



LODGERS TAX COMMITTEE MEETING

1/8/2019

11:00am

City Council Chambers

Meeting called by: Jennifer Lazarz, Tourism & Marketing Manager, jlazarz@gallupnm.gov

Committee Members in Attendance: Cindy Tanner (chair), Jeremy Boucher, Anna Connell, Yogash Kumar

Committee Member not present: Steve Harper

11:00-11:45

Review of Applications for Funding: USTRC Events before June 30, 2019

The Lodgers Tax Committee Discussed the 4 applications submitted by Trice's for 5 events (two events are the same days and share an application). Jennifer asked the committee if they desired to examine each application individually or all of them as a whole, they opted to examine them as a whole.

The question was raised by Jeremy Boucher- why is Trice's seeking an increase in funds for their three existing events that had been previously funded?

Jennifer had previously discussed this with Walt Eddy. His reasons were:

1. Due to the oil boom we are seeing more competition for rodeo based events from the Hobbs and Carlsbad areas as they have more funding to put into these types of events.
2. The events have been growing in attendance, and the Race at the Rocks (which was new in 2018) had surprisingly far more contestants that were originally expected and we foresee a leap again in entries
3. The prices of many prizes and other operations expenses have gone up

The committee checked with Jennifer to see what funds remained for the year, and discussed that since the appropriate funds were available they didn't see a reason not to award Trice's the requested ask, especially since they appreciate his advertising reach with texting services and the AZ Jackpot.

Motion to approve all 4 applications at the amounts requested was made by Jeremy Boucher and seconded by Anna Connell.

Amounts recommended to City Council by the Lodgers Tax Committee:

- ***Race at the Rocks, \$6,000***
- ***Red Rock Classic Team Roping, \$8,500***
- ***Classic Invitational & Spit Fire Breakaway (New Events, one application) \$4,500***
- ***Red Rock Trailer Roping \$6,000***

11:45 Update on Marketing Action Plan, Vote on FY20 Lodgers Tax Application Revisions

The Marketing Action plan for the Tourism and Marketing Department was submitted to the Lodgers Tax Committee for review in advance of their Strategic Planning Meeting taking place on February 12 (11am at the El Morro Events Center). Highlights of Jennifer's update included the success of TMS Family Gallup in terms of social media coverage and blog content for families, the earned media we've garnered over the last two years, and changes to our broader campaign in terms of outdoor advertising and how the brand interest lies significantly with outdoor adventures complimented by the culture and arts in terms of returns demonstrated by earned media.

Jennifer also discussed how Hub Destination Marketing and she have been assessing the overall broader value of diving deeper into a "real" western image and how to leverage rodeo in unique ways versus the rest of the state since the New Mexico Tourism Department doesn't prioritize rodeo events in its marketing.

The Lodgers Tax Committee then went on to review the FY20 application and reimbursement guidelines presented by Jennifer. Jennifer explained that these documents were reviewed by Patty Holland, CFO of the City of Gallup, the City Attorney Curtis Hayes, and the City Manager, Maryann Ustick, before bringing it to them. Jennifer highlighted the following changes to the documents: (committee discussion on these items is italicized)

Within the application instructions:

- Applications will now be accepted via email
The Committee was excited it is now more accessible
- The dates have been reflected to accept the five 2019/2020 deadlines.
- The eligibility statement was cleaned up/revised by Curtis Hayes
- Page 1 under Timeline- Event promoters may not contract with or authorize payment to themselves or family members unless explicitly authorized by City Council (language added by Curtis to assist Jennifer and Patty with cleaning up reporting issues and accountability for funds)
Cindy and Jeremy expressed that they are very pleased to see this in writing and hopes that it will fix some of the ambiguities they've had and concerns they've had with services rendered by several events that have received funding in the past. They also believe it will create greater transparency to the public.
- Photo requirement was added
The whole committee expressed appreciation that Jennifer added this and is taking proactive steps to co-market the events. Jennifer expressed that she really needs them for submission to both the Galluprealtrue.com website as well as the New Mexico Tourism Department website for advance event marketing (the state works a MINIMUM of 90 days out for promotional content).

Within the application itself:

- Many questions were removed because the Lodgers Tax Committee had previously expressed that the events do not need to explain or prove why they are good for the community, and that they would rather discuss how funding is being used to grow our tourism influx/economy versus the merit of events for the community- the application is now shorter
Yogash expressed that this is positive and that the lodgers tax application is a "living document" that will continue to change based on how our tourism changes.
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- Questions about funding sources were removed because event funding sources change annually and this hasn't factored into the committee's decisions in the last year (page 4)
 - Language was added on page 4 that indicates the funding request needs to match the grant request chart on page 6, and that the anticipated project cost needs to match page 7

All the committee members expressed that they are very happy to see this- they think the addition of the budget chart here and in the post event evaluation really forces event organizers to stay on top of their financial planning and Jeremy noted that it will help them to plan ahead for operational execution and will really separate out those who are constructively creating an event for the community versus people who are winging it.

- Page 5- question 2 was added to request a schedule of events so that the tourism office can better assist with marketing efforts and field event questions

The Committee was very happy about this addition as well, in particular for the film festivals, Ceremonial, and the athletic events.

- Page 6- Plan for grant amount- language has been added by the City Manager, City Attorney, and Jennifer to include that items listed within the budget are the only reimbursable items after funds are awarded, and that the committee reserves the right to deny funding of specific items within the budget in their recommendation to council (ESSENTIALLY- if it's not in the application, we don't pay for it later)

The Committee loved this. Cindy Tanner expressed that she feels it is the next step for greater transparency to both the public and the state, and Jeremy and Anna discussed how this will drive applicants to get quotes and plan their marketing further in advance for greater impact.

- Page 6- added the language on the application that artwork is required for promotional items before funding will be recommended. This was mailed out in letters and in the reimbursement guide last year.
- Page 7- the event budget sheet has been added to the application. Many times previous applicants have missed this on the application check list and this addresses that issue, and also helps the lodgers tax committee to see how much is marketing versus operations

Jeremy added that this is one of his favorite additions- that event organizers really need to plan and this helps them do that, and if they can't plan finances, it won't be a successful event in the end

- Page 8- the checklist has been significantly shortened since the components were added to the application

Within the reimbursement guidelines and evaluation form (this gets mailed and emailed to applicants after City council has approved any funding)

- The following has been added to the list of items not covered by lodgers tax: item submissions that do not meet branding requirements, sponsor banners, video production, items submitted for reimbursement that were not on the original application

Cindy and Jeremy expressed that they were happy that this list has grown and then the whole committee discussed that the point of the money is to not only relieve event budget stress, but to help grow attendance from out of town in our community and that sometimes to do that effectively it means restricting some spending categories that aren't best accomplishing event growth objectives.

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- Proof of payment- we will no longer accept copies of the face of checks, they may only submit credit card receipts, cancelled checks, bank or credit card statements for proof of payment. In addition, the invoice or receipt must be marked paid by the vendor, not hand written
 - Several of the rules from the application were added here for reinforcement
 - Event evaluation- several questions have been removed and one was added: what do you plan to do differently or to add to your event for the future?; the photo requirement has also been restated
 - Post- event Expenditure report- was added to the evaluation form since this has not been uniform among previous submissions in the past as “event budget- actuals”

Motion to approve application by Cindy, seconded by Jeremy.

11:45 Additional topics for discussion

Jennifer discussed that she was going to submit an RFP in the amount of \$45K with \$5K in security services for the New Mexico High School Rodeo Association State Finals to come to Gallup and discussed the new tourism marketing measures added to the RFP that she was submitting that is different from previous years.

Jennifer also gave the committee a list of questions to think about in advance of Strategic Planning in February.

Cindy Tanner requested that Jennifer email the committee her travel schedule/conference schedule so they can see where we are represented this winter/spring.

Meeting adjourned by at Noon.
