



CITY OF NORMAN, OK STAFF REPORT

MEETING DATE: 11/26/2024

REQUESTER: Anthony Francisco

PRESENTER: Anthony Francisco, Finance Director

ITEM TITLE: CONSIDERATION OF ADOPTION, REJECTION, AMENDMENT AND/OR POSTPONEMENT OF RESOLUTION R-2425-68: A RESOLUTION OF THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NORMAN, OKLAHOMA, APPROPRIATING \$50,000 FROM THE ROOM TAX FUND BALANCE TO THE MISCELLANEOUS SERVICES, FOR NORMAN ARTS COUNCIL.

BACKGROUND:

Pursuant to the Norman City Code, Section 12-521 (et. Seq.), the City Council has established a policy whereby room tax collections are distributed to three organizations to further the aims of the Transient Guest (Hotel/Motel) Room Tax: the Norman Convention and Visitors Bureau, doing business as VisitNorman (50%) for convention and tourism promotion; the Parks Department for parks capital improvement projects (25%); and the Norman Arts Council (25%) for arts and humanities programs. The 25% allocation to the arts and humanities was maintained when the Room Tax rate was increased to eight percent (8%) in 2023.

As of June 30, 2024, the convention and tourism portion of the Room Tax is estimated to have had a fund balance of \$183,387. Assuming that eight percent (8%) of projected allocations are held in reserve (as is the policy for most City funds), approximately \$111,987 is available in "excess" reserves for arts and humanities-related expenditures.

DISCUSSION:

As discussed in the attached letter from Norman Arts Council (NAC) Executive Director Leslie Nottingham, NAC has requested the appropriation of up to \$50,000 of available Room Tax Fund balance for an Art Center Feasibility Study. The study will look into the possibility of a permanent home for the NAC (the current Mainsite Art Gallery facility is rented space) and for smaller arts organizations and for the future funding of such a facility or facilities.

Assuming approval of the appropriation, the NAC would award a contract with a third-party consulting firm to carry out the Feasibility Study. The consultant would report directly to the NAC Board of Directors. Funds would be allocated based on the amount of the consultant contract approved by the NAC Board.

RECOMMENDATION:

If Council desires to support the request of the Norman Arts Council, the appropriation of Room Tax Fund balance (account 23-29000) to Miscellaneous Services (account 23730241-44741) should be approved, and the funds directed to the Norman Arts Council.