



## CITY OF NORMAN, OK STAFF REPORT

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**MEETING DATE:** 02/14/2023

**REQUESTER:** Anthony Francisco, Finance Director

**PRESENTER:** Anthony Francisco, Finance Director

**ITEM TITLE:** CONSIDERATION OF ADOPTION, REJECTION, AMENDMENT, AND/OR POSTPONEMENT OF RESOLUTION R-2223-96: A RESOLUTION OF THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NORMAN, OKLAHOMA APPROPRIATING \$76,250 FROM THE ROOM TAX FUND BALANCE TO BE USED BY THE NORMAN CONVENTION AND VISITORS BUREAU (NCVB) D/B/A VISITNORMAN TO PAY A PORTION OF THE COSTS FOR FOUR STRATEGIC PLANS DESIGNED TO PROMOTE TOURISM IN NORMAN.

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### **BACKGROUND:**

Pursuant to the Norman City Code, Section 8-521 (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. On May 25, 1993, the Council approved contract K-9293-136 with the Norman Convention and Visitors Bureau (NCVB) d/b/a VisitNorman to administer the portion of the room tax used to attract conventions and other meetings, and to promote visitation of Norman. The contract requires that NCVB to submit to Council a detailed plan of work and integrated budget for 95% of the estimated revenues for the following fiscal year. Funds must be appropriated by Council in order to be distributed to NCVB.

As of June 30, 2023, the convention and tourism portion of the Room Tax is estimated to have a fund balance of \$246,579. Assuming that eight percent (8%) of projected allocations are held in reserve (as is the policy for most City funds), approximately \$180,579 is available in “excess” reserves for convention and tourism-related expenditures.

### **DISCUSSION:**

As discussed in the attached letter from VisitNorman Executive Director Dan Schemm, The Board of Directors of VisitNorman has requested the appropriation of \$76,250 of available Room Tax Fund balance for strategic plans in the following areas:

- Implementation of a Weather Museum in Norman;
- Master Plan for Promotion of Tourism and Development at Lake Thunderbird;
- A Mountain Bike Trail Plan
- An Equestrian Facility Plan

VisitNorman intends to partner and share costs with the Norman Economic Development Coalition, Grover Cleveland County, and perhaps the City of Norman in the implementation of these strategic plans. The studies will include public input and Council participation, and any published outcomes will be made available to the public.

If approved, the Scope of Work for fiscal year 2022-2023 provided pursuant to Contract K-9293-136 (as last amended) shall thereafter include the work to procure and implement the strategic plans with third-party consulting firms.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

If Council desires to support the request of the VisitNorman Board of Directors, the appropriation of Room Tax Fund balance (account 23-29000) to Miscellaneous Services (account 23330243-44774) should be approved, and the funds directed to the Norman Convention and Visitors Bureau (VisitNorman) under an expanded scope of work for Contract K-9293-136, as amended.