organization Primary Point of Contact**First Name***

Denise

Last Name*

Bullitt

Title*

Organizational Strategist

Phone Number*

8435930904

E-mail Address*

sankofainspirit@gmail.com

Organization Secondary Point of Contact**First Name**

Anita Singleton

Last Name

Prather

Title

Executive Director

Phone Number

8432635229

E-mail Address

auntpearliesue@yahoo.com

Project Description: *

In the heart of the Southeast's most sought-after travel destinations lies a cultural treasure that captivates the hearts of visitors from all corners of the nation. Meet Anita Singleton Prather, affectionately known as Aunt Pearl Sue, and the driving force behind the Gullah Kinfolk Traveling Theater (GTTI).

For over two decades, this Sea Island native has been a beacon of storytelling excellence, using theater arts, live narratives, and educational events to weave the rich tapestry of Gullah Geechee heritage. Anita's performances are not mere spectacles; they are celebrations of Lowcountry history and culture. With the rhythmic beats of foot-stomping music and soul-stirring songs, she transports her audiences back in time to a place where history comes alive.

Anita Singleton Prather's impact extends far beyond the shores of South Carolina. Her national recognition has made her a magnet for tourists, drawing in crowds from major East Coast cities like New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Washington, D.C., as well as from southern gems such as Columbia, Charleston, Augusta, Atlanta, Savannah, Tampa, and Jacksonville. Even travelers from the northwest, like Cleveland, Chicago, and Chattanooga, are lured to our region by her mesmerizing performances.

Many that come are drawn to our historic Beaufort and St. Helena Island. But others desire the suburban luxury of Bluffton and Hilton Head, both deeply woven into the history and culture that call these guests to our region.

Recognizing the increasing interest of attendees to explore beyond Historic Beaufort, the Gullah Traveling Theater is excited to announce its plans to include Bluffton as one of its performance venues in 2024. Furthermore, they will be unveiling two new plays in the same year. This strategic move aims to invite loyal patrons to return to familiar surroundings while experiencing something fresh and captivating.

In addition to enjoying a captivating show, the GTTI collaborates with local vendors and partners to offer bundled group tours, dining experiences, and historical sightseeing. From the Historic Ruins of Palmetto Bluff to the Historic Campbell Chapel African Methodist Episcopal Church and the Cordray House, Bluffton boasts a treasure trove of cultural assets that make it an ideal setting for expanding the Gullah Traveling Theater's storytelling.

With your generous funding support, the Gullah Traveling Theater intends to promote its newly produced live performance plays for 2024 across its growing footprint. This will entice patrons to plan multi-night stays in the charming Town of Bluffton. We will work in partnership with Bluffton's Communications and Community Outreach team to schedule events that complement local festivities, capturing the essence, culture, and character of Bluffton. Events like the Martin Luther King, Jr., and Juneteenth celebrations, Mayfest, and the Arts and Seafood Festival present golden opportunities to align performance dates. Our messaging will enthusiastically encourage historical tours, museum visits, local dining experiences, entertainment, and even the chance to worship in a historic church. This makes every date with the Gullah Traveling Theater a multifaceted draw for unforgettable 2- and 3-night getaways.

Included is our Schedule of Events for the Bluffton community in 2024. Each is at a distinct venue designed to test the marketplace and assist us in learning the entertainment appetite of this Lowcountry community. While the venues seat about 200 people each, we feel comfortable that this schedule will engage the general public, promote tourism, and broaden Bluffton's cultural assets.

All advertising/marketing paid for with Town of Bluffton Accommodations Tax dollars must incorporate the branding shown here: [Town of Bluffton Brand Standards](#). The use of the Town's logo must meet the design standards outlined at the aforementioned link and be approved by the Town. Designs may be submitted electronically using this [link](#). Please allow five (5) business days for approval.

Impact on or Benefit to Tourism:*

Supporting this endeavor will significantly bolster local tourism. The Gullah Traveling Theater, with its established and growing patronage, has cultivated a devoted following that returns to the Lowcountry year after year. As we recognize the increasing appetite among our patrons to venture beyond Historic Beaufort, expanding into Bluffton becomes a logical progression.

Introducing new theatrical productions in this vibrant area provides yet another compelling reason for our guests to revisit and delve deeper into the rich tapestry of the Lowcountry. The ripple effect will be felt across Bluffton, with hotels experiencing a surge in overnight bookings, restaurants, and shops enjoying increased foot traffic and boosted sales. The allocation of ATAX dollars amplifies our capacity to employ a multifaceted marketing strategy, reaching not only our loyal GTTI constituents but also the wider public in areas where we have experienced significant appeal.

In collaboration with Bluffton Tourism staff, we will utilize these resources to maximize our outreach, spotlighting other community events and tourism treasures, just as we have consistently done over the last 20+ years.

“Tourist” means a person who does not reside within the corporate limits of the Town or within a Town zip code that takes a trip into the corporate limits of the Town for any purpose, except daily commuting to and from work.

“Travel” and “Tourism” mean the action and activities of people taking trips outside their home communities for any purpose, except daily commuting to and from work.

Project/Event Start & End Date:*

1/31/2024

—

12/16/2024

Multi-Year Project/Event?*☐ Yes☒ No**Permits Required, if any:***

no

Additional Comments:

We are not aware of any specific permits required beyond the Bluffton Business License but if any are identified, we will be happy to comply.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION**Project/Event Line Item Budget***

Bluffton ATAX budget 2023-2024, revised.pdf

Most Recent Fiscal Year Balance Sheet and Profit and Loss Accounting Statement*

GTTInc Financial Statements - November 17 2023.pdf

Financial Guarantee*

GTTI Board Resolution ATAX Bluffton 2023.pdf

Applicant must provide a copy of official minutes wherein the sponsoring organization approves the project and commits the organization to financial responsibility for carrying it out to the stage of completion.

Please list all contributions made to the project/event by the sponsoring organization. This shall include both monetary and in-kind goods and/or services, as applicable.

Contribution ***Amount/Value***

Projected ticket sales

\$30,750

Contribution***Amount/Value***

Vendor Marketplace fees

\$750

Have you requested, received or been awarded funding from other sources or organizations (including additional ATAX funds from other local entities) for this project/event?*

☐ Yes☒ No

If yes, please list all sources and amounts:

Funding Source***Amount*****Funding Source****Amount****Funding Source****Amount****Funding Source****Amount**

PRIOR RECIPIENT'S REPORT

If your organization has received ATAX funding from the Town of Bluffton in previous years, you must complete the below information. Only the information for the most recent round of funding is required.

If you have not received ATAX funding from the Town of Bluffton, please answer "No" and skip this section, and sign and submit your application.

Has your organization previously received ATAX funds from the Town of Bluffton?*

- ☐ Yes
☒ No

Project/Event Name*

Year*

Amount Awarded*

Was project completed?*

- ☐ Yes
☐ No

If project was not completed, please explain:

How were the funds used?

What impact did this project/event have on the community or benefit tourism? Describe how the tourism data was measured.

Please provide the project/event budgets for the previous two (2) years.

No file chosen

Additional Comments

All applicants will be required to come before the Accommodations Tax Advisory Committee (ATAC) and answer any and all questions when scheduled to do so.

Any organization awarded funds for advertising/marketing must incorporate the Bluffton Heart of the Lowcountry brand logo in all promotional materials and advertising.

The South Carolina Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) defines a “public body” as any organization or corporation supported in whole or in part by public funds or expending public funds. If awarded, your organization’s acceptance of public funds from the Town of Bluffton may cause your organization to come within the meaning of “public body” as defined by the Freedom of Information Act. S.C. Code Ann. §30-4-10, et seq. (Supp. 2002). Accordingly, this is to advise that by accepting public funds, your organization may be subject to the South Carolina Freedom of Information Act.

By submitting this application, the organization certifies that it has read and understands the paragraphs above. The organization additionally certifies that it does not discriminate in any manner on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, sex, disability, religion, or language and that all funds that may be received by the applicant organization from the Town of Bluffton, South Carolina will be solely used for the purposes set forth in this application and will comply with all laws and statutes, including the South Carolina Code of Laws regarding Allocations of Accommodations Tax Revenues.

By typing your name below, you are signing this application electronically. You agree that your electronic signature is the legal equivalent of your manual signature on this application.

Signature*

Signatory's Title or Position*

Denise M. Bullitt

Business Strategist

First, Middle Initial, Last Name

INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE
P. O. BOX 2508
CINCINNATI, OH 45201

DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

Date: **AUG 17 2013**

GULLAH TRAVELING THEATER INC
1010 MONSON ST
BEAUFORT, SC 29902

Employer Identification Number:
46-1806147
DLN:
17053071332003
Contact Person:
LORI PERRY ID# 31107
Contact Telephone Number:
(877) 829-5500
Accounting Period Ending:
December 31
Public-Charity Status:
170(b)(1)(A)(vi)
Form 990 Required:
Yes
Effective Date of Exemption:
December 17, 2012
Contribution Deductibility:
Yes
Addendum Applies:
No

Dear Applicant:

We are pleased to inform you that upon review of your application for tax exempt status we have determined that you are exempt from Federal income tax under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Contributions to you are deductible under section 170 of the Code. You are also qualified to receive tax deductible bequests, devises, transfers or gifts under section 2055, 2106 or 2522 of the Code. Because this letter could help resolve any questions regarding your exempt status, you should keep it in your permanent records.

Organizations exempt under section 501(c)(3) of the Code are further classified as either public charities or private foundations. We determined that you are a public charity under the Code section(s) listed in the heading of this letter.

Please see enclosed Publication 4221-PC, Compliance Guide for 501(c)(3) Public Charities, for some helpful information about your responsibilities as an exempt organization.

Sincerely,



Director, Exempt Organizations

Enclosure: Publication 4221-PC

Letter 947 (DO/CG)

TOWN OF BLUFFTON

September 26, 2023

DATE ISSUED

April 30, 2024

EXPIRES

LIC-09-23-052130

LICENSE NUMBER

019805-2023

BUSINESS ID

Gullah Traveling Theater, Inc

COMPANY NAME

Gullah Traveling Theater, Inc

DBA NAME

**Non Profit - Promoters of Performing Arts, Sports, and Similar Events with
Facilities**

BUSINESS TYPE

Community Theater

DESCRIPTION/CONDITIONS

711 Bladen ST Ste# 310

Beaufort SC 29902

BUSINESS LOCATION

711 Bladen ST Ste #310

Beaufort SC 29902

MAILING LOCATION

ALL BUSINESSES LOCATED IN THE TOWN OF BLUFFTON MUST POST THE BUSINESS LICENSE IN A VISIBLE LOCATION WITHIN THE BUSINESS LOCATION AS REFERENCED ABOVE AND IS VALID FOR THIS LOCATION ONLY. ALL BUSINESSES LOCATED OUTSIDE THE TOWN OF BLUFFTON MUST KEEP A CURRENT COPY WHILE CONDUCTING BUSINESS INSIDE THE TOWN OF BLUFFTON. CHANGE IN LOCATION OR OWNERSHIP REQUIRES A NEW LICENSE. IF THE BUSINESS IS CLOSED, CONTACT OUR OFFICE AT 843-706-4501 TO UPDATE ACCOUNT.

Section 6-21 Purpose and Duration of Business License

The business license levied by this ordinance is for the purpose of providing such regulation as may be required for the business subject thereto and for the purpose of raising revenue for the general fund through a privilege tax. Each license shall be issued for one (1) calendar year ending December 31. The provisions of this ordinance and the rates herein shall remain in effect from year to year as amended by Town Council.

Renewal Process

Renewal notices are mailed in January of each year to all active businesses.

Section 6-22-A License Tax

The required license tax shall be paid for each business subject hereto according to the applicable rate classification on or before the thirtieth (30th) day of April in each year.

Gullah Traveling Theater, Inc

711 Bladen ST Ste #310

Beaufort SC 29902

Construction within the Town of Bluffton
shall only occur during the hours of
7:00am - 7:00pm Monday thru Saturday
and 12:00pm - 7:00pm on Sunday.



Gullah Traveling Theater Comes to Bluffton

Schedule of Events

2024

January 31, 2024

The Last Stand Book Launch Party – Free to the Public

Featuring Aunt Pearlle Sue and the Gullah Kinfolk Songs & Story

Gumbo Tasting Event – \$25pp

Gullah Gumbo Tasting Menu:

Gumbo – Chicken, Seafood, and Veggie, Non-tomato Seafood

Rice, Cornbread, Dump Cake & Iced Tea

Location: **The Rotary Community Center at Oscar Frazier Park**

Co-Sponsors: The Storybook Shoppe, Bluffton, SC

Bluffton Farmer's Market

The Town of Bluffton

July 13 – 14, 2024

Let the Cricle Be Unbroken – Celebrating American Independence Gullah-Style

Starring Aunt Pearlle Sue and the Gullah Kinfolk Traveling Theater

3-Shows: Saturday matinee, Saturday evening, and Sunday matinee.

Tickets: \$35pp

Location: **May River Theater**

Co-Sponsors: May River Theater, The Town of Bluffton

December 14, 2024

Gullah Christmas 2024

Starring Aunt Pearlle Sue and the Gullah Kinfolk Traveling Theater

2-Shows: Saturday matinee and Saturday evening

Tickets: \$25pp

African Christmas Marketplace – Free to the Public

Location: **First Zion Missionary Baptist Church**

Co-Sponsors: The Town of Bluffton, First Zion Missionary Baptist Church

GTI
ATAX BUDGETS
 2024

12/22/2023
 dmb
 draft #5

FUNDING ALLOCATIONS		ATAX Bluffton	Description
	Ticket Sales		
	The Last Stand - Book Signing & Gumbo Tasting Event	\$ 3,750	150 tickets @ \$25
	May River Theater	\$ 15,750	3-shows/150 tickets @/\$35 per ticket
	Gullah Christmas	\$ 9,750	2-shows/\$25 per ticket
	AD Sales	\$ 1,500	playbills/souvenir books
	Vendors		
	Christmas Marketplace	\$ 750	10 vendors @\$75
	TOTAL REVENUE	\$ 31,500	
	Projected Expenses		
	Program Expenses		
	Venue Rental	\$ -	InKind - Rotary Center in Oscar Frazier Park, May River Theater, First Zion Missionary Baptist Church
	Program Supplies	\$ 300	Wristbands, name tags, sanitation
	Marketing & Public Relations	\$ 8,500	tourism ATAX funds
	Website	\$ 500	updating website for e-commerce & market draw
	Cast Meals	\$ 750	Staff and cast meals for performance & final rehearsals
	Printing	\$ 500	Playbills, tickets, rack cards, posters
	Set/Props	\$ 500	Set build out, materials & supplies
	Audio Engineer, Sound & Lighting	\$ 1,500	May River Theater
	Sales Commissions	\$ 1,250	25% of sales over \$300
	Total Program Expenses	\$ 13,800	
	Staff Salaries		
	Executive Director & Producer	\$ 9,450	\$90K+18% benefits, 33% = \$26,550
	Administrative Assistant	\$ 2,549	\$48K+18% benefits, 15% = \$8,496
	Project Director/Manager	\$ 4,868	\$55K+18% benefits, 25% = \$16,225
	Human Resource Manager	\$ 2,549	\$48K+18% benefits, 15% = \$8,496
	Development Support	\$ 1,440	\$24K*20% = \$4,800
	Production Assistant	\$ 3,186	\$36K+18% benefits, 25% = \$10,620
	Historical Performance Artists	\$ 16,250	\$2,500 Book event, \$7,500 May River, \$6250 Gullah Christmas
	Stage Support	\$ 2,000	\$1500 May River, \$500 First Zion
	Total Staff & Contract Salaries	\$ 42,291	
	Administrative Costs		
	Insurance	\$ 1,500	
	Custodial Services & Maintenance	\$ 750	May River Theater, First Zion Missionary Baptist
	Total Admin Costs	\$ 2,250	
	TOTAL ALL EXPENSES	\$ 58,341	
	Net Funding Needs	\$ (26,841)	

Gullah Traveling Theater, Inc.

Statement of Financial Position

As of November 17, 2023

	TOTAL
ASSETS	
Current Assets	
Bank Accounts	
1000 Checking-6114 (0268mt/5289is/5297ofc/7337ap)	132,390.79
1030 Payroll Checking-3377	20,488.93
1080 Sierra Leone Chking-4508	1,642.02
1090 Sunshine Club Checking-2940	780.00
Total Bank Accounts	\$155,301.74
Other Current Assets	
Undeposited Funds-1	3,470.00
Total Other Current Assets	\$3,470.00
Total Current Assets	\$158,771.74
TOTAL ASSETS	\$158,771.74
LIABILITIES AND EQUITY	
Liabilities	
Current Liabilities	
Other Current Liabilities	
2100 Direct Deposit Payable	0.00
2200 Payroll Liabilities	
2201 Federal Taxes (941/944)	2,545.77
2202 SC Income Tax	379.15
2203 SC Unemployment Tax	0.00
Total 2200 Payroll Liabilities	2,924.92
2300 Anita P. Loans	0.00
South Carolina Department of Revenue Payable	0.00
Total Other Current Liabilities	\$2,924.92
Total Current Liabilities	\$2,924.92
Total Liabilities	\$2,924.92
Equity	
3000 Opening Balance Equity	4,173.76
3200 Unrestricted Net Assets	6,209.90
Net Revenue	145,463.16
Total Equity	\$155,846.82
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND EQUITY	\$158,771.74

Gullah Traveling Theater, Inc.

Statement of Activity

January 1 - November 17, 2023

	TOTAL
Revenue	
4001 Restricted Grants	
4001-1 Foundation-Restricted	200,000.00
Total 4001 Restricted Grants	200,000.00
4002 Unrestricted Grants	
4002-1 Foundation-Unrestricted	30,000.00
4002-2 Gov't (federal/state/county)-Unrestricted	39,719.00
Total 4002 Unrestricted Grants	69,719.00
4003 Show Revenue/Catering	73,673.70
4004 Donations	
4004-1 Business/Individual Donations	2,135.00
4004-3 Sierra Leon Project	175.00
Total 4004 Donations	2,310.00
4004-4 In-Kind Donations Rcvd	0.00
Sunshine Club Membership Dues	540.00
Total Revenue	\$346,242.70
GROSS PROFIT	\$346,242.70
Expenditures	
5220 1099 Contractor Pay/Professional Servs	1,086.25
5220-1 Accounting & Legal	9,520.00
5220-2 Bookkeeper	13,041.00
5220-3 Cast Member	47,125.00
5220-4 Catering	4,014.75
5220-5 Consulting	13,150.00
5220-6 Founder's Salary	2,000.00
5220-7 Misc. Laborer Pay	2,205.00
Total 5220 1099 Contractor Pay/Professional Servs	92,142.00
5300 Operating Expense	235.20
5310 Advertising & Marketing	1,848.69
5310-1 Audio/Video Production	1,000.00
5310-2 Printing, Publication & Radio	4,492.98
Total 5310 Advertising & Marketing	7,341.67
Total 5300 Operating Expense	7,576.87
5400 Auto	
5400-1 Fuel	2,301.14
5400-2 License & Registration	50.00
Total 5400 Auto	2,351.14
5410 Bank Charges & Fees	113.02
5420 Merchant BANKCD Fee	349.00
5440 Dues & subscriptions	969.86
5450 Office Supplies & Software	3,389.90

Gullah Traveling Theater, Inc.

Statement of Activity

January 1 - November 17, 2023

	TOTAL
5460 Postage & Shipping	263.90
5470 Supplies & Materials	622.29
5480 Taxes & Licenses	1,059.00
5490 Insurance	286.02
5520 Equipment Rental	79.76
5521 Rent to own bldg.	321.00
5522 Storage Unit Rental	2,027.00
5526 Venues/Practice Facilities	9,865.00
5600 Telephone & Internet	415.59
5700 Event/Program Expenses	17.03
5700-1 Cast Member Meals	596.47
5700-2 Costume/Decorations/Props < \$2500	1,474.42
5700-4 Reimbursable Expenses	4,446.88
Total 5700 Event/Program Expenses	6,534.80
5800 Travel	
5800-1 Lodging	5,602.63
5800-2 Meals	1,387.43
5800-3 Transportation (bus/plane/taxi/vehicle/etc.)	5,457.17
Total 5800 Travel	12,447.23
5900 Charitable Contributions/Donations	2,000.00
5910 Sierra Leon Project Expenses	2,710.00
Total 5900 Charitable Contributions/Donations	4,710.00
Business Meals	276.41
Conferences/Seminars/Webinars	95.00
Office Rental - Suite 310	4,203.90
Office/General Administrative Expenditures	171.88
Other Business Expenses	193.92
Payroll Expenses	
Taxes	3,174.08
Wages	41,491.29
Total Payroll Expenses	44,665.37
QuickBooks Payments Fees	499.68
Sunshine Club Expenses	150.00
Total Expenditures	\$195,779.54
NET OPERATING REVENUE	\$150,463.16
Other Expenditures	
In-Kind Donations Received	5,000.00
Total Other Expenditures	\$5,000.00
NET OTHER REVENUE	\$ -5,000.00
NET REVENUE	\$145,463.16

Gullah Traveling Theater, Inc.
Board of Directors Meeting – ADDENDUM, excerpt
Minutes
September 10, 2023

The Board of Directors supports the submission of a proposal to the Town of Bluffton's Accommodations Tax Committee to bring three live performances in 2024. Each of these productions will include 1-general admission and 3-student performances. Estimated total revenue will be between \$42,000 and \$47,000. We will request up to \$20,000 from Bluffton's ATAX funding to increase the advertising and marketing reach for these 3-productions.

Approved by the Board of Directors, September 27, 2023.

Attested to by Weller Thomas, Board Chair

Weller R. Thomas, Chairman

Milroy, Shannon

From: Denise Bullitt <sankofainspirit@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 4, 2024 9:03 AM
To: Milroy, Shannon
Subject: December 31, 2023 ATAC application follow up

WARNING!

This email originated from outside of the Town of Bluffton's email system. DO NOT click any links or open any attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Good morning, Shannon

In reviewing our application, I noted an error in the amounts listed for Total Project Costs and Percent of Total Budget. If possible, please add an addendum to indicate the correct amounts which align with the submitted budget.

Total Project Costs = \$58,341
Percent of Total Budget = 46%

Many thanks!

--

Denise

Denise Mason Bullitt, CPA, M.Div.

Grant and Business Strategist

Gullah Traveling Theater, Inc.

"Celebrating Black History 365 Days a Year!"

711 Bladen Street, #318

Beaufort, SC 29902

843-593-0904 (cell)