

ACCOMMODATIONS TAX COMMITTEE
April 9, 2024, Meeting Minutes

In attendance: Mark C. Burt, Marie Pound, Peter Fikas, Neal Patel, Sullange Solomon

Absent: Angela Emerson, Sophia Chen

City representatives: Kelly McMullen, Leila Williams, Amanda Rowan

Mr. Mark Burt called the meeting to order. The FY 23-24 meeting minutes were reviewed. Mr. Patel made a motion to approve the minutes, Ms. Pound seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Burt requested the committee conduct the annual election of officers. Mr. Fikas nominated Mr. Patel as Chair. Marie Pound seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Fikas nominated Ms. Pound as Vice-Chair. Mr. Patel seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Burt nominated Mr. Fikas as secretary. Ms. Solomon seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

The bylaws were reviewed. Mr. Burt recommended changing the meeting time from 8:00 am to 10:00. The committee agreed to accept the bylaws with the amendment.

The Committee reviewed the requests for the 24-25 year. Ms. McMullen explained that the City-hosted events were being presented without applications to streamline the City's process while still allowing finance to create a line item for the events. Mr. Burt reviewed with the committee how Accommodations Taxes are collected and used for the grants. It was noted that there was \$130,875.00 requested in funding and \$128,250.00 estimated available. The Committee reviewed the City's Ad Specialty request. Mr. Burt noted that the Committee awarded the City \$6,000.00 last year but only used \$2,884.31. Ms. McMullen clarified that was the amount used when the report was generated but did not include Soiree purchases. Ms. Rowan confirmed that Soiree used the remaining amount. Mr. Patel made a motion to approve the requested \$7,000 for FY 24/25. Mr. Fikas seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

The Police Department requested \$5,000.00 in ad specialties. Mr. Fikas made a motion to approve the full amount for the Police Department ad specialty items, and Mr. Patel seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Ms. McMullen confirmed that Airport High School was not submitting any requests this year, and that due to scheduling conflicts the Cayce Pickleball and Cayce Serves were not applying for the upcoming year either.

The Woman's Club requested \$11,125.00 for the Hot Flash 5K. Mr. Burt stated he felt that was a lot of money for an event of approximately 200. Ms. McMullen stated the committee could award a smaller amount, designate where the grant was to be used, or deny the award. Ms. Sullange suggested awarding the amount needed for advertising. Mr. Patel suggested awarding \$1,500 (half of advertising). Mr. Patel made a motion to award the Woman's Club \$1,500, Mr. Fikas seconded. The motion passed unanimously with the agreement Ms. McMullen would designate the money to be used for advertising.

Tartan Day South was requesting \$20,000. Mr. Burt explained what Tartan Day is and what events take place. The Committee reviewed attendance and zip codes collected. Mr. Fikas made a motion to approve the \$20,000. Ms. Pound seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

The Committee reviewed the Cayce Events. Mr. Burt requested the museum allow the Committee members to tour the museum and receive invitations to events. Ms. McMullen stated she would email Mr. Thomas. Mr. Fikas made a motion to approve the four city events together. Ms. Pound seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

The Committee reviewed the 30% designees' applications. Mr. Burt asked the Committee what Experience Columbia was doing with funds. In the past they were the only advertising agency to apply but now there were the two others. Ms. Rowan confirmed they did advertise for Soiree. Mr. Patel suggested awarding the same percentages from last year to each organization. Ms. McMullen stated that Lake Murray Country would receive 30% or approximately \$11,542.50. Experience Columbia would receive 35% or \$13,466.25 and the Greater CWC Chamber of Commerce would receive 35% or \$13,466.25. Mr. Patel made a motion to award the 30% designees those amounts, Ms. Pound seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Total requests submitted equaled \$130,875.00. Total amount recommended was \$89,725.00

Mr. Burt asked if the remaining funds that were not allocated could be used to beautify the State Street area with lights and plants. Ms. Sullange agreed it was needed. Mr. Burt asked if this could be tied to an event. Ms. McMullen stated she would speak with the City Manager and contact at the SC DOR to determine if funds could be utilized in that manner. Ms. McMullen will let the Committee know via email of the response.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned, with Mr. Patel making a motion to adjourn and Mr. Fikas seconding.

Respectfully submitted,

Amanda Rowan