

CULTURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION
SPECIAL SESSION

JULY 10, 2018

The Cultural Resources Commission met in Special Session on Tuesday, July 10, 2018 at 4:00 p.m. in the Derek D. Daniels Conference Room of the Athens Partnership Center, 201 W. Corsicana St., Athens, Texas with the following members present, to-wit:

Virginia Reeder
Beth Faulk
Kelley Townsend
Kathy Means
Deanne Boswell

Elizabeth Borstad, City Manager
Adrianna Hinds, Community Services Coordinator
Emma Grey, Communications and Marketing Intern

others present: Bob Miars, Cliff Thompson, Chris Tinsley, Deborah Deas, Kevin Blackwell, Gary Bonner, Mary Ensign, Eddie Alexander, Mary Eggleston, Leon Spencer;

with the following members absent; Chet Patel, and Jon Garrett

constituting a quorum at which time the following proceedings were enacted, to-wit:

DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Member Means filed a Conflict of Interest with Agenda item 6) Discuss, consider and take action, as necessary, concerning all matters related to recommending Fiscal Year 2019 Tourism Grant Development (formerly known as the Hotel Occupancy Tax: Call For Projects) applications for funding.

CONSIDER APPROVING THE MINUTES OF THE JUNE 5, 2018 REGULAR SESSION

A motion was made by member Townsend, seconded by Member Means to approve the Minutes of the June 5, 2018 Regular Session. The motion carried unanimously.

CITIZENS COMMUNICATIONS

There was no discussion.

CULTURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION UPDATES REGARDING COMMUNITY EVENTS

Member Means provided the following update:

- “Taste of Athens” hosted by the Athens Chamber of Commerce was very well attended and beneficial for the restaurants

Member Reeder provided the following updates regarding upcoming Art Gallery 211 events:

- Ongoing children’s summer art workshop ages 5-16
- August 25, 2018 5:00 – 7:00 pm. the Opening Celebration of “Transitions/Transformations free admission

CULTURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION REQUEST FOR FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

Member Means requested a future agenda item regarding downtown advertising in partnership with “The Texan” events.

Member Townsend requested a future agenda item regarding the fall foliage map, fall events and promotion.

DISCUSS, CONSIDER AND TAKE ACTION, AS NECESSARY, CONCERNING ALL MATTERS RELATED TO RECOMMENDING FISCAL YEAR 2019 TOURISM GRANT DEVELOPMENT (FORMERLY KNOWN AS THE HOTEL OCCUPANCY TAX: CALL FOR PROJECTS) APPLICATIONS FOR FUNDING

Adrianna Hinds, Community Services Coordinator, explained the process and stated each applicant will present their organization’s application for funding request. She stated the Commission Members may ask questions regarding the application.

Ms. Hinds introduced Bob Miars with Henderson County Regional Fair Park.

Mr. Miars, Chairman of the Henderson County Regional Fair Park Board of Directors, explained the application request is to replace twenty-two stalls at a cost of \$42,120. He stated the project is a multi-year project of replacing stalls.

Mr. Miars presented events scheduled for 2018. He stated 35% of operating income comes from stall rental.

Elizabeth Borstad, City Manager arrived at 4:15 p.m.

There were no questions from the Cultural Resources Commission regarding the application submitted by Henderson County Regional Fair Park.

Ms. Hinds introduced Mr. Cliff Thompson with Athens ISD.

Mr. Thompson explained Athens ISD is bringing in twenty eight (28) teams for the first annual boys and girls basketball tournament on November 29, 30, and December 1, of 2018. He stated the application request is for hotel rooms for teams. Mr. Thompson explained that the first game will begin at 8:00 a.m. and the last game will start at 8:00 p.m. with teams playing in 2-3 gyms at all times.

Mr. Thompson explained that planning for the tournament began in January 2018 with the building of the new Athens ISD facility.

Member Means asked will the funding request by Athens ISD be used to pay for hotel rooms for teams that come to play in the tournament, with Mr. Thompson stating yes. He further explained the funds would pay for five (5) rooms for four (4) teams for a total of twenty (20) rooms.

Member Reeder asked if the event would be a reoccurring event for Athens ISD with Mr. Thompson stating the event would be reoccurring each year.

Member Means asked if other tournaments pay for rooms for the players, with Mr. Thomson stating yes it is very common to pay for rooms in an effort to draw in teams.

Member Means asked how teams will be selected to receive the hotel rooms, with Mr. Thompson stating teams are selected first by distance, then those teams that have both boys and girls traveling to the tournament are selected next.

Member Boswell stated the tournament is during Canton Trade Days which is 1st Monday weekend. She asked if the hotels would have availability, with Mr. Thompson stating he had contacted the Holiday Inn to find out if could get twenty (20) rooms and he was told there is nothing that would prevent him from getting twenty (20) rooms.

Ms. Hinds asked, on behalf of the Commission, if the hotels were asked to donate rooms, with Mr. Thompson stating he did not ask for any donated rooms.

There were no additional questions from the Cultural Resources Commission.

Ms. Hinds introduced Chris Tinsley with Athens Teenage Baseball Association.

Mr. Tinsley explained this is year four (4) that Athens Teenage Baseball Association has requested funding to host the Dixie Baseball Association State Tournament. He stated ATBA is requesting funds for one or more state tournaments to be held in Athens. He provided background information on the previous tournaments.

Member Townsend asked if ATBA could document if the tournament has increased hotel stays every year, with Mr. Tinsley stating that he has no way of doing that because he does not know what tournament the ATBA will be awarded each year.

Member Townsend added to her question, asking if in the past 3 years Mr. Tinsley could document increased hotel stays. Mr. Tinsley did not reply due to the fact that Member Boswell immediately asked another question.

Member Boswell asked if ATBA has always sold out Athens hotel rooms, forcing event goers to go to other towns to get hotel rooms. Mr. Tinsley stated that if ATBA hosts multiple tournaments, the hotels will sell out and event goers have to go to other towns to stay.

Member Townsend asked if Mr. Tinsley could safely say that every year tournament goers increase, with Mr. Tinsley stating yes it has increased year after year.

Ms. Hinds introduced Deborah Deas with East Texas Arboretum and Botanical Society.

Ms. Deas informed the Commission that the Arboretum is hosting the "Grow Show" on July 19th. Ms. Deas also thanked the Commission for the grants that were awarded to the East Texas Arboretum and Botanical Society last year.

Ms. Deas explained the Arboretum is seeking funding for repairs to the Woman's Building. She stated the interior of the building needs repairs and updates. Ms. Deas explained the building is used for weddings, baby showers, retirement parties, and family reunions. She stated that Arboretum hosts at least 2 weddings a month causing attendees to stay in hotel rooms. She stated that for some of those weddings, the entire grounds are reserved. She stated that while they do not ask guests how many hotel rooms they will have or how many out of town guests they will be bringing, they know that it will happen when there is a big wedding and people have to stay in hotels. She stated that the Woman's building is often used for rehearsal dinners or bridal showers associated with the wedding. She stated that the Woman's Building is used for a variety of other types of events that she listed that generate out of town guests. She stated the desire is to make the building more appealing.

Ms. Hinds asked that of the 2 weddings that are held at the Arboretum each month, does the Arboretum have any data as to how many of those weddings use or rent the Woman's Building or rent the entire facility. Ms. Deas stated the building is used mostly for rehearsal dinners, day before the weather gatherings, the reception after or insurance in case of inclement weather.

Ms. Hinds asked if most weddings occur at the Wofford House. Ms. Deas responded that weddings take place all over the grounds, sometimes under the pavilion, etc. and that the location depends on the time of the year.

Member Boswell asked what type of maintenance program the Arboretum has so things of this nature are on the board's radar.

Member Boswell further clarified and asked what the overall maintenance program looks like for the Arboretum. Ms. Deas stated the Arboretums budget takes care of emergencies and the outside things such as the sprinklers. She stated they tend to spend more on the outside vs. the inside.

There were no further questions.

Ms. Hinds introduced Kevin Blackwell with Fire It Up Productions.

Mr. Blackwell stated that this is his tenth year in Athens. He explained the organization is requesting funds for advertising for a family team roping sport event. He stated the organization has one (1) to two (2) events per month.

Mr. Miars commented that Fire it Up Productions has fourteen (14) events, and they are the biggest promoter to bring tourists into Athens.

Member Faulk exited the meeting at 4:49 p.m.

Member Reeder asked how the requested \$3,000 in grant money for advertisement would be used and how would it benefit Athens. Mr. Blackwell explained the advertising would take place in the magazines he brought to show the Commission and that the ad would be focused solely on Athens.

Member Means asked if the events were two (2) day events and if they rope both days, with Mr. Blackwell stating yes.

Ms. Hinds clarified that Fire it Up Productions did apply for the grant last year, but did not receive funding.

There were no additional questions from the Commission Members.

Ms. Hinds introduced Gary Bonner with United States Equestrian Drill Championships – Super Ride.

Mr. Bonner explained the Super Ride Event.

There were no questions from the Commission.

Ms. Hinds introduced Mary Ensign with Athens Old Fiddlers Reunion.

Ms. Ensign provided a short history of the Old Fiddlers Reunion. She stated this was the 87th year and this is the oldest running festival in the City of Athens and the longest running festival in the State of Texas, and the second largest contest in the Nation.

She explained the organization is requesting funds for restoration of the Athens Old Fiddlers Electrical Boxes.

Member Means asked where the panels and boxes go during Fiddlers, with Ms. Ensign stating they are attached to parking meter poles.

Ms. Reeder explained the electrical boxes.

There were no additional questions from the Commission.

Ms. Hinds opened the floor for staff recommendations and the Cultural Resources Commission recommendations. She informed the applicants they can stay, however, they are unable to engage in deliberation with the Commission. She stated if questions are asked by the Commission, applicants are able to respond to questions regarding the organizations application.

Ms. Hinds explained staff met on July 9, 2018 to review all the applications received. She informed the Commission there is a decreased budget for aid to other organizations. She explained due to the undertaking “The Texan” and other downtown development projects, the City is really looking to expand the use of HOT Funds. She stated in previous years the City has allocated approximately \$30,000 for aid to other organizations in Fiscal Year 2016 and 2017. She stated in 2018 the city was able to increase the amount \$51,420 for aid to other organizations. She stated the City loves to fund what the outside organizations are doing. She stated all the events are worthy of funding as it draws tourism.

Ms. Hinds explained for 2019 there is only \$20,000 available for aid to other organizations, and seven (7) applications were received.

Ms. Hinds presented the following spreadsheet of funds requested.

Tourism Development Grant Application Funding Allocation FY2019					
Available Funding	Organization	Requested Funding	75% of Request Considering Estimate Budget	Recommended Allocation	Cultural Resources Commission Recommendation
\$20,000	Old Fiddlers	\$3,900.00	\$2,925.00	\$2,925.00	
	SuperRide	\$18,500.00	\$13,875.00	\$0	
	Fire It Up Productions	\$3,000.00	\$3,000.00	\$3,000.00	
	ETABS	\$15,000	\$11,250	\$0.00	
	ATBA	\$15,000	\$11,250	\$10,575.00	
	Athens ISD	\$3,500	\$3,500	\$3,500.00	
	HCRFPC	\$21,060	\$15,795	\$0	
		\$79,960.00	\$61,595.00	\$20,000.00	

Ms. Hinds explained the total amount requested from all applicants is \$79,960. Ms. Hinds stated a change was made to the grant application it is now a 75%/25% grant.

Ms. Hinds explained staff's recommended allocations, and stated it was extremely hard this year. She stated the Commission will make their recommendations and ultimately the City Council will approve the Commission recommendation or add additional funding.

Ms. Hinds explained staff's recommended 75% funding for each organization as follows:

Old Fiddlers	\$2,925.00
SuperRide	\$0
Fire It Up Productions	\$3,000.00
ETABS	\$0.00
ATBA	\$10,575.00
Athens ISD	\$3,500.00
HCRFPC	\$0
	\$20,000.00

Ms. Hinds reviewed each application and explained staff's reasoning for their financial recommendation for each organization.

The floor was opened for discussion.

Ms. Hinds mentioned other opportunities for funding and stated applicants can apply for funds from the General Fund.

Member Reeder mentioned that she was not familiar with the use of the Parks Department labor for projects within the City.

Ms. Hinds explained that this was a regular practice for Cain and Coleman Park improvements in partnership with the Athens Teenage Baseball Association.

Member Reeder asked Mr. Tinsley to explain the process and how that partnership has worked in the past.

Member Reeder stated she appreciates the work staff has done and making the rational for recommended funding.

After deliberation a motion was made by Member Boswell, seconded by Member Means to approve the following recommended funding for Fiscal Year 2019 Tourism Grant Development (formerly known as the Hotel Occupancy Tax: Call For Projects) applications:

Old Fiddlers	\$2,925.00
SuperRide	\$0
Fire It Up Productions	\$3,000.00
ETABS	\$0.00
ATBA	\$10,575.00
Athens ISD	\$3,500.00
HCRFPC	\$0
	\$20,000.00

The motion carried unanimously.

COMMUNITY SERVICES COORDINATOR UPDATE

Ms. Hinds provided the following updates:

- “The Texan” Grand Opening event held on Tuesday, July 3rd was very successful. She stated while weather moved the event indoors, Darryl Worley agreed to do an acoustic show inside; while outside, there were over 300 folks in attendance and approximately 200 folks came inside to see the rest of the show
- The final show of The Texan Summer Concert Series is scheduled for Saturday, July 21st featuring Hayes Carll
- Staff meeting to discuss programming for “The Texan” for the fall, working on promoting the event venue
- Staff discussed forming a committee of volunteers to discuss ways to improve downtown
- December 8, 2018 Christmas Parade

- Further clarification received from TxDOT regarding banners for advertisement across state highways. Ms. Hinds stated she was informed these types of banners are not allowed across overpasses

ADJOURN

The meeting was adjourned.

PASSED AND APPROVED THIS 4th DAY OF SEPTEMBER, 2018.

Chet Patel, Chairman

ATTEST:

Bonnie Hambrick, City Secretary