

ACCOMMODATIONS TAX ADVISORY COMMITTEE

STAFF REPORT

Department of Finance & Administration



MEETING DATE: February 20, 2024
 SUBJECT: The Rotary Club of Bluffton: 2024 Mayfest Weekend in Bluffton
 PROJECT MANAGER: Shannon Milroy, Budget, Grants & Procurement Administrator

Summarized below is the application from The Rotary Club of Bluffton for Accommodations Tax grant dollars in support of advertising and tourist transportation for the 2024 Mayfest Weekend in Bluffton.

Total Budget: \$52,000
Requested Amount: \$15,000
Percentage of Request^: 29%

^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		Budget Items Recommended for ATAX Funds
Advertising & Promotion of Tourism or Arts and Cultural Events	\$15,000		\$ 15,000
Facilities for Civic and Cultural Events	5,000		
Public Facilities	-		
Municipality and County Services	7,000	*	5,000
Tourist Transportation	5,000	*	5,000
Other/Ineligible Project Expenses	20,000		
Total	\$52,000		\$ 25,000

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

Budgeted Eligible Expenses:

Advertising & Promotion:

Total budget \$15,000

- Types of advertising and promotion not specifically indicated in application

Facilities for Civic and Cultural Events:

Total budget \$5,000

- Trash/Restrooms for attendees

Municipality and County Services:

Total budget \$7,000

- Event Security/Police

Tourist Transportation:

Total budget \$5,000

- Shuttles for attendees

Other/Ineligible Project Expenses:

Total Budget: \$20,000

- Entertainment, Vendor License, and beer and merchandise for resell.

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
\$15,000	12	5	53	5	5	35		

Advertising: Comprises 100% of the requested funds. Specific markets, publications or other vehicles of promotion were not indicated in the application.

Festival/Event: Mayfest is a one-day festival held the Saturday of Mother's Day weekend each year from 10 a.m. - 5 p.m. Food, music, craft and artisan vendors line the streets to celebrate the quirky, eclectic, different and unique people and identity of Bluffton.

Bluffton Event: Mayfest is held in Old Town Bluffton.

Tourism Draw %: Tourists comprised 23% of the 2023 Mayfest Event attendees; zip codes were collected on the shuttles.

Benefit to Tourism: Additional advertising dollars would allow for the event to be marketed in out-of-town markets as a Mother's Day weekend destination, thus increasing Bluffton tourism numbers and revenue.

Self-Sufficiency % (Financial Need): Eligible amount requested is 29% of total expenses budget. Revenues of \$67,000 (not including an ATAX award) are anticipated from merchandise and concession sales, vendor fees and sponsorships.

Previous Funding Amounts						
Fiscal Year	Requested Amount	% of Budget	Advisory Committee Recommendation	Town Council Approved	Expended	Comments
2023	\$15,000	36%	\$15,000	\$15,000	\$11,071.04	"Expended" figure included on submitted Final Report; Reimbursement request/documentation not yet received

Accommodations Tax Committee Recommendations and Comments:

The Committee recommends funding \$25,000 for advertising and promotion, restrooms, trash, and trolley service expenses.