

TOWN COUNCIL
STAFF REPORT
Department of Finance & Administration



MEETING DATE:	June 13, 2018
PROJECT:	I.1. Accommodations Tax Advisory Committee Recommendations for Quarter ending March 31, 2018
PROJECT MANAGER:	Natalie Majorkiewicz, Treasury Manager

RECOMMENDATION:

In accordance with the grant process, the Accommodations Tax Advisory Committee met on May 15, 2018 and May 29, 2018 to review the quarterly grant applications and have made the following grant award recommendation for Town Council's consideration:

Requesting Organization	Amount Requested	Amount Recommended
Bluffton Historical Preservation Society (BHPS): Welcome Center at the Heyward House Historic Center and "Common Ground" Capital Project	\$ 177,000	\$ 185,000
BHPS: Slave Dwelling Project Sleepover and Juneteenth Celebration	5,300	5,250
Celebrate Bluffton, Inc.: Bluffton Buddy Annual Software License	450	0
Community Foundation of the Lowcountry: SC Lowcountry Oyster Trail - Oyster Shell Public Art Display	15,000	15,000
Society of Bluffton Artists: Promoting the Arts in the Lowcountry and Beyond	12,150	12,150
Total for the Quarter	\$ 209,900	\$ 217,400

FUNDS CURRENTLY AVAILABLE FOR DISTRIBUTION:

Total State and Local Accommodations Tax funds currently available for distribution are \$582,550 as outlined below.

State ATAX		Local ATAX	
Remaining from Previous Quarters	\$ 182,431	Remaining from Previous Quarters	\$ 303,055
4 th Quarter Revenue	61,836	4 th Quarter Revenue	127,540
First \$25k to General Fund*	N/A	8% to DMO	(10,203)
5% to General Fund	(3,092)	Disaster Recovery Designation	(1,275)
30% to DMO	(18,551)	51% to Town of Bluffton CIP	(59,191)
Total State ATAX Funds Remaining for Distribution	\$ 222,624	Total Local ATAX Funds Remaining for Distribution	\$ 359,926

When comparing the State and Local Accommodations Taxes collections for the quarter ending March 31, 2018 to the same quarter of last fiscal year, the revenues have decreased \$38,576 or 17% as of the ATAC Meeting held March 15, 2018.

The past winter we encountered Winter Storm Grayson effecting both travel and daily operations of businesses and school from January 3-5, 2018 which is a contributing factor to the decrease.

DESIGNATED MARKETING ORGANIZATION PRESENTATION:

□ Hilton Head Island - Bluffton Chamber of Commerce and Visitor & Convention Bureau's 2018-2019 Bluffton Marketing Plan

Ariana Pernice, Vice President, Visitor & Convention Bureau gave a presentation of the FY19 marketing campaign for the Town of Bluffton. The chamber estimates receiving \$135,000 from State ATAX (30% of revenue collections) and Local ATAX (8% of revenue collections) monies as the Town of Bluffton's Designated Marketing Organization (DMO). Fiscal Year 2019's marketing plan for Bluffton includes the following pillars of marketing: History, Culture, Arts, Culinary, and Festivals & Events. Marketing tactics and strategies will focus on: 1) Affluent consumers visiting Old Town Bluffton for cultural, historic tours, shopping and culinary activities as day visitors, 2) Overnight stays in Bluffton for new visitors as well as repeat visitors to the region, and 3) Group Tour Planners. Media Partnerships this year will include Coastal Living and Garden & Gun.

The Committee voted to approve the Hilton Head Island - Bluffton Chamber of Commerce and Visitor & Convention Bureau as the DMO with the presented marketing plan budget as presented.

Bluffton Marketing Strategies and Programs	Budget Value
Bluffton Quarterly E-newsletter & Insider Program:	\$ 2,402
Media Partnerships:	37,413
Destination Photo & Video Shoot:	5,000
Search Engine Optimization, Social Media & Content Hub:	5,187
Search Engine Marketing PPC Campaign:	18,176
Collateral and Fulfillment (2019 Vacation Planner 100,000 printed):	10,275
Budgeted Research Programs for FY2018-2019:	6,597
Destination Marketing Operations & Management:	49,950
Total:	\$ 135,000

When comparing FY18 budget with FY19, the increases are mainly due to the increased dollars awarded through the Town which has afforded expanded digital marketing programs such as Instagram and Facebook as well as media partners.

Below is a comparison with the FY18 budget and the current FY19:

Bluffton Marketing Strategies and Programs	FY18	FY19	% Increase/ (Decrease)
Digital Marketing (E-newsletter & PPC Campaign):	15,937	20,578	23%
Media Partnerships:	25,925	37,413	31%
Destination Photo & Video Shoot:	3,050	5,000	39%
Social Media:	3,813	5,187	26%
Group Sales & Trade Shows:	300	0	(100%)
Collateral and Fulfillment:	7,957	10,275	23%
Budgeted Research Programs:	4,728	6,597	28%
Destination Marketing Operations & Management:	36,290	49,950	27%
Total:	\$ 98,000	\$ 135,000	27%

FUNDS REQUESTED FOR DISTRIBUTION:

☐ **Bluffton Historical Preservation Society (BHPS) revised its original request of \$177,000 to \$185,000 to support the Welcome Center at the Heyward House (\$142,000) and “Common Ground” capital project (\$43,000)**

- The Heyward House serves as the Town of Bluffton’s official Welcome Center.
- The request of \$185,000 is approximately 86% of the Welcome Center’s total budget and is up \$58,000 in total from last year’s annual request.
- This year’s request includes the “Common Ground” capital project which attributes \$30,494 of the total increase from the capital request last year.
- Total visitors projected for FY 2018 is 11,000 with approximately 81% from out of town as reported in prior years. FY 2018 numbers are down slightly from 2017 due to Hurricane Irma in September 2017 and renovation work in the spring.

Using last year’s budget and award, there is an increase in both salaries and benefits due to planned cost of living increases for staff as well as increases in mortgage, insurance and utility costs to coincide with current expenditures and improvements made at the center. Additionally, advertising costs have increased to allow for printing of rack cards for the Garvin-Garvey House and Facebook reaches.

The operating costs were based on the projection last year of 75% visitors and this year’s tourism projection is 81% and is reflected in the next chart.

Below is a comparison of the Welcome Center's FY18 and FY19 budgets:

Bluffton Welcome Center	2018 Total Budget	2018 ATAX Award 75%	2019 Total Budget	2019 Recommended ATAX Award 81%	% Increase/ (Decrease) in ATAX Awards
Salaries and Benefits:	\$86,835	\$65,126	\$102,000	\$83,436	22%
Mortgage, Insurance & Utility Costs:	25,216	18,912	30,750	\$25,155	25%
Programs:	2,001	1,500	2,625	\$2,625*	43%
Advert. & Marketing:	4,669	3,502	7,900	\$7,900*	56%
Equipment Upgrades:	8,004	6,003	1,500	\$1,227	-389%
Contract Services:	23,098	17,324	21,375	\$17,485	1%
Other:	3,094	2,127	5,100	\$4,173	49%
Capital Improvements:	16,675	12,506	43,000	43,000*	71%
Total	\$169,592	\$127,000	\$214,250	\$185,000	31%

* Notes items funded at 100% while others are funded based on percentage of tourism

Below is the breakdown in tourism-related categories:

Bluffton Historical Preservation Society - Welcome Center at the Heyward House and "Common Ground" Capital Project	Total Budget	Recommended ATAX Grant (approx.. 86% of project budget)
Advertising and Promotion:	\$ 7,900	\$ 7,900
Promotion of Arts & Cultural Events:	2,625	2,625
Const., Maint., and Operation of Facilities:	43,000	43,000
Operating Visitor Information Center:	160,725	131,475
Total	\$ 214,250	\$ 185,000

- Eligible "tourism-related expenditures" include:
 - "Advertising and promotion" which is budgeted at \$7,900 for increasing reaches through Facebook and printing brochures and marketing materials.
 - "Promotion of Arts & Cultural Events" budgeted at \$2,625 for tours and events
 - "Construction, Maintenance, and Operation of Facilities" budgeted at \$43,000. This is an increase over last year's capital project budget by \$30,494 for the "Common Ground" outdoor expansion planned.
 - "Operating Visitor Information Center" requested amount of \$131,475 of the organization's budget of \$160,725 equating to 81.8% which is in line with the percentage of tourists visiting the center.
 - SC Revenue Ruling #98-22: *"Expenditures that will qualify under this category are any monies spent to operated and maintain centers whose primary purpose is to provide information, brochures, and other services to tourists."*

The committee voted to recommend a total award of \$185,000.

☐ BHPS requested \$5,300 for Slave Dwelling Project Sleepover and Juneteenth Celebration

- The request of \$5,300 is 100% of the total budget.
- Two-day celebration with presentations and discussions scheduled at various locations with free admission.
- Eligible “tourism-related expenditures” include:
 - “Advertising and promotion” which is budgeted at \$1,000 and include working with the Bluffton Martin Luther King Observance Committee.
 - “Promotion of Arts & Cultural Events” budgeted at \$2,640 for Mr. Joe McGill’s speaking and travel fees for both days.
 - “Operation of Facilities” budgeted at \$1,150 with only \$1,100 eligible for rental and activities during the Juneteenth Celebration.
 - “Law Enforcement” budgeted at \$510
- Scheduled visits to Heyward House, Boys and Girls Club, Oyster Factory Park, and overnight stay at the Garvin-Garvey House.
- The overnight stay is limited to 25 attendees.

The committee voted to recommend a total award of \$5,250 at the Special Meeting.

Bluffton Historical Preservation Society - Slave Dwelling Project Sleepover and Juneteenth Celebration	Total Budget	Recommended ATAX Grant (100% of project budget)
Advertising and Promotion:	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000
Promotion of Arts & Cultural Events:	2,640	2,640
Operation of Facilities:	1,150	1,100*
Law Enforcement:	510	510
Total	\$ 5,300	\$ 5,250

*1,100 is eligible. Total eligible is \$5,250.

☐ Celebrate Bluffton, Inc. requested \$450 to support annual software license for Bluffton Buddy

- The request of \$450 is approximately 50% of the total \$900 budget.
- Bluffton Buddy has users from 20 different countries.
- It is a free App that is self-paced and GPS enabled to bring “Bluffton’s history to life.”
- Eligible “tourism-related expenditures” include:
 - “Advertising and promotion” which is budgeted at \$900 for the annual software license.
- There are currently 13 stops located throughout Bluffton with 2 new stops currently being created for the app.

The committee voted to recommend a total award of \$0 due the committee’s understanding this as an unallowable expense. Since the meeting, staff has received legal advice from Town’s attorney on the request and feels this is a “permissible expense under the ATAX statute” based on the app directly related to the promotion of tourism.

Bluffton Buddy - Annual Software License	Total Budget	Recommended ATAX Grant
Advertising & Promotion:	\$ 900	\$ 0
Total	\$ 900	\$ 0

□ Community Foundation of the Lowcountry requested \$15,000 for the SC Lowcountry Oyster Trail’s Oyster Shell Public Art Display

- The request of \$15,000 is approximately 30% of the total \$50,000 budget.
- Oyster shell forms can be displayed indoors or out throughout area businesses.
- Purpose is to draw awareness to the importance of oyster habitat and complement the Bluffton arts community.
- Eligible “tourism-related expenditures” include:
 - “Advertising and promotion” which is budgeted at \$50,000 and include print and digital campaigns partnering with SmartMarketing to target arts and cultural travelers.
- This project has a goal of 26 sponsors to secure and decorate shell forms for unveiling in mid-September, the beginning of oyster season.

The committee voted to recommend a total award of \$15,000.

Community Foundation of the Lowcountry - SC Lowcountry Oyster Trail’s Oyster Shell Public Art Display	Total Budget	Recommended ATAX Grant (approx.. 30% of project budget)
Advertising and Promotion:	\$ 50,000	\$ 15,000
Total	\$ 50,000	\$ 15,000

□ Society of Bluffton Artists requested \$12,150 is support of advertising for Promoting the Arts of the Lowcountry and Beyond

- The request of \$12,150 is approximately 45% of the total \$27,173 budget.
- The gallery/education center is located in Old Town.
- Eligible “tourism-related expenditures” include:
 - “Advertising and promotion” which is budgeted at \$27,173 and include professional marketing services, print, online, and social media.
- Sales have increased as well as participation in SoBA Classes and Summer Camp.

The committee voted to recommend a total award of \$7,132.

Society of Bluffton Artists - Promoting the Arts in the Lowcountry and Beyond	Total Budget	Recommended ATAX Grant (approx.. 45% of project budget)
Advertising and Promotion:	\$ 27,173	\$ 12,150
Total	\$ 27,173	\$ 12,150

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Accommodations Tax Advisory Committee (ATAC) draft meeting minutes from May 13, 2018
 2. Accommodations Tax Advisory Committee (ATAC) draft meeting minutes from Special Meeting May 13, 2018
 3. Hilton Head Island - Bluffton Chamber of Commerce and Visitor & Convention Bureau's 2018-2019 Bluffton Marketing Plan - available in hard copy upon request
 4. Bluffton Historical Preservation Society (BHPS): Welcome Center at the Heyward House and "Common Ground" Capital Project grant application - available in hard copy upon request
 5. BHPS: Welcome Center at the Heyward House and "Common Ground" Capital Project ATAC Scoring Sheet Summary
 6. BHPS: Slave Dwelling Project Sleepover and Juneteenth Celebration grant application - available in hard copy upon request
 7. BHPS: Slave Dwelling Project Sleepover and Juneteenth Celebration ATAC Scoring Sheet Summary
 8. Celebrate Bluffton, Inc.: Bluffton Buddy Annual Software License grant application - available in hard copy upon request
 9. Celebrate Bluffton, Inc.: Bluffton Buddy Annual Software License ATAC Scoring Sheet Summary
 10. Community Foundation of the Lowcountry: SC Lowcountry Oyster Trail - Oyster Shell Public Art Display grant application - available in hard copy upon request
 11. Community Foundation of the Lowcountry: SC Lowcountry Oyster Trail - Oyster Shell Public Art Display ATAC Scoring Sheet Summary
 12. Society of Bluffton Artists: Promoting the Arts in the Lowcountry and Beyond grant application - available in hard copy upon request
 13. Society of Bluffton Artists: Promoting the Arts in the Lowcountry and Beyond ATAC Scoring Sheet Summary
 14. ATAC Scoring Table Rating Matrix
 15. Previously Funded Grant Listing
 16. Council Motion Recommendations
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ACCOMMODATIONS TAX ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
MAY 15, 2018

Chairman Sam Britt called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. Other committee members present were Jean Wilson, Joseph Kropiewnicki, Bridgette Frazier, and Mike Tripka. Staff in attendance was as follows: Natalie Majorkiewicz, Treasury Manager and Terrieca Green, Payroll/Revenue Coordinator.

Roll Call and Confirmation of Quorum

Five committee members present, one absent, quorum met.

Adoption of Agenda

Natalie stated that Town Council meeting has changed to June 13, 2018.

Adoption Minutes:

Chairman moved to adopt the minutes.

Tripka motioned to adopt minutes as stated. Bridgette seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

Financial Report: Natalie Majorkiewicz, Treasury Manager

The total funds available for distributions are **\$582,550** (State Accommodations Tax **\$222,624** and Local Accommodations Tax **\$359,926**)

Committee Approval and Recommendation to Town Council on Applicant's Request as follows:

Hilton Head Island - Bluffton Chamber of Commerce 2018-2019 Bluffton Marketing Plan

Ariana Pernice, Vice President, Visitor & Convention Bureau gave a presentation of their marketing campaign for the Town of Bluffton. The chamber estimated receiving \$135,000 from State and Local ATAX monies as the Town of Bluffton's Designated Marketing Organization (DMO).

Tripka made the motion to approve the Hilton Head Island - Bluffton Chamber of Commerce and Visitor & Convention Bureau as the DMO with the presented marketing plan budget. Wilson seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

Bluffton Historical Preservation Society (BHPS): Welcome Center at the Heyward House
Historic Center and Common Ground Capital - \$177,000

Kelly Graham, Executive Director gave an overview of the request for Accommodation Tax dollars, which include renovations at the Heyward House and the annual request for general operating fund expenses. The Heyward House serves as the official Welcome Center for the Town of Bluffton. Katie Epps, Director of the Heyward House gave an overview of the work that is going on at the Heyward House and events in the coming year. They have seen a significant growth in their social media outreach, which has gone up 1.9% on Pinterest 31.0% on BlogSpot views and 279% in website views. Additional budget requests include updates to the webpage for content and security purposes. Graham shared the model for the Common Ground, exterior

lighting, and oyster shell paths with a Pavilion. A multi-use area for the public that will help to define the downtown area as a fun place to be. Kelly noted that the original request did not include the oyster shell paths and would like to have an additional \$8,000 for that portion of the project.

Tripka recused himself from the meeting while the remaining members voted. Frazier motioned to grant \$185,000. Britt seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

BHPS: Slave Dwelling Project Sleepover and Juneteenth Celebration - \$5,300

Kelly Graham, Executive Director gave an overview of Juneteenth a two-day celebration with presentations at various locations in Bluffton. Request for funding for advertising, promotion of arts and cultural events, and law enforcement. Advertising locally and in other areas including Savannah and Charleston. Collaborating with Montage and Comfort Inn Suites to promote the Juneteenth Celebration. Speaker Joe McGill will be guest for the event.

Tripka and Frazier recused themselves from voting which resulted in a loss of a quorum. A special meeting for vote on this request will be held when a quorum can be met.

Celebrate Bluffton, Inc.: Bluffton Buddy - \$450.00

Bob Newbert, Chairman gave an overview of the funds needed for the software license for the Bluffton Buddy App. Britt mentioned concern is that the licensing of the product does not fall within the scope of ATAX dollars, committee advised during the last meeting to present the committee with items that are reimbursable for ATAX dollars according to the state law. Britt advised Newbert to come to an ATAX Workshop to get input from staff on how to apply for grant to help ways to get funds for ATAX dollars.

Tripka motioned to grant \$450. Britt seconded. Tripka denied motion for development of the App would have considered funding if it was more advertising or promoting use of the app. Advised that funds should come out of operations fund for the App. Frazier stated that using funds for software is out of scope for ATAX dollars. Tripka motioned to approve. Britt seconded. Vote was five opposed. The motion failed.

Community Foundation of the Lowcountry: SC Lowcountry Oyster Trail - Oyster Shell Public Art Display - \$15,000

Larry Hughes, founder gave an overview of the Oyster Trail. Hughes stated trail is educational and fun for all ages. The shells will be 26 four-foot fiberglass oyster shell that will be display indoor and outdoor throughout Bluffton businesses. This will bring traffic to the business throughout Bluffton. The trail will bring a cultural awareness of oysters to our community and ecosystem. The trail will start in Bluffton and could potentially go up as far as Charleston SC.

Tripka motioned to grant \$15,000. Kropiewnicki seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

Society of Bluffton Artists: Promoting the Arts of the Lowcountry and Beyond - \$12,150

Gayle Miller, president gave an overview of SoBA. The request will be toward advertising designed to enhance the position as a leading regional destination visual arts gallery and learning center within the Lowcountry. Funds will be for promoting the arts for Bluffton and beyond. Advertising will be throughout different hotels, local newspapers, local airports and various social media channels such as Facebook, Instagram. Hughes stated that they track the tourist by a guest register and sales receipts.

Wilson motioned to grant \$12,150. Frazier seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 8:08 p.m.

DRAFT

ACCOMMODATIONS TAX ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
MAY 29, 2018

Chairman Sam Britt called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. Other committee members present were Jean Wilson, Joseph Kropiewnicki and Maria Kramer. Staff in attendance was as follows: Natalie Majorkiewicz, Treasury Manager and Terrieca Green, Payroll/Revenue Coordinator.

Roll Call and Confirmation of Quorum

Four committee members present, two absent, quorum met.

Committee Approval and Recommendation to Town Council on Applicant's Request as follows:

BHPS: Slave Dwelling Project Sleepover and Juneteenth Celebration - \$5,300

Wilson motioned to grant \$5300. Kropiewnicki seconded. Britt stated it was discussed at the May 15th meeting that the committee would move to approve what they can and would vote on in special meeting. Britt stated that the amount that can be approve is \$5250. Wilson re-motioned to grant \$5250. Kropiewnicki seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 5:33 p.m.

ACCOMMODATIONS TAX ADVISORY COMMITTEE

STAFF REPORT

Department of Finance & Administration



MEETING DATE: May 15, 2018
 SUBJECT: Bluffton Historical Preservation Society (BHPS): Welcome Center at the Heyward House and "Common Ground" Capital Project
 PROJECT MANAGER: Natalie Majorkiewicz, Treasury Manager

Summarized below is the application from Bluffton Historical Preservation Society (BHPS) for Accommodations Tax grant dollars in support of advertising and promotion of tourism, promotion of cultural events, construction, maintenance, and operation of facilities, and operating visitor information center.

Requested Amount: \$177,000

Bluffton Historical Preservation Society - Welcome Center at the Heyward House and "Common Ground" Capital Project	Total Budget	Requested ATAX Grant (approx.. 81% of project budget)
Advertising and Promotion:	\$ 7,900	\$ 7,900
Promotion of Arts & Cultural Events:	2,625	2,625
Const., Maint., and Operation of Facilities:	46,000	35,000
Operating Visitor Information Center:	160,725	131,475
Total	\$ 217,250	\$ 177,000

Eligible "Tourism-Related Expenditures" per South Carolina Code of Laws:

Advertising and Promotion of Tourism:

- Total budget is \$7,900
- Increasing reach of Facebook posts
- Reprinting brochures and marketing materials to include the rebranding of Heyward House Museum and Welcome Center
- Brochures placed at airport, all SC Welcome Centers, Gullah Geechee Museum, Chambers, and other historic sites in addition to hotels, timeshares, and tour companies.

Promotion of Arts & Cultural Events:

- Total budget is \$2,625
- House and walking tour scripts updated, Native American Pottery program to be added, and annual oyster roast.

Construction, Maintenance, and Operation of Facilities:

- Total budget is \$46,000 with amount requested at \$35,000
- "Common Ground" project
- Outdoor expansion used for workshops, informational classes, and social functions.

Operating Visitor Information Center:

- Total budget is \$160,725 with amount requested at \$131,475
- Expenses to operate and maintain Heyward House Museum and Welcome Center.

Festival/Event: The Heyward House serves as the Town of Bluffton's official Welcome Center.

Bluffton Event: The house and special events are located and held in Old Town.

Tourism Draw %: 10,374 visitors in 2016/2017 with 81% from out of town. Total visitors projected for FY 2017/2018 is 11,000. The noticeable decrease from last year is attributable to Hurricane Irma in September 2017.

Benefit to Tourism: Official Welcome Center for the Town of Bluffton.

Self-Sufficiency % (Financial Need): Requesting approximately 81% of total budget which is up \$50,000 from last year's annual request. The requested funds are projected for use in the operating and capital budgets in FY19.

Table Rating (Scores 0-5 with 5 satisfying the qualifications best, exception Advertising 0-15)

Amount Recommended	Advertising (15)	Festival/Event (5)	Bluffton Event (5)	Tourism Draw % (5)	Benefit to Tourism (5)	Self-Sufficiency % (5)	Total of 40 possible	Comments
\$ 185,000	6	4	5	5	4	1	21	

Previous Funding Amounts - Bluffton Historical Preservation Society

Fiscal Year	Amount Requested	% of Budget	Advisory Committee Recommendation	Town Council Approved	Expended	Comments
2017	\$127,000	75%	\$127,000	\$127,000	\$94,418	
2016	90,000	67%	90,000	90,000	90,000	
2015	100,000	74%	100,000	100,000	79,667	
2014*	30,000		30,000	110,000	110,000	

*Council converted request from quarterly to an annual amount

Accommodations Tax Committee Recommendations and Comments:

The Committee recommends funding \$ 185,000 for Advertising and Promotion (\$7,900), Promotion of the Arts & Cultural Events (2,625), Construction, Maintenance, and Operation of Facilities (43,000), and Operating Visitor Information Center (\$131,475) .

ACCOMMODATIONS TAX ADVISORY COMMITTEE STAFF REPORT

Department of Finance & Administration



MEETING DATE: May 15, 2018
 SUBJECT: Bluffton Historical Preservation Society (BHPS): Slave Dwelling
 Project Sleepover and Juneteenth Celebration
 PROJECT MANAGER: Natalie Majorkiewicz, Treasury Manager

Summarized below is the application from Bluffton Historical Preservation Society (BHPS) for Accommodations Tax grant dollars in support of advertising and promotion of tourism, promotion of cultural events, operation of facilities, and law enforcement.

Requested Amount: \$5,300

Bluffton Historical Preservation Society - Slave Dwelling Project Sleepover and Juneteenth Celebration	Total Budget	Requested ATAX Grant (100% of project budget)
Advertising and Promotion:	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000
Promotion of Arts & Cultural Events:	2,640	2,640
Operation of Facilities:	1,150	1,100*
Law Enforcement:	510	510
Total	\$ 5,300	\$ 5,250

*1,100 is eligible. Total eligible is \$5,250.

Eligible "Tourism-Related Expenditures" per South Carolina Code of Laws:

Advertising and Promotion of Tourism:

- Total budget is \$1,000
- Advertising to outlying areas including Savannah and Charleston
- Also working with the Bluffton Martin Luther King Observance Committee

Promotion of Arts & Cultural Events:

- Total budget is \$2,640
- Speaker and travel expenses for Mr. Joe McGill for both days

Operation of Facilities:

- Total budget is \$1,150 with \$1,100 eligible
- Includes facility rental and activities for attendees during Juneteenth Celebration

Law Enforcement:

- Police budgeted at \$510

Festival/Event: Presentations and events scheduled for Friday, June 15th at Heyward House and Boys and Girls Club and Saturday, June 16th at Oyster Factory Park with an overnight stay at the Garvin-Garvey House with 25 attendees.

Bluffton Event: Two-day celebration with presentations and discussions scheduled at various locations in Bluffton with free admission.

Tourism Draw %: Unknown, but visitor data is planned to be taken during the event.

Benefit to Tourism: Two-day event with guest speaker, John McGill who has a nation-wide following

Self-Sufficiency % (Financial Need): Requesting 100% of the total project budget.

Table Rating (Scores 0-5 with 5 satisfying the qualifications best, exception Advertising 0-15)

Amount Recommended	Advertising (15)	Festival/Event (5)	Bluffton Event (5)	Tourism Draw % (5)	Benefit to Tourism (5)	Self-Sufficiency % (5)	Total of 40 possible	Comments
\$ 5,250	4	3	4	4	5	2	22	

Previous Funding Amounts - N/A

Accommodations Tax Committee Recommendations and Comments:

The Committee recommends funding \$ 5,250 for Advertising and Promotion (\$1,000), Promotion of Arts & Cultural Events (\$2,640), Operation of Facilities (\$1,100), and Law Enforcement (\$510).

ACCOMMODATIONS TAX ADVISORY COMMITTEE STAFF REPORT

Department of Finance & Administration



MEETING DATE: May 15, 2018
 SUBJECT: Celebrate Bluffton, Inc.: Bluffton Buddy Annual Software License
 PROJECT MANAGER: Natalie Majorkiewicz, Treasury Manager

Summarized below is the application from Celebrate Bluffton, Inc. for Accommodations Tax grant dollars in support of advertising and promotion of tourism.

Requested Amount: \$450

Celebrate Bluffton, Inc.: Bluffton Buddy Annual Software License	Total Budget	Requested ATAX Grant (approx. 50% of project budget)
Advertising and Promotion:	\$ 900	\$ 450
Total	\$ 900	\$ 450

Eligible "Tourism-Related Expenditures" per South Carolina Code of Laws:

Advertising and Promotion of Tourism:

- Total budget is \$900
- Software license for Celebrate Bluffton's free mobile app, Bluffton Buddy Festival/Event: Free App for smart phones and tablets that is self-paced and GPS enabled.

Bluffton Event: Currently, 13 stops throughout Bluffton specifically to focus on Bluffton's history with visuals, narration, music and sound effects.

Tourism Draw %: Users from 20 countries have used Bluffton Buddy

Benefit to Tourism: Available 24/7 and Bluffton Buddy brings "Bluffton's history to life."

Self-Sufficiency % (Financial Need): Requesting approximately 50% of the total project budget.

Table Rating (Scores 0-5 with 5 satisfying the qualifications best, exception Advertising 0-15)

Amount Recommended	Advertising (15)	Festival/Event	Bluffton Event	Tourism Draw % (5)	Benefit to Tourism (5)	Self-Sufficiency % (5)	Misc. (10)	Total of 40 possible	Comments
\$ 450	0	N/A	N/A	0	0	0	0	0	

Previous Funding Amounts - Celebrate Bluffton, Inc.: Bluffton Heritage Trail

Fiscal Year	Amount Requested	% of Budget	Advisory Committee Recommendation	Town Council Approved	Expended	Comments
2018	\$ 7,132	30%	\$ 7,132	\$ 7,732	\$ 0	
2015	2,660	4%	2,660	2,660	1,885	

Accommodations Tax Committee Recommendations and Comments:

The Committee recommends funding \$ 0 but recommends Celebrate Bluffton Inc. to come back with eligible expenses in the future for the Bluffton Buddy App.

**ACCOMMODATIONS TAX ADVISORY COMMITTEE
STAFF REPORT**
Department of Finance & Administration



MEETING DATE: May 15, 2018
SUBJECT: Community Foundation of the Lowcountry: SC Lowcountry Oyster Trail - Oyster Shell Public Art Display
PROJECT MANAGER: Natalie Majorkiewicz, Treasury Manager

Summarized below is the application from Community Foundation of the Lowcountry for Accommodations Tax grant dollars in support of advertising and promotion of tourism.

Requested Amount: \$15,000

Community Foundation of the Lowcountry - SC Lowcountry Oyster Trail's Oyster Shell Public Art Display	Total Budget	Requested ATAX Grant (approx.. 30% of project budget)
Advertising and Promotion:	\$ 50,000	\$ 15,000
Total	\$ 50,000	\$ 15,000

Eligible "Tourism-Related Expenditures" per South Carolina Code of Laws:

Advertising and Promotion of Tourism:

- Total budget is \$50,000 with \$15,000 being requested
- For SmartMarketing print and digital campaign to target arts and cultural travelers

Festival/Event: N/A

Bluffton Event: Oyster shell forms can be displayed indoors or out throughout area businesses.

Tourism Draw %: This is the initial request for this project but a "very successful" project in Mobile Bay, AL per chamber officials there.

Benefit to Tourism: Both a tourism and economic development initiative with a focus on the arts.

Self-Sufficiency % (Financial Need): Requesting approximately 30% of total budget.

Table Rating (Scores 0-5 with 5 satisfying the qualifications best, exception Advertising 0-15)

Amount Recommended	Advertising (15)	Festival/Event	Bluffton Event	Tourism Draw % (5)	Benefit to Tourism (5)	Self-Sufficiency % (5)	Misc. (10)	Total of 40 possible	Comments
\$ 15,000	5	1	4	1	3	3	8	26	

Previous Funding Amounts - N/A

Accommodations Tax Committee Recommendations and Comments:

The Committee recommends funding \$ 15,000 for Advertising and Promotion.

ACCOMMODATIONS TAX ADVISORY COMMITTEE STAFF REPORT

Department of Finance & Administration



MEETING DATE: May 15, 2018
 SUBJECT: Society of Bluffton Artists: Promoting the Arts of the Lowcountry and Beyond
 PROJECT MANAGER: Natalie Majorkiewicz, Treasury Manager

Summarized below is the application from Society of Bluffton Artists (SoBA) for Accommodations Tax grant dollars in support of advertising and promotion of tourism.

Requested Amount: \$12,150

Society of Bluffton Artists - Promoting the Arts in the Lowcountry and Beyond	Total Budget	Requested ATAX Grant (approx.. 45% of project budget)
Advertising and Promotion:	\$ 27,173	\$ 12,150
Total	\$ 27,173	\$ 12,150

Eligible "Tourism-Related Expenditures" per South Carolina Code of Laws:

Advertising and Promotion of Tourism:

- Total budget is \$27,173
- For professional marketing services, print, online, and social media

Festival/Event: N/A

Bluffton Event: The gallery/education center is located in Old Town.

Tourism Draw %: Using credit card sales, 54% of purchases were made with out of state addresses. A monthly guest book registry shows tourists coming in from many parts of the world.

Benefit to Tourism: Sales increased in both local and nonresidents as well as participation in SoBA Classes and Summer Camp.

Self-Sufficiency % (Financial Need): Requesting approximately 45% of total budget.

Table Rating (Scores 0-5 with 5 satisfying the qualifications best, exception Advertising 0-15)

Amount Recommended	Advertising (15)	Festival/Event	Bluffton Event	Tourism Draw % (5)	Benefit to Tourism (5)	Self-Sufficiency % (5)	Misc. (10)	Total of 40 possible	Comments
\$ 12,150	7	0	3	3	5	3	10	30	

Previous Funding Amounts - Bluffton Historical Preservation Society

Fiscal Year	Amount Requested	% of Budget	Advisory Committee Recommendation	Town Council Approved	Expended	Comments
2016	\$10,700	39%	\$6,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	
2015	15,000	44%	6,000	7,000	7,000	
2014	15,000	19%	9,800	9,800	9,800	
2013	3,475	52%	1,000	1,000	1,000	

Accommodations Tax Committee Recommendations and Comments:

The Committee recommends funding \$ 12,150 for Advertising and Promotion.

Table Rating Matrix-----COMMITTEE AVERAGE POINTS-----

**Points
Awarded**

Advertising possible total points - 15

Part 1 - 5 points possible based on how much of the requested funds go toward advertising

- 0% of funds go toward advertising **0 points**
- 1% - 20% of funds go toward advertising **1 points**
- 21% - 40% of funds go toward advertising **2 points**
- 41% - 60% of funds go toward advertising **3 points**
- 61% - 80% of funds go toward advertising **4 points**
- 81% - 100% of funds go toward advertising **5 points**

Part 2 - 10 points possible based on where the advertising is placed

- None of the funds go toward advertising **0 points**
- Local newspapers/periodicals and electronic advertising (examples Island Packet, Bluffton Today) **2 points**
- Local guides/periodicals specifically geared toward tourists with a shelf life of more than 30 days **4 points**
- Larger regional publications and electronic marketing within 100 miles (example Charleston or Savannah newspapers) **6 points**
- Newspapers/periodicals/electronic marketing to large, metropolitan areas outside of 100 miles away (example Atlanta Journal/Constitution, Charlotte newspaper, Washington Post ,Chicago Tribune) **8 points**
- Nationally distributed newspapers/periodicals/electronic marketing (example, USA Today, New York Times, Time Magazine, Southern Living, airline in-flight magazines) **10 points**

Festival/Event possible total points - 5

- higher point value given to requests for festivals or events
- length of event or festival should be considered. Is it an all-day event versus a two-hour event?
- higher point value could be awarded for multi-day festivals

Bluffton Event possible total points - 5

- higher point value given to events held within the town limits of Bluffton
- higher point value given to events spanning multiple locations?

Tourism Draw possible total points - 5

- 0% of attendees are tourists based on historical or projected information **0 points**
- 1% - 20% of attendees are tourists based on historical or projected info **1 points**
- 21% - 40% of attendees are tourists based on historical or projected info **2 points**
- 41% - 60% of attendees are tourists based on historical or projected info **3 points**
- 61% - 80% of attendees are tourists based on historical or projected info **4 points**
- 81% - 100% of attendees are tourists based on historical or projected info **5 points**

Benefit to Tourism (economy) possible total points - 5

- higher point value given to events that encourage overnight stays
- higher point value given to events that have local business participation

Self Sufficiency possible total points - 5

- 100% of budget from ATAX request **0 points**
- 80% - 99% of budget from ATAX request **1 point**
- 60% - 79% of budget from ATAX request **2 points**
- 40% - 59% of budget from ATAX request **3 points**
- 20% - 39% of budget from ATAX request **4 points**
- 1% - 19% of budget from ATAX request **5 points**

Miscellaneous possible total points – 10 (Only use if applicant does not qualify as a festival/event)

Group Average Grand Point Total out of a possible 40 points

Group Average % (out of 40 points)

Grant Requests	Amount Requested	Advisory Committee Recommendation	Town Council Approved	Source of Funding	Paid FY 2016	Paid FY 2017	Paid FY 2018	Remaining
Applications Received March 31, 2016								
Bluffton Historical Preservation Society: Annual Amount \$90,000	\$ 90,000	\$ 90,000	\$ 90,000	State ATAX	\$ -	\$ 90,000	\$ -	\$ -
Total Grants for 3rd Quarter Payments	\$ 90,000	\$ 90,000	\$ 90,000		\$ -	\$ 90,000	\$ -	\$ -
Applications Received June 30, 2016								
Beaufort County Black Chamber of Commerce	\$ 25,000	\$ 3,980	\$ 3,980	State ATAX	\$ -	\$ 3,980	\$ -	\$ -
Historic Bluffton Arts & Seafood Festival	25,000	25,000	25,000	Local ATAX	-	20,958	-	4,043
Old Town Merchants Society: Annual Request \$48,000	48,000	48,000	48,000	Local ATAX	-	48,000	-	-
Total Grants for 4th Quarter Payments	\$ 98,000	\$ 76,980	\$ 76,980		\$ -	\$ 72,938	\$ -	\$ 4,043
Applications Received September 30, 2016								
Farmers Market	\$ 55,066	\$ 24,050	\$ 24,050	Local ATAX		\$ 7,362	\$ 12,650	\$ 4,037
Hilton Head Island Bluffton Chamber of Commerce	25,000	24,000	24,000	Local ATAX		-	24,000	-
Total Grants for 1st Quarter Payments	\$ 80,066	\$ 48,050	\$ 48,050		\$ -	\$ 7,362	\$ 36,650	\$ 4,037
Applications Received December 31, 2016								
Beaufort County Black Chamber of Commerce	\$ 10,500	\$ 3,980	\$ 3,980	State ATAX	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 3,980
The Greater Bluffton Chamber of Commerce: Taste of Bluffton	31,400	17,750	17,750	Local ATAX	-	17,031	-	719
Total Grants for 2nd Quarter Payments	\$ 41,900	\$ 21,730	\$ 21,730		\$ -	\$ 17,031	\$ -	\$ 4,699
Applications Received March 31, 2017								
Bluffton Historical Preservation Society: Annual Amount \$127,000	\$ 127,000	\$ 127,000	\$ 127,000	State ATAX	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 105,693	\$ 21,307
Greater Bluffton Chamber of Commerce: Boiled Peanut Festival 9/2017	19,850	9,500	11,900	Local ATAX	-	-	11,298	602
Beaufort County PALS: Dixie Junior Boys and Dixie Boys World Series(2 World Series)	77,050	50,750	50,570	Local ATAX	-	-	32,913	17,657
Total Grants for 3rd Quarter Payments	\$ 223,900	\$ 187,250	\$ 189,470	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 149,904	\$ 39,566
Applications Received June 30, 2017								
Hilton Head Symphony Orchestra	\$ 20,000		\$ 20,000	Local ATAX	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 20,000	\$ -
Historic Bluffton Arts & Seafood Festival	30,000	30,000	30,000	Local ATAX	-	-	23,878	6,123
Old Town Merchants Society: Annual Request \$48,000	48,000	48,000	48,000	Local ATAX	-	-	23,344	24,656
Total Grants for 4th Quarter Payments	\$ 98,000	\$ 78,000	\$ 98,000		\$ -	\$ -	\$ 67,222	\$ 30,778
Applications Received September 30, 2017								
Farmers Market	\$ 24,250	\$ 24,125	\$ 24,125	Local ATAX	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 4,891	\$ 19,234
The Greater Bluffton Chamber of Commerce: The 2018 Taste of Bluffton	34,900	28,484	28,484	Local ATAX	-	-	8,536	19,948
Total Grants for 1st Quarter Payments	\$ 59,150	\$ 52,609	\$ 52,609		\$ -	\$ -	\$ 13,427	\$ 39,182
Applications Received December 31, 2017								
Celebrate Bluffton: Bluffton Buddy	\$ 7,132	\$ 7,132	\$ 7,132	Local ATAX	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 7,132
Total Grants for 2nd Quarter Payments	\$ 7,132	\$ 7,132	\$ 7,132		\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 7,132
Applications Received March 31, 2018								
Bluffton Historical Preservation Society: Annual Amount \$127,000	\$ 177,000	\$ 185,000	\$ -	State ATAX	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
BHPS: Slave Dwelling Project Sleepover and Juneteenth Celebration	5,300	5,250	-	Local ATAX	-	-	-	-
Celebrate Bluffton: Bluffton Buddy	450	-	-	Local ATAX	-	-	-	-
Oyster Shell Public Art Display	15,000	15,000	-	Local ATAX	-	-	-	-
Society of Bluffton Arts	12,150	12,150	-	Local ATAX	-	-	-	-
Total Grants for 3rd Quarter Payments	\$ 209,900	\$ 217,400	\$ -		\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Total Grants	\$ 908,048	\$ 779,151	\$ 583,971		\$ -	\$ 187,331	\$ 267,203	\$ 129,436

State ATAX:

General Fund: \$25,000 + 5%
HHI-Bluffton Chamber: 30%

Local ATAX:

Visitors Convention Bureau: 8%
Town Capital Improvements Projects: 38% (FY16 & 17) 51% (FY18)
Disaster Recovery Designation: 1%

Recommendation of Motions

1. "I make a motion to approve the Hilton Head Island - Bluffton Chamber of Commerce and Visitor & Convention Bureau's marketing plan and FY2018/2019 budget as the Designated Marketing Organization for the Town of Bluffton."

2. "I make a motion to grant the Bluffton Historical Preservation Society \$185,000 in support of Welcome Center at the Heyward House and "Common Ground" Capital Project as presented in the Staff Report breakdown for advertising and promotion, promotion of the arts and cultural events, construction, maintenance, and operation of facilities, and operating Visitor Information Center."

3. "I make a motion to grant the Bluffton Historical Preservation Society \$5,250 in support of the Slave Dwelling Project Sleepover and Juneteenth Celebration as presented in the Staff Report breakdown for advertising and promotion, promotion of the arts and cultural events, operation of facilities, and law enforcement."

4. "I make a motion to grant the Celebrate Bluffton, Inc. \$450 in support of the annual software license for the Bluffton Buddy App as presented in the Staff Report breakdown for advertising and promotion."

5. "I make a motion to grant the Community Foundation of the Lowcountry \$15,000 in support of the SC Lowcountry Oyster Trail's Oyster Shell Public Art Display project as presented in the Staff Report breakdown for advertising and promotion."

6. "I make a motion to grant the Society of Bluffton Artists \$12,150 in support of Promoting the Arts in the Lowcountry and Beyond as presented in the Staff Report breakdown for advertising and promotion."