
AGENDA ITEM

TO: Mayor McNeill, Lansing City Council
FROM: Tim Vandall, City Administrator
DATE: August 26, 2024
SUBJECT: Kansas Regional Prisons Museum 501C3 Funds

In 2005, the Kansas Regional Prisons Museum 501C3 was created. At that time, Mayor Bernard and other members of the Lansing/Leavenworth community were a part of the board. The board's vision was to construct a new museum dedicated to telling the story of prisons in the region. It should be noted that this was a not-for-profit entity, and while Mayor Bernard was an active participant, this was not a City organization. However, the City contributed funds to this 501C3 through Lansing DAZE proceeds and 5K runs. Residents throughout the community also contributed to the non-profit. The by-laws of the Kansas Regional Prisons Museum stated if the organization is disbanded, proceeds can go to the City. With the City's help, the 501C3 generated approximately \$140,000; however, over time, excitement for the idea subsided. On February 22, 2019, the remaining members of the KRPM voted to disband the nonprofit. It is worth noting that in early 2019, the idea of utilizing the old LCF prison for a museum or tourist attraction did not exist. On March 7, 2019, the City Council voted to approve the transfer of the funds from the 501C3 to the City, with guidance being the funds should be used for a quality-of-life item, and not general operations. With that guidance, the funds at that time were utilized for Bernard Park design and improvements.

Policy Consideration: A letter from the Lansing Historical Society is included in agenda materials. Utilizing the old LCF for tours or a potential museum meets the intent behind the Kansas Regional Prisons Museum Board's vision.

Financial Consideration: Since the original proceeds were utilized for Bernard Park improvements in 2019, if the Council decides to proceed, the funds could be disbursed from the Transient Guest Tax Fund. The Transient Guest Tax is earmarked for events/attractions that bring people into Lansing and create lodging for our hotels, meals at our restaurants, and patronize other business. It may make sense to disburse funds over time as this expense was not included in the 2024 during the summer of 2023.

Action: No action at this time. Feedback and guidance from governing body to act at future meeting.