

# ACCOMMODATIONS TAX ADVISORY COMMITTEE

## STAFF REPORT

### Department of Finance & Administration



MEETING DATE: February 20, 2024  
 SUBJECT: Gullah Traveling Theater, Inc.: Gullah Kinfolk Come to Bluffton  
 PROJECT MANAGER: Shannon Milroy, Budget, Grants & Procurement Administrator

Summarized below is the application from Gullah Traveling Theater, Inc. for Accommodations Tax grant dollars in support of advertising and promotion and facilities costs for their Gullah Kinfolk Come to Bluffton performances.

**Total Budget:** \$58,341  
**Requested Amount:** \$26,841  
**Percentage of Request^:** 46%

^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	\$9,000	\$ 9,000
Facilities for Civic and Cultural Events	750	750
Public Facilities	-	
Municipality and County Services	-	*
Tourist Transportation	-	*
Other/Ineligible Project Expenses	48,591	
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$58,341</b>	<b>\$ 9,750</b>

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

#### Budgeted Eligible Expenses:

##### Advertising & Promotion:

Total budget \$9,000

- Marketing and Public Relations (\$8,500) as well as the printing of playbills, rack cards and posters (\$500). Marketing messages will suggest multi-night stays in Bluffton and encourage historical tours, museum visits, local dining, entertainment and worship in a historic church.

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

Total Budget: \$750

- Custodial Services and Maintenance of the facilities

##### Project Expenses:

Total Budget: \$48,591

- Insurance costs, staff salaries, updating web site, cast meals, set/props, and sales commissions

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
\$26,841	8	5	5	3	4	4	29	

**Advertising:** Comprises approximately 92% of the eligible budgeted expenses within the grant request. Specific markets, publications or other vehicles of promotion were not indicated in the application.

**Festival/Event:** 2024 Schedule of Events include performances at a Book Launch and Gumbo Tasting Event on January 31, 2024, three shows of "Let the Circle Be Unbroken - Celebrating American Independence Gullah-Style" from July 13-14, 2024 and two performances of "Gullah Christmas 2024" which will both be held on December 14, 2024.

**Bluffton Event:** Locations for each set of performances are as follows: January 31 - The Rotary Community Center at Oscar Fraizer Park, July 13-14 at May River Theatre, and December 14 at First Zion Misionary Baptist Church.

**Tourism Draw %:** These performances have not taken place in Bluffton before so statistics are unknown.

**Benefit to Tourism:** Performing in Bluffton will draw the Gullah Traveling Theater's devoted following to the area, leading to overnight stays and a bolster to local restaurants and shops.

**Self-Sufficiency % (Financial Need):** The request is around 46% of the total budget. The remaining expenses will be paid for from proceeds from ticket and ad sales in the performance playbills as well as vendor fees at the Christmas Marketplace.

Previous Funding Amounts						
Fiscal Year	Requested Amount	% of Budget	Advisory Committee Recommendation	Town Council Approved	Expended	Comments
n/a						

Accommodations Tax Committee Recommendations and Comments:

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The Committee recommends funding \$9,750 for advertising and promotion and facilities for civic and cultural events expenses.