

ACCOMMODATIONS TAX COMMITTEE
May 25, 2021 Meeting Minutes

In attendance: Mark C. Burt, Suki Patel, Lynda Murray, Angela Emerson, Peter Fikas

Absent: Marie B. Pound, Neal Patel

City representative: Mendy Corder, Amanda Rowan

Mr. Mark Burt called the meeting to order. The Committee reviewed the Accommodations Tax Report for FY21-22. Currently the amount in the Accommodations Tax Account is approximately \$11,000.00 less than previous years due to Covid-19. Mr. Burt asked Ms. Emerson if hotel reservation were increasing since COVID restrictions had been lifted. Ms. Emerson stated that the numbers had increased from 15% to 50%. With restrictions lifting, the 4th quarter may be closer to anticipated and past amounts. It was noted there is currently (approximated) \$131,000.00 in the account and \$130,000.00 in requests. The committee then reviewed Accommodations Tax Funding Requests for FY21-22.

The first request, Ad Specialties, is City of Cayce “swag” and consists of items such as pens, shirts, and various promotional items. Mr. Suki Patel made a motion to approve the requested amount and Ms. Murray seconded. It was approved unanimously.

Airport High School has requested funds for FY21-22 for the girls’ junior varsity and varsity soccer tournaments. It was noted that Airport has made requests in the past and Ms. Corder verified it was for the same amounts. Mr. Burt stated that in the past the committee has requested verification that local hotels were utilized but has not received that information. Ms. Corder stated that she remembered that in the past the committee wanted to require applicants to use local hotels and restaurants but she believes the Accommodations Tax Oversight Committee did not allow that to be a requirement. Mr. Burt asked for contact information for Ms. Damita Holcomb, the City’s contact at the Department of Revenue’s Accommodation Tax Oversight Committee, so he could inquire on what the committee is allowed to verify before giving any funding to the high school. It was mentioned that most tournaments do not include overnight stays, so the committee would like to make sure the City is gaining some revenue from these events before approving any further funding. Mr. Burk made a motion to table the soccer tournaments until further clarification is obtained and the committee unanimously agreed.

Mr. Fikas made a motion to approve the Museum’s Children’s Colonial Fair for the amount requested. Mr. Patel seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.

Mr. Fikas made a motion to approve the Museum’s Christmas Traditions for the full requested amount of \$5,000.00. Mr. Patel seconded and the motion was unanimously approved. Ms. Emerson did note that on the application it stated all local hotels had been contacted, but she her hotel had not. Ms. Corder stated she would schedule a time for she and Andy Thomas, a Museum staff member, to visit the hotel and meet with Ms. Emerson.

Mr. Patel made a motion to approve the Museum’s Exhibit Creation for \$11,000.00 (the full amount requested). Mr. Fikas seconded and the motion was unanimously approved after Mr. Burt verified that the new exhibit would be located on museum grounds.

Ms. Emerson made a motion to approve the Cayce Fall Fest for the full requested amount of \$15,000.00 and Ms. Murray seconded. The committee unanimously approved.

Ms. Murray made a motion to approve the Christmas in Cayce events for the requested amount of \$13,000.00 and Mr. Patel seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Emerson made a motion to approve the Greater Cayce West Columbia Visitor's Center for the full requested amount of \$30,000.00. Ms. Murray seconded. The committee unanimously approved. The funding will be used to assist in the operation of the Chamber and for staffing.

Mr. Fikas made a motion to reject EdVenture's request for funding and Ms. Murray seconded. The funding for EdVenture was rejected unanimously. Mr. Burt asked Ms. Emerson if she believed local hotels would be able to sell 100 tickets to EdVenture in a year. Ms. Emerson stated she may be able to sell ten (10), but she did not believe she would be able to sell 100. The committee did not feel the funding was warranted on this project.

Mr. Fikas made a motion to approve the Soiree on State for the requested amount of \$25,000.00 and Mr. Patel seconded. The motion was approved unanimously.

Mr. Patel made a motion to approve Tartan Day South's funding request of \$12,000.00. Mr. Fikas seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved by the committee. Mr. Patel requested information on how the City collects Hospitality Tax from out-of-city vendors that work an event in the City. Ms. Corder stated she would speak with the Hospitality Tax Coordinator and would get back to him with that information.

Mr. Burt requested the total amount currently allotted to requests. Ms. Rowan stated the amount of \$118,000.00 had been approved for recommendation to Council. Mr. Burt stated he would speak with the Accommodation Tax Oversight Committee and then the Committee could revisit Airport High School's requests.

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

Respectfully submitted,

Amanda Rowan