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## City Council Special Meeting

**DEPARTMENT:** Economic Development

**FROM:** Alex Philips, Economic Development Director

**MEETING:** July 22, 2024

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**SUBJECT:**

Consider approval of a resolution awarding FY 2025 Hotel Occupancy Tax funds for tourism activities (*Staff Presenter: Alex Philips, Economic Development Director*)

**SUMMARY:**

The City accepts applications from organizations seeking funds to be used in the development and promotion of tourism-related activities that are designed to promote tourism and attract overnight visitors to the City of Burleson. The funds primary use is intended to benefit the convention and hotel industries through the promotion of tourism to the City. The use of Hotel/Motel Occupancy tax funds is dictated by State law and defined in the Texas Tax Code (Subtitle D. Local Hotel/Motel Occupancy Taxes; Chapter 351. Municipal Hotel/Motel Occupancy Taxes).

Use of the approved Hotel/Motel Occupancy Tax funds, must by law, directly enhance and promote tourism and the convention and hotel industry AND fall within one of the statutorily provided categories. The categories for expenditure of the Hotel/Motel Occupancy Tax are as follows:

**Visitor Information Center.** Funds may be used for the acquisition of sites for the construction, improvement, enlarging, equipping, repairing, operation and maintenance of convention center facilities or visitor information centers, or both.

**Furnishing of Facilities and Registration of Visitors.** Funds may be used for the furnishing of facilities, personnel and materials for the registration of convention delegates or registrants.

**Advertising, Promotional Programs and Activities.** Funds may be expended for advertising, conducting solicitations and promotional programs to attract tourists and convention delegates or registrants to the municipality or its vicinity.

**Arts Promotion.** Occupancy tax funds may be used for the encouragement, promotion, improvement and application of the arts, including instrumental and vocal music, dance, drama, folk art, creative writing, architecture, design and allied fields, painting, sculpture, photography,

graphic and craft arts, motion pictures, radio, television, tape and sound recording and other arts related to the presentation, performance, execution and exhibition of these major art forms.

**Historical Restoration and Preservation.** Funds may be used for historical restoration and preservation projects or activities or advertising and conducting solicitations and promotional programs to encourage tourists and convention delegates to visit preserved historic sites or museums. (As of the date of the document the City has not dedicated any reserve funding to the acquisition of a convention center or visitor facilities and such may not allocate more than 50% of the occupancy tax revenue).

**Tourist Transportation System.** Funds may be used to transport the attendees to different tourism venues. In 2007, the legislature authorized the use of city hotel tax for any sized city to cover the costs of transporting tourists from hotels to and near the city to any of the following destinations:

- the commercial center of the city
- a convention center in the city
- other hotels in or near the city
- tourist attractions in or near the city

Applications for Fiscal Year '25 were accepted from area organizations seeking to increase tourism in Burleson through an event or activity. The City received eight (8) applications from six (6) organizations totaling \$162,300 in grant requests. The application submitted by North Texas Jellystone Park is contingent on them being up to date on Hotel/Motel taxes no later than the beginning of fiscal year 2025 (Oct. 1, 2024).

**OPTIONS:**

- 1) Accept grant amounts as requested
- 2) Modify grant amounts at Council's discretion

**FISCAL IMPACT:**

The total amount requested is \$162,300. The projected revenue for this fiscal year is \$516,809. A total of \$130,000 was tentatively budgeted for Hotel/Motel tax grants for the upcoming fiscal year. The total grant amount as approved by Council will be added to the FY 2025 budget.

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