



Special Called Meeting of County Council Meeting Beaufort County, SC

Council Chambers, Administration Building Beaufort County Government Robert Smalls
Complex 100 Ribaut Road, Beaufort

Monday, November 18, 2024
5:00 PM

**Or at the conclusion of the Public Facilities and Safety Committee Meeting, no sooner
than 4:30 PM**

AGENDA

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

JOSEPH F. PASSIMENT, CHAIRMAN
DAVID P. BARTHOLOMEW
LOGAN CUNNINGHAM
YORK GLOVER
MARK LAWSON
ANNA MARIA TABERNIK

LAWRENCE MCELYNN, VICE CHAIR
PAULA BROWN
GERALD DAWSON
ALICE HOWARD
THOMAS REITZ

1. CALL TO ORDER
2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE
3. PUBLIC NOTIFICATION OF THIS MEETING HAS BEEN PUBLISHED, POSTED, AND DISTRIBUTED IN COMPLIANCE WITH THE SOUTH CAROLINA FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT
4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

CITIZEN COMMENTS

5. CITIZEN COMMENTS PERIOD – 15 MINUTES TOTAL

Anyone who wishes to speak during the Citizen Comment portion of the meeting will limit their comments to AGENDA ITEMS ONLY and speak no longer than three (3) minutes. Speakers will address Council in a respectful manner appropriate to the decorum of the meeting, refraining from the use of profane, abusive, or obscene language. In accordance with Beaufort County's Rules and Procedures, giving of a speaker's time to another is not allowed.

ACTION ITEMS

6. SECOND READING OF AN ORDINANCE APPROPRIATING FUNDS FROM THE STATE A-TAX FUNDS AS RECOMMENDED BY THE STATE A-TAX COMMITTEE IN COMPLIANCE WITH THE REQUIREMENTS OF SOUTH CAROLINA CODE OF LAWS

EXECUTIVE SESSION

7. PURSUANT TO S.C. CODE SECTION 30-4-70(A)(2) RECEIPT OF LEGAL ADVICE WHERE THE LEGAL ADVICE RELATES TO PENDING LITIGATION (REDFISH HOLDINGS LLC V BEAUFORT COUNTY)
 8. PURSUANT TO S. C. CODE SECTION 30-4-70(A)(1): TO ENGAGE IN DISCUSSIONS INCIDENT TO EMPLOYMENT, APPOINTMENT, COMPENSATION, PROMOTION, DEMOTION, DISCIPLINE, OR RELEASE OF AN EMPLOYEE OR A PERSON REGULATED BY A PUBLIC BODY (COUNTY ATTORNEY)
 9. PURSUANT TO S.C. CODE SEC. 30-4-70(A)(2): RECEIPT OF LEGAL ADVICE WHERE THE ADVICE RELATES TO PENDING CLAIMS OR OTHER MATTERS COVERED BY THE ATTORNEY-CLIENT PRIVILEGE (OKATIE RIVER PARK/PEPPER HALL, LLC)
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END OF EXECUTIVE SESSION

10. MATTERS ARISING OUT OF EXECUTIVE SESSION
11. ADJOURNMENT

TO WATCH COMMITTEE OR COUNTY COUNCIL MEETINGS OR FOR A COMPLETE LIST OF AGENDAS AND BACKUP PACKAGES, PLEASE VISIT:

<https://beaufortcountysc.gov/council/council-committee-meetings/index.html>



BEAUFORT COUNTY COUNCIL AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY

ITEM TITLE:
<i>RECOMMEND APPROVAL TO COUNCIL OF AN ORDINANCE APPROPRIATING FUNDS FROM THE STATE A-TAX FUNDS AS RECOMMENDED BY THE STATE A-TAX COMMITTEE IN COMPLIANCE WITH THE REQUIREMENT OF SOUTH CAROLINA CODE OF LAWS</i>
MEETING NAME AND DATE:
<i>Finance Committee, October 28, 2024</i>
PRESENTER INFORMATION:
<i>Jonathan Sullivan, Chairman, Accommodations Tax (State 2%) Committee 20 minutes</i>
ITEM BACKGROUND:
<i>Presentation of Accommodations Tax (State 2%) Committee Recommendations to Tourism-Related Organizations in the Amount of \$760,250. Attached are an Ordinance for Council to appropriate the grants for State Accommodations Taxes and Exhibit A which contains the recommendations from the Accommodations Tax (State 2%) Committee, and a letter from the Chairman of the State Accommodations Tax Committee with notes and reference to previous year award if applicable.</i>
PROJECT / ITEM NARRATIVE:
<i>The Accommodations Tax (State 2%) Committee Chairman will present the board's recommendations for the 2024-2025 State ATAX Grant Awards</i>
FISCAL IMPACT:
<i>Beaufort County Director of Compliance and Internal Controls, Christine Webb and Senior Accountant, Brycen Campbell, determined an allocation of \$1,300,000 from State ATAX Funds Collections to be awarded to grant applicants as per the attached. Committee recommends Council to allocate \$760,250 of the funds for this cycle.</i>
STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS TO COUNCIL:
<i>Staff recommendation is to approve the grants as recommended by the Committee.</i>
OPTIONS FOR COUNCIL MOTION:
<i>Recommend Approval to Council and forward for First Reading at the next County Council Meeting. Recommend Modifying recommendations made by the Accommodations Tax Board and forward to Council to approve modified recommendations at the next County Council Meeting. Recommend denial of committee recommendations to Council and forward to Council.</i>

ORDINANCE 2024/ _____

AN ORDINANCE APPROPRIATING FUNDS FROM THE STATE 2% ACCOMMODATIONS TAX FUND AND OTHER MATTERS RELATED THERETO

WHEREAS, County Council is authorized to utilize State 2% Accommodations Tax (“A-Tax”) Funds to promote tourism and enlarge the economic benefits of tourism through advertising, promotion, construction and maintenance of access and access to nearby roads for civic, cultural recreational or historic facilities; and

WHEREAS, S.C. Code Ann. §6-4-10(4)(b) expressly authorizes a county which has a high concentration of tourism activity to use State Accommodations Tax funds "to provide additional county and municipal services including, but not limited to, law enforcement [and] traffic control" as may be necessary for tourism related activities; and

WHEREAS, Beaufort County ("County") initiated a formal grant application process, and accepted applications from local entities to receive grant funds from the State Accommodations Tax; and

WHEREAS, applications were received, reviewed and scored by the State Accommodations Tax Advisory Committee, which has made award recommendations to County Council for approval and appropriation of funds; and

WHEREAS, County Council finds that it is in the best interest of its citizens, residents, visitors and tourists to provide the recommended funds to local entities and projects as set forth in the attached "Exhibit A" which is incorporated herein by reference.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY BEAUFORT COUNTY COUNCIL, that appropriations shall be made in the form of grant awards to local entities from Beaufort County's State Accommodations Tax funds as set forth in the attached Exhibit “A”.

DONE this _____ Day of _____, 2024

COUNTY COUNCIL OF BEAUFORT COUNTY

BY: _____
Joseph Passiment, Jr. Chairman

ATTEST:

Sarah Brock, Clerk to Council

Time	Committee Member	Organization	Event Title	Contact Name	Amount Requested	Recommended	Notes
9:00am	Sullivan	1 Greater Beaufort-Port Royal CVB	Tourism Marketing FY 2024-2025	Robb Wells	\$ 195,000.00	\$ 270,000.00	
9:15am	Gibbs	2 Beaufort Art Association	Beaufort Art Gallery Tourist Bench	Rush Dixon	\$ 2,250.00	\$ -	
9:20am	Sullivan	3 Beaufort History Museum	Social Media Funding for Beaufort History Museum Revolutionary War Day & for all social media entries for 2025	Katherine Lang	\$ 5,550.00	\$ 750.00	
9:25am	Guerra	4 Friends of the Spanish Moss Trail	Digital/Social Media Campaign Featuring the Spanish Moss Trail	Sissy Perryman	\$ 20,000.00	\$ 20,000.00	
9:30am	Green	5 Beaufort Area Hospitality Association	Beaufort Oyster Festival & Restaurant Week 2025	Ashlee Houck	\$ 30,000.00	\$ 30,000.00	
9:35am	Guerra	6 Lean Ensemble Theater	Marketing, Lean Ensemble Theater productions	Blake White	\$ 4,000.00	\$ -	
9:40am	Stewart	7 FRIENDS OF FORT FREMONT	Develop and Market Digital Simulations of Homeland Defense at Fort Fremont	Wendy Wilson	\$ 34,000.00	\$ 12,000.00	
9:45am	Green	8 Port Royal Sound Foundation	PRSF Tourism Marketing Campaign	Kat Armstrong	\$ 37,000.00	\$ 37,000.00	
9:50am	Singleton	9 SC Lowcountry Tourism Commission	Promotion of Beaufort County and the Lowcountry	Peach Morrison	\$ 93,300.00	\$ 93,300.00	
9:55am	Desai	10 Freedman Arts	"Chalk it Up" Arts Festival	Elizabeth Quarles	\$ 50,000.00	\$ 50,000.00	
10:00am	Desai	11 Mid-Cities Youth Sports Association	The Inaugural S.M.O.K.E. Invitational AAU Basketball Tournament	Jindia Blount	\$ 42,500.00	\$ -	Did not attend presentation.
10:05am	Sullivan	12 The Original Gullah Festival of South Carolina, Inc.	2025 Original Gullah Festival	Denise Bullitt	\$ 41,000.00	\$ 25,000.00	
10:15am	Singleton	13 Hilton Head Choral Society	Concerts in April, May, September and December 2025	David Coyle	\$ 5,000.00	\$ -	
10:20am	Guerra	14 Friends of Port Royal Cypress Wetlands	Facebook Media Advertising	Eileen Newton	\$ 6,000.00	\$ 6,000.00	
10:25am		Break 10 Minutes					
10:35am	Desai	15 Gullah Traveling Theater, Inc.	2025 Decoration Day Play	Denise Bullitt	\$ 30,000.00	\$ 13,500.00	
10:40am	Stewart	16 Gullah Traveling Theater, Inc.	Da' Gullah Dinner Theater	Denise Bullitt	\$ 30,000.00	\$ -	
10:45am	Guerra	17 Hilton Head Symphony Orchestra	HHSO Marketing Programs	Susan Hartmann	\$ 25,000.00	\$ -	
10:50am	Gibbs	18 Hilton Head Island Land Trust	Hilton Head Island Land Trust Raptor Camera	James Schneider	\$ 13,500.00	\$ -	
10:55am	Sullivan	19 Junior Jazz Foundation	Hilton Head Jazz Camp	James Berry	\$ 30,000.00	\$ -	
11:00am	Stewart	20 Hilton Head Island Concours d'Elegance & Motoring Festival	Hilton Head Island Concours d'Elegance & Motoring Festival	Kelly Smith	\$ 40,000.00	\$ 35,000.00	
11:05am	Singleton	21 Beaufort Film Society	Beaufort International Film Festival	Ron Tucker	\$ 60,000.00	\$ 60,000.00	
11:10am	Gibbs	22 Beaufort Water Search And Rescue	water rescue services and Water Festival event safety patrol	Patrick Canning	\$ 20,000.00	\$ -	
11:15am	Desai	23 Historic Bluffton Foundation	Historic Bluffton Foundation Spring Tour of Homes	Robert Jones Jr.	\$ 3,000.00	\$ -	
11:20am	Green	24 Daufuskie Island Historical Foundation	Daufuskie Island Historical Foundation Brochure Printing	Nancy Ludtke	\$ 7,000.00	\$ -	
11:25am		Break 10 Minutes					
11:35am	Singleton	25 Coastal Discovery Museum	Cultural and Ecotourism Programming	Rex Garniewicz	\$ 38,500.00	\$ 13,500.00	
11:40am	Singleton	26 Birding Beaufort "Birding With Benefits" 501(c)3	Wings Over Beaufort 2025 - A Birding & Ecotourism Festival	Jennifer Clementoni	\$ 25,000.00	\$ 11,200.00	
11:45am	Gibbs	27 Historic Bluffton Foundation	Under the Ancient Oaks	Robert Jones Jr.	\$ 8,000.00	\$ 8,000.00	
11:50am	Green	28 Lowcountry Golf Course Owners Association	2025 Golf Tourism to Drive Vacationing Golfers to Beaufort County	Barry Fleming	\$ 20,000.00	\$ 7,500.00	
11:55am	Stewart	29 Gullah Museum of Hilton Head Island	Gullah Heritage Festival	Edra Stephens	\$ 35,000.00	\$ -	
12:00pm	Sullivan	30 Hilton Head Hospitality Association	Hilton Head Wine & Food Festival	Jeffrey Gerber	\$ 10,000.00	\$ -	
12:05pm	Green	31 Native Island Business and Community Affairs Ass. (NIBCAA)	Gullah Celebration	Eric Turpin	\$ 50,000.00	\$ 10,000.00	
12:10pm	Stewart	32 David M. Carmines Memorial Foundation	Hilton Head Island Seafood Festival	Kelly Smith	\$ 36,000.00	\$ 25,000.00	
12:15pm	Desai	33 Beaufort County 250 Committee (BC 250) of the South Carolina American Revolution Sestercentennial (250) Commission	Beaufort County 250 Committee Fund - Community Foundation of the Lowcountry	Richard Thomas	\$ 213,400.00	\$ 32,500.00	
12:20pm		Lunch 45 Minutes					
1:05pm		Committee Discussion					
		34 Beaufort County Black Chamber of Commerce	Gullah Roots: Mapping Heritage, Connecting Communications	Bridget Brown	\$ 50,000.00		Applied to county instead of city by accident.

Committee Members

- 5 Vimal Desai
- 4 Marie Gibbs
- 4 Ken Guerra
- 5 Dick Stewart
- 5 Anita Singleton
- 5 Steven Green
- 5 Jonathan Sullivan, Chairman

Award Requests
Budgeted Allocation

\$ 1,260,000.00
\$1,300,000.00

\$ 760,250.00 Total Recommendation From Committee

- Did not attend workshop. Accidentally applied for County instead of City. Application inelligible
- 11 Waiting on workshop attendance verification from applicant.
* CONFIRMED ATTENDANCE

SCHEDULE REQUESTS

- Lean Ensemble Theater-Blake White-- Morning
- Hilton Head Hospitality Assoc. -Jeff Gerber -- Afternoon
- BC 250- Richard Thomas-- after 2 before 4
- Hilton Head Land Trust - Jim Schneider-- 10am-noon

Beaufort County, South Carolina
2024-2024 2% State ATAX
October 18th, 2024 Applicant Presentation
TDAC Recap and Recommendations

On October 18th, 2024 the Beaufort County 2% State ATAX Committee heard applicants for the 2024/2025 ATAX Grant Cycle.

As we continue to improve the committees work and recommendations to Council, this committee will continue to be critical of having good financial documentation that demonstrates fiscal responsibility and a strong demonstrated Return on Investment with Tourism Dollars. We have worked year after year to provide the best recommendations that support strong tourism demand. In the last few years, we have seen the growth of the ATAX funds from just under \$500,000 to now \$1,300,000. We will continue to track how ATAX funds come to the County so we can make supporting recommendations to continue this pattern of growth. Through this past year we learned that roughly 78% of ATAX collected by the County comes from the Northern portion of the County. With this in mind we worked to place the investments back into that area. We also remain focused on low tourism seasons to help generate as much demand as possible and support a year-round tourism approach.

Greater Beaufort-Port Royal CVB - Tourism Marketing \$195,000.00

- Full support from the Committee to fund the CVB. Concerns are with the ongoing cost to place ads in the media with ongoing cost creep in a heavy advertising year with the election. The committee recognizes the CVB's contributions to Northern Beaufort County and the return of every \$1 invested in the CVB results in an \$11 return on investment.

Beaufort Art Association - Beaufort Art Gallery Tourist Bench \$2,250.00

- The committee enjoyed the idea of an artist bench on Bay St and certainly felt this fits within Art and Culture for tourism. The committee decided to not recommend this project, we want to emphasize a focus on a return on the ATAX investment and this did not have a means to track that impact. **While a great project, not one we recommend be funded through this committee.**

Beaufort History Museum - Social Media Funding for Beaufort History Museum Revolutionary War Day & for all social media entries for 2025 \$5,550.00

- **The committee is recommending \$750** as part of the request for paid ad placement for the Revolutionary War Day event. We like the fit for heritage and culture. It has limited space available but the size fits the marketing expense and has room to grow for future years. We did not support the remaining funds for general annual Social Media marketing without a specific projection on paid advertising and tracking the return on investment.

Friends of the Spanish Moss Trail - Digital/Social Media Campaign Featuring the Spanish Moss Trail \$20,000.00

- Year after year we have seen positive growth of the trail and its impact on tourism generation. The organization has been able to administer their previous awards effectively and the committee finds this to be a good future investment with the ongoing development of the Trail. **The committee is recommending \$20,000.**

**Beaufort Area Hospitality Association - *Beaufort Oyster Festival & Restaurant Week 2025*
\$30,000.00**

- This is a January Event, a need time for activities to drive tourism. Growth of the festival has been steady and want to see more occur. Previously January was the slowest month in the market, this event has moved the needle. Food Tourism is real, Tides to Tables runs a week long, they host the Oyster Boogie 5k, all locally sourced Oysters. Does not do craft fair, want tourist to visit local shops and support those businesses. **The Committee is recommending \$30,000.**

Lean Ensemble Theater - Marketing, Lean Ensemble Theater productions \$4,000.00

- Tourist tend to stay closer to the theater, this has greatest impact on Hilton Head area and Bluffton. This seemed to generate little return to Beaufort County ATAX Collections. **The committee is recommending \$0 funding.**

Friends of Fort Fremont - Develop and Market Digital Simulations of Homeland Defense at Fort Fremont \$34,000.00

- Beaufort County has made significant investments to improve the site and make the Fort a positive destination for Tourist to see and understand the local history. The committee felt creating simulation videos could discourage tourist as they could just watch and visit online. We hope to see a future focus on being opened more frequently and added tours. We do support the general marketing request to increase the reach of the Fort as this is a hard site that works year round to support the tourism economy. **The committee is recommending \$12,000.**

Port Royal Sound Foundation - PRSF Tourism Marketing Campaign \$37,000.00

- The PRSF is one of the few centrally located museums in unincorporated Beaufort County. They have continued to invest mostly through private donations to build a great experience. Marketing and the continued growth of this attraction is a positive investment for long term returns. **The committee is recommending \$37,000.**

**SC Lowcountry Tourism Commission - Promotion of Beaufort County and the Lowcountry
\$93,300.00**

- SC Lowcountry Tourism serves as a regional marketing organization and supports a focused marketing approach to Northern Beaufort county and the area partners. They have incredible tracking and help set the standard for reporting their return on investment. **The committee is recommending \$93,000.**

Freedman Arts - "Chalk it Up" Arts Festival \$50,000.00

- The Freedman's Arts has already signed up 40 Artist for this year's event, they are focusing on key artist that have a following and are known to attract other artists/tourists. This is only a 2nd year event, they are adding a third day with a Friday evening event. The event will move to more centrally focused in downtown Beaufort to allow for more attendees and take advantage of the surrounding spaces. This event is starting to push into a busy time, we hope to see this happen in early March in coming years to create more tourism activities in a slower time. **The committee is recommending \$50,000.**

Mid-Cities Youth Sports Association - The Inaugural S.M.O.K.E. Invitational AAU Basketball Tournament \$42,500.00

- Did not show for presentation, **The committee is recommending \$0**

The Original Gullah Festival of South Carolina, Inc. - 2025 Original Gullah Festival \$41,000.00

- This is a long running and historical festival, due to the history of the festival it takes place Memorial Weekend. This is already a busy time in the area but we also understand the need to create activities to retain year over year tourist. The festival is adding Sunday in hopes to extend the weekend stay and add a room night to an already high travel weekend. The Committee is **recommending \$15,000 for Sunday high impact entertainment and \$10,000 for marketing in collaboration with the Gullah Decoration Day Play over the same weekend. The financial reports and details need improvement and will require more details going forward to maintain future funding. Year over year reporting needs to be removed. The committee is recommending \$25,000 in total funds.**

Hilton Head Choral Society - Concerts in April, May, September and December 2025 \$5,000.00

- Organization creates nice Arts Activities, during the presentation it was acknowledged that they support tourist in the Hilton Head area, they have requesting \$20k from HHI ATAX. **The committee is recommending \$0.**

Friends of Port Royal Cypress Wetlands - Facebook Media Advertising \$6,000.00

- Ecotourism continues to be a growing business and we are seeing more and more of these tourist. This is well positioned to take advantage of the natural landscape and we believe this is a great investment to build a larger venue or activation opportunity. **The committee is recommending \$6,000.**

Gullah Traveling Theater, Inc. - 2025 Decoration Day Play \$30,000.00

- This is a historically significant activity that is working in conjunction with the Gullah Festivals weekend activities. This event estimated it captured/generated 800 tourists this past year. The total request for the return on investment is not well supported, however we do feel there is an opportunity to support this and the Gullah Festival in mass marketing and good collaboration between both groups. As part of the Gullah Festival, **we have recommended \$10k for marketing and provided an additional recommendation for \$10k to the Decoration Day Play event for a this combined weekend event, a total of \$20k in marketing.** We are also **recommending \$3,500 to support the venue rental fee of the Performing Arts Center. This organization will require a full P&L report of the event, this information has not been well documented. The committee has struggled to get a budget with full revenues and expense details making it difficult to provide a good recommendation to Council. As part of the approval this organization has remaining funds from this past cycle for an event that has occurred. We are requesting those funds be returned to continue these year's grant cycle for the applicant.** With the new process started this past cycle, we have had one organization return their unused funds. **To the committee this seems like the best recommendation to Council to maintain a clear accounting of activities. We have reviewed with the County Finance Staff and they support this process. The committee is recommending \$13,500**

Gullah Traveling Theater, Inc. - Da' Gullah Dinner Theater \$30,000.00

- This is a new proposed event, the committee felt the **application lacked enough information** about the specific details of the event and no financial models to show a return for the investment. The little information provided did estimate the total number of tourists would be an estimated 480. **This does not meet a good return on investment for the \$30,000 request.** This could be cleaned up with details and a more formal plan for future request. **The committee is recommending \$0.**

Hilton Head Symphony Orchestra - HHSO Marketing Programs \$25,000.00

- Nice art and cultural activity, this is primarily focused on HHI having little impact on the unincorporated Beaufort County. The majority of the past advertising is spent in a local life magazine and does not meet requirements for attracting tourists from outside the 50+ mile radius. **The committee is recommending \$0.**

Hilton Head Island Land Trust - Hilton Head Island Land Trust Raptor Camera \$13,500.00

- *The committee recommended funding for this last year, there was no real data on actual tourism generation from the project. We don't feel the activity will encourage individuals to become tourist. The committee is recommending \$0.*

Junior Jazz Foundation - Hilton Head Jazz Camp \$30,000.00

- *Great camp for kids in the summer months, the primarily stay at USCB housing generate little ATAX. This is not viewed as a tourism generating activity. The committee is recommending \$0.*

Hilton Head Island Concours d'Elegance & Motoring Festival – Motoring Festival \$40,000.00

- We understand the vast impact of the event and are encouraged that they are connecting more activities county wide, we want to see more off HHI activities in the future. This year they have a driving tour that hits Parris Island and takes people across the county. A key piece for the attendees is the need for homes with garages, this drives short term rentals as well affordable accommodations which also takes them off island generating spend in Unincorporated Beaufort County. **They are becoming more and more sufficient. The committee is recommending \$35,000.**

Beaufort Film Society - Beaufort International Film Festival \$60,000.00

- BIFF has been consistent in growing and maintaining a solid festival. Years ago they shifted their dates to fill a low occupancy time in February. This is a great investment for the slow time of year and creates a positive impact for the Tourism economy. We support the videography, photography, marketing, equipment rentals and the venue rental. **The committee is recommending \$60,000.**

Beaufort Water Search And Rescue - water rescue services and Water Festival event safety patrol \$20,000.00

- This is not a tourism generating event. **The committee is recommending \$0.**

Historic Bluffton Foundation - Historic Bluffton Foundation Spring Tour of Homes \$3,000.00

- This is a limited one-day event in April during a peak time, did not see the return on investment, **The committee is recommending \$0.**

Daufuskie Island Historical Foundation - Daufuskie Island Historical Foundation Brochure Printing \$7,000.00

- The committee supported the request last year and asked them to come with something different in the future as this is not a tourism generator. Pamphlets at the museum has the tourist already in the market. **The committee is recommending \$0.**

Coastal Discovery Museum - Cultural and Ecotourism Programming \$38,500.00

- They are hosting an art market that produces nearly 105 art market, general stay in unincorporated with more affordable rates. The continued story development of Santa Elena is impactful for County Wide impact. **We recommend \$7,500 for the Art Market marketing expense and \$6,000 for the Santa Elena story. The committee is recommending \$13,500.**

Birding Beaufort "Birding With Benefits" 501(c)3 - Wings Over Beaufort 2025 - A Birding & Ecotourism Festival \$25,000.00

- We continue to see a rise in demand for ecotourism, there is little option to get that experience in this area. This organization is working to promote and provide this experience and is doing a September focused activity in a need time that is normally slow. Both the SC LowCountry Tourism Commission and the CVB have indicated their desire to work with this group to support these activities. **We support \$10k for marketing and \$1,200 for event space and Keynote speaker fees. The committee is recommending \$11,200.**

Historic Bluffton Foundation - Under the Ancient Oaks \$8,000.00

- They are bringing back an old event and working to breathe new life into it. It will be a three day event that includes reenactors showcasing the way of life, they have received interest already for 28 of 30 SCAR reenactors who want to come. This event will take place in November 2025, **driving tourism activity in a normally slow time. \$4k for marketing expenses, \$4k to support venue fees, planning, event management and logistics. The committee is recommending \$8,000**

Lowcountry Golf Course Owners Association - 2025 Golf Tourism to Drive Vacationing Golfers to Beaufort County \$20,000.00

- They are mostly focused on HHI and Bluffton courses, as supported by HHI ATAX with a \$200k request. The committee would like to see **a focus on Unincorporated Golf Courses for marketing** with these ATAX funds. **The committee is recommending \$7,500.**

Gullah Museum of Hilton Head Island - Gullah Heritage Festival \$35,000.00

- They have decided to remove summer camp and the request for \$10k associated with the event. The remaining events budget was not broken out for individual events and lacked detail. We would like to better understand the detailed financials and return on Tourism Investment, how many anticipated tourists will be generated for future funding cycles. **The committee is recommending \$0.**

Hilton Head Hospitality Association - Hilton Head Wine & Food Festival \$10,000.00

- This seems to be a HHI centric event, we requested additional info last year to continue supporting County Funded ATAX, we were not able to get that this year. **The committee is recommending \$0.**

Native Island Business and Community Affairs Ass. (NIBCAA) - Gullah Celebration \$50,000.00

- This is a Hilton Head Island centric organization and events. County is invested in donated office space annually to support organizational needs. Many of the visitors are on the island and not travelling from outside the region, for their tourism draw they felt 20% we're staying in unincorporated Beaufort County. **They are requesting \$225,000 from HHI ATAX committee. The committee is recommending \$10,000.**

David M. Carmines Memorial Foundation - Hilton Head Island Seafood Festival \$36,000.00

- This is a weeklong festival that takes place in February creating demand during a slower time for tourism. Because February is such a slow time across the county, the committee members felt confident this event draws attendees from across the county to go to the festival and generate a positive accommodations tax return. the funds recommended are for digital online marketing media. **The committee is recommending \$25,000.**

Beaufort County 250 Committee (BC 250) of the South Carolina American Revolution Sestercentennial (250) Commission - Beaufort County 250 Committee Fund - Community Foundation of the Lowcountry \$213,400.00

- This is a very complex request that requires more details for full funding. the committee would like to recommend a smaller funding amount and allow the the BC 250 some time to come back with a specific detailed plan describing how the funds would be used, and would they be ongoing assets that can used to generate tourist year-round or will this only be for a short period of time. We would also like to understand the ongoing cost of operating and maintaining these sites for future years and what that funding model would require. **The recommended funding is to support the Project Planning to provide details on specific details, expenses and on-going cost and come back to request additional funds. The committee is recommending \$32,500.**

Following this part of the discussion, the committee voted unanimously to support these recommendations to Council.

An additional motion was made to provide \$75,000 to the CVB in Northern Beaufort County to support groups and activities that may require additional marketing support. After the motion was seconded, the committee discussed the cost of marketing expense during an election year as well as the local H and A tax funds not being distributed until sometime in 2025. Including some of the applicants before this committee have been asked to come back with more details for future funding. This will allow the Northern County CVB a secondary set of funds to support organizations who require additional marketing support.

After discussion the vote carried, and the committee is recommending the additional \$75,000 to the Greater Beaufort, Port Royal CVB.
