

Section 2. Organization Information

What is the purpose of the Organization

The Town of Swansboro Parks and Recreation Department hosts four major festivals annually. All the festivals take place in Downtown Swansboro within the closed street perimeter of Front Street, Church St., and Highway 24. All the events are free and open to the public that allows for a true showcase of the Swansboro waterfront and the eastern end of Onslow County.

In 2023, it is estimated that the festivals will cost \$124,653. The Town of Swansboro Parks and Recreation Department is asking for \$6,500 to assist with covering the increasing cost of fireworks, entertainment, a professional sound company, and new methods to advertise the festivals. The Town of Swansboro Parks and Recreation Department hopes that Swansboro Tourism Development Authority will provide additional funds to support the four community festivals.

******The Town of Swansboro also requests a motion that the Swansboro Tourism Development Authority allocate \$6500 or match the funds that Onslow County Tourism provides each year.***

Section 6. Nature of the Activity

What is the purpose of the activity?

Provide recreational and shopping opportunities and entertainment, celebrate holidays, showcase Swansboro's history, and offer unique experiences for visitors and citizens of Swansboro. Not only do the festivals provide recreational opportunities, but they also showcase the town for first time visitors and our future viability, growth, and perception of Swansboro and Onslow County. The festivals are an integral part of Swansboro, have become a tradition for the local and surrounding communities, and provide a significant amount of economic impact. Festivals, such as the ones the Town hosts are local community traditions that many times are the "first date" to prospective new residents. Many times, it is the first time they visited, and the goal is for them to return throughout the year.

Section 7. Organizational Capacity

Briefly describe the competency of the organization and staff to perform this activity and to provide responsible management. Has this organization or staff members been in direct leadership of this event or similar events before? If this activity has occurred in the last two years, please briefly summarize any organizational leadership changes as well as lessons learned/challenges from the event in those years and what the organization and/or staff intends to do differently to improve the activity in previous years.

The Parks and Recreation Department oversees the management of the festivals. The current Parks and Recreation Director has 23 years' experience in festival administration and planning and has over seen the Swansboro Festivals since 2019. Another staff member assists the director in organizing the festival and served on the Swansboro Festival Committee for 20 years. She continues to be an integral part organizing and aiding the department. The festival has been through three management changes since 2017. Challenges since the Town has taken over is consistent leadership, raising sponsorship funds, and the COVID pandemic. It is going to take time to rebuild relationships with sponsors and recover from the economic impacts of the pandemic.

The current Director has overseen the festivals since July 2019 and in that time as created a detailed and true cost of the festivals as well as the in-kind contributions, created a new sponsorship brochure, began to repair broken sponsor relationships, recruited new sponsors, and secured new media partners. In 2019, festival

sponsorships collected were \$8350. Since 2019, sponsorships have increased each year and in 2023 funds have more than doubled. In 2023, the Director has raised an additional \$16,500 over 2019 funds, which is an increase of 197%. The goal is to continue to increase sponsorships each year, as there is already new interest for 2024.

Section 8. Activity Information

Simply and clearly explain and describe the activity in sufficient detail so that the Authority knows what is to occur. Attach additional sheets, if necessary, but a concise narrative is highly desired. Report any contingency plans if the activity is weather dependent. Please attach and label as “Activity Information” and this section number.

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Arts by the Sea is a one-day event held on the second Saturday of June. Arts by the Sea highlights artists and crafters as they line the historic streets with beautiful fine art and handmade wares. Pottery, jewelry, paintings, stained glass, fiber, carvings, photography, sculpture, and metal work are just a few of the crafts represented at this annual event. This is a juried art show where unique products are in abundance for visitors to view and purchase. The festival will showcase local performing artists including dancers, musicians, vocal artists, and more. Approximately 4-6,000 patrons visit Arts by the Sea every year. This past festival, June 10, 2023, sold 86 vendors spaces, which has been the highest since 2019. The festival also has presold over half of the spaces for 2024.

July 4th attracts over 3-5000 patrons that enjoy an evening of fireworks, musical entertainment, and food to celebrate Independence Day. The much-anticipated fireworks can be widely viewed along Swansboro's waterfront, along the bridges and along Highway 24 to Cedar Point.

The Mullet Festival will celebrate its 69th anniversary in 2023. It is the oldest festival on the Crystal Coast and is held on the second weekend of October. The Swansboro Mullet Festival is a two-day event that offers locals and visitors a glimpse into history combined with a modern celebration of all things' mullet. The weekend festivities kick off with The Blessing of the Fleet to honor boat owners that have passed. This is followed shortly with a parade leading downtown where festival goers can browse over 150 vendors and listen to live music. The kids' zone offers a variety of inflatables, slides and crafts allowing younger patrons to burn off some energy while parents relax under the tent. The Mullet Festival attracts over 30,000 visitors to Swansboro and Onslow County from Eastern North Carolina and beyond. Just as with Arts by the Sea, the vendor spaces for Mullet Festival were the largest they have been since 2017 and is almost sold out for 2023.

The Swansboro Christmas Flotilla is a time-honored tradition and fun for the whole family! It is held annually the day after Thanksgiving. Approximately 4,000 visitors gather along Swansboro's waterfront to watch the spectacular parade of boats floating along the White Oak River. Boat captains vie for attention by transforming their boats with bright lights, music, and Christmas characters, all to please the crowds. Santa arrives, via boat, at the Church Street Dock to the delight of hundreds of children. He settles at the Pug Pavilion where he greets each child with a gift, listens to their Christmas wishes while allowing parents to take the Santa photo.

Section 9. Activity Timeline Detail

Provide a Detailed timeline for the activity. Provide information on any organizational meetings, planning meetings or key milestones. Give specific information about when sponsor solicitation would occur, when promotion would begin, when funding might be needed from the Authority if approved and any contingency plans if the activity is weather dependent. If this event has occurred last year and was funded by the STDA please attached the actual detailed timeline from that activity The Authority is interested in evaluating when expenditures would need to be made, the time needed for lead-up expenditures to the event, and whether marketing is a blast type activity or something more institutional.

Planning for the four festivals takes place all year long each year. Logistic and committee meetings are held for each festival several times prior to the even. After action meetings are held after each event to discuss any issues that may have occurred and how we can improve for the next year. Events are rain or shine and in the case of severe weather a rain date is selected.

Section 10. Promotional & Marketing Activity

If the Activity has occurred in the past, describe the promotional or marketing activity that has been used. If the Activity has not yet occurred, describe the promotional activity that the organization seeks to have for the Activity.

Swansboro Parks and Recreation utilizes every media source as well as personal contacts to advertise the four festivals. Efforts include three Swansboro websites (Town of Swansboro, Parks and Recreation Department, and the festivals), banners, posters, tourism website, community event calendars, and social media outlets. The department is a member of NC Festival and Events Association which promotes the four festivals on their website. The site has an average of 480,000 visitors per month. This membership attracts vendors, performers, and entertainers from Georgia to Virginia. The Town of Swansboro Parks & Recreation Department has secured an exclusive media group with five radio stations for the past three years marketing all the festivals.

Advertising Efforts

Radio

- Exclusive radio partner, 5 stations, reaching 18+ demographics
- All stations within the top 10 ranking by Nielson
- \$6000 in radio ads

Newspaper Ads

- In-kind sponsorship with Tideland News

Marketing Firms

- In 2022 began working with Front Row Communications-Facebook ads directed to www.visistswansboro.org.
- In 2023 began working with DFS Agency- digital targeted marketing.

Festival Organizations

- Festivals and Events-festivalsandevents.net
- Festivals.com
- Fairsandfestival.net
- Free listings
- Featured events, promote festival, call for vendors, entertainment

Section 11.

Summary of sources and amounts of funding for the activity for the past five years. If your activity does not have a past history, then only include the budget numbers for current FY.

What constitutes your fiscal year? July 1- June 30

Narrative:

Below is information the county received for the 2023-24 Non-Profit Tourism Grant Assistance that was submitted in March 2023. Please note that the chart below does not reflect vendor revenue.

5. Summary of sources and amounts of funding of project/event for up to five years.

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Federal					
Local-Swansboro TDA	0	6500	6500	6500	6500
County	6500	10000	15000	15000	15000
Sponsors	19750	22000	23000	24000	25000
Total	26250	38500	44500	45500	46500
In-kind	28820	33659	33000	33000	33000

Describe any other funding being sought for current year from other entities including whether an application is being made to Onslow County Tourism:

Funding received from Onslow County Tourism for at least the last 10 years.

The Town of Swansboro Parks and Recreation Department submitted a request for \$15,000 from the Non-profit Tourism Assistance Grant for the 2023-24 fiscal year. In 2022-23 Onslow County awarded the Swansboro Festivals \$10,000 and the proposed budget for Onslow County awards the Town of Swansboro \$10,000 for the 2023-24 fiscal year.

Section 12. Summary of expenditures for the activity for the past five years.

If your activity does not have a past history, then only include the budget numbers for current FY. These are broad categories and rounded estimates of expenditure can be used for each of the categories.

Fiscal Year: June 1-July 30

Below is information the county received for the 2023-24 Non-Profit Tourism Grant Assistance in March 2023. Since then, the expenditures have been adjusted to \$124,653.

6. Summary of expenses directly related to this project/event for up to five years

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Salaries & Benefits	23645	26660	29843	30000	30000
Operating Expenses	94159	97662	112905	113000	115000
Fixed Assets					
Other					
Total	117804	124322	142748	143000	145000

Section 13. Activity Budget Detail

2022-23 Town of Swansboro Budget

Section 14. Tourism Related Impacts

Below is information the county received for the 2023-24 Non-Profit Tourism Grant Assistance that was submitted in March 2023.

Economic Impact of Most Recent Event:

Overnight Stays Impact:

Actual Number of Rooms Used		County Impact Dollar		Overnight Impact:
396	X	193.00	=	76,428.00

Daytime Visitor Impact:

Number of Attendees	Average Family Size		Attendees Spending Outside of Event		County Impact Dollar		Daytime Impact:
44,000	/ 4	=	11,000	X 0.25 = \$ 2,750.00	X	93.00	= 255,750.00

Economic Impact:	Overnight Impact		Daytime Impact		
	76,428.00	+	255,750.00	=	332,178.00