STAFF REPORT
Hillsborough Tourism Board
November 6, 2023

PRESENTER/INFORMATION CONTACT

Tourism Program Manager, Shannan Campbell

ITEM TO BE CONSIDERED

Subject: Tourism Board Funding Discussion (continued..)

Attachments:

1. Revised/Updated Draft FY24 Quarterly Report Questionnaire
2. Revised/Updated Draft FY25 Grant Scoring Rubric
3. Revised/Updated Draft FY25 Budget Justification Form

Summary:

In 2015 the Tourism Board moved from having only one method of funding (grants) to having three methods of funding (grants, contracts, special projects/partnerships) in order to fund different kind of projects/programs/and operations that supported the overall tourism program. The Tourism Board identified that it was asked, from what are now contract partners, for roughly the same amounts of money year over year for the same projects/programs/operations year over year. The board identified that it wanted a structured traditional competitive grant program for new/innovative ideas to start new events or projects as well as a way to be nimble and fund smaller asks that pop up through the year (special projects/partnerships). They also determined that asking the historic sites and the Alliance to apply for a competitive grant program every year was not the most effective and that these relationships should transition to contracts for tourism services.

The Tourism Board has been perfecting all three of these funding processes over the years to see what works, what doesn't, and what kind of questions and reporting should be provided in order to ensure that the tourism funds are being spent effectively to grow tourism in town.

At the last meeting it was requested for the grant scoring rubric to be refined, additional questions to be added to the quarterly report document, and investigation into shifting the RFP process to submittable platform that the board also uses for grants. The FY25 Budget Justification Form was also updated for clarity on how multiple forms are needed for multiple budget increase requests.

There were also several questions raised such as: Should the board move from requiring quarterly to bi-annual reports? Can organizations accurately identify their needs and programming in February for upcoming July-June fiscal year? How does the Tourism Board become better informed of organizations' goals and fundraising?

Financial impacts:

N/A

Staff recommendation and comments:

Staff has updated some key documents and included more questions regarding ROI/economic impact and fundraising.