

ACCOMMODATIONS TAX COMMITTEE

March 26, 2019 Meeting Minutes

In attendance: Mark C. Burt, Suki Patel, Lynda Murray, Marie B. Pound, Peter Fikas, Neal Patel

City representative: Katinia Taylor

Mr. Mark Burt called the meeting to order. He stated that a new chairperson was needed because of the passing of Dr. Pete Cassidy. After further discussion Mr. Suki Patel made a motion to elect Mr. Mark Burt as chairperson and Mr. Peter Fikas as Vice-Chair. Ms. Marie Pound seconded his motion, and the motion passed. The Committee reviewed the Accommodations Tax Report for FY18-19 and Accommodations Tax Funding Requests for FY19-20.

The committee reviewed each application. Mr. Burt discussed with the committee that the guided nature tour may not qualify for accommodations tax funds due to the limited amount of attendees. He also stated that the Cayce Historical Museum should not list the amount attendees to be present on the applications for the promotional movie and brochure application.

Mr. Suki Patel suggested that somehow all of the businesses/organizations in the community should be made aware of the accommodations tax funds. Mrs. Taylor stated to the committee that when the accommodations tax funds applications are being accepted, the invitation to apply is advertised a press release, social media and the City's website. Mr. Patel recommended that someone on the committee reach out to the community when the application process opens.

Mr. Burt told the committee that prior to making any recommendations for application requests he first determines what it would cost per person to attend the events to ensure the organizations are asking for a reasonable amount of money. His calculation process consists of multiplying the amount of visitors expected by the percentage of those individuals coming from out of town and then dividing the two numbers together.

The committee unanimously agreed that Airport High School boys and girls soccer tournaments receive the amount of funds requested. Mr. Burt stated that the high school should be given a list of the hotels that they should use to apply for funds. Airport High School listed two hotels located in the City of West Columbia on their applications.

The Cayce Historical Museum requested additional funds for the museum aide/contractor and two additional requests for a promotional movie and promotional brochure. Mr. Burt stated that in order for the committee to make a recommendation for funding these promotional projects the Museum must advertise all hotels and restaurants on the promotional movie and brochure. The committee agreed and the recommendation to give the museum the funds applied for was unanimously approved.

The Events Committee applied for \$15,000 in accommodations tax funds for the Cayce Fall Fest. Mr. Neal Patel discussed with the committee that according to the application the committee seems to only want to draw locals to the event based on the amount of attendees expected. He stated that the Committee proposed to use only local performers and did not request much money to advertise the

event. Mr. Suki Patel made a motion to recommend to only fund the event with \$5000 for advertising purposes and Ms. Pound seconded his motion which was unanimously approved.

The Greater Cayce West Columbia Visitors Center requested \$10,000 separately from the 30% funds they receive quarterly through accommodations tax. This request of funds is to help fund a chamber video that will promote Cayce. Mr. Burt stated again that the Chamber should advertise the local hotels and restaurants in their video to receive the committee's recommendations. Mr. Neal Patel made a motion to recommend their full request and Ms. Murray second his motion which was unanimously approved.

The Events Committee requested \$500 more in accommodations tax funds to have a fall and spring guided nature tour with Dr. Rudy Mancke. Mr. Burt mentioned that because this event has a limited amount of attendees it may not qualify for accommodations tax funds. After further discussion the committee agreed as a whole to fund the event. Ms. Pound made a motion to recommend the funds requested of \$1000 for the guided nature tour and Mr. Suki Patel seconded her motion which was unanimously approved.

The Accommodations Tax Committee unanimously approved to recommend all of the other organizations with the amount of funds requested. Mr. Suki Patel suggested that in the future all of the organizations should come before the committee to present their proposal on the amount of funds they will be requesting. Mr. Burt told the committee that the Cayce Historical Museum came before the committee in the past but that asking for all of the applicants to present their proposal would take up a lot of the committee's time.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Katinia Taylor