

**MINUTES OF THE OCCUPANCY
TAX BOARD**

Tuesday, May 24, 2022 2:30 p.m.

Committee Chair: Kerry Moore

Committee Members: Bonnie Bitzer, Justin Jones

Staff Coordinator: Kevin Wilson

Notice of this meeting was given to the public in compliance with Sections 10-15-1 through 10-15-4 NMSA 1978 and Resolution 22-14

A. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 2:37 p.m.

B. ROLL CALL

Members present: Kerry Moore, Justin Jones, Bonnie Bitzer.

Staff present: Kevin Wilson, Juanita Jennings.

Guests present: Leslie Robertson, Joe Forchtner, Perry Toles, Jan Olesinski, Patricia Andrade-Loranca, Travis Hicks, Marcus Green.

Attending virtually via GoToMeeting and phone: Shari Perman.

C. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Chair Moore moved to hear information items before action items. Member Jones seconded the motion. The vote was 3-0 in favor. The motion passed.

D. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

Member Jones moved to approve the minutes of the March 22, 2022 and April 19, 2022 minutes. Member Bitzer was the second. The vote was 3-0 in favor. The motion passed.

E. NON-ACTION ITEMS

Lodgers' Tax Report: Kevin Wilson, the city's staff representative for the board, discussed year-to-date collections and gave a review of prior Lodgers' Tax Fund awards. Through March, year-to-date collections were \$1,024,013 in lodgers' tax and \$548,585 in Convention Center Fees.

2019 Lodgers' Tax Award Overview: In 2019, the last year the city awarded lodgers' tax for events, 10 events were awarded a total of \$115,349.

The Lodgers' Tax Fund budget allocation for fiscal year 2023 is \$100,000, and the board was currently in the first of two application periods. The current application process covers events between July and December. A second application process is scheduled in August for events taking place from January and June of 2023. Chair Moore noted the board had roughly \$50,000 to work with in each application period.

City Public Affairs Director Juanita Jennings said the city's current finance reporting places lodgers' tax payments in the month they are received, meaning late payments create artificially inflated occupancy rates when they do arrive. Jennings said she has an alternate tracking system that backdates late payments to the appropriate month, and that March

occupancy was around 61%.

F. ACTION ITEMS

1. Consideration of Lodgers' Tax Funding Request for Wool Bowl

Members were asked to consider a request from New Mexico Military Institute to fund the Wool Bowl for \$4,660 at a 50% reimbursement rate of eligible expenses. There is no history of Lodgers' Tax funding for the game. Staff recommendation is to consider funding the fair at a 50% reimbursement rate of eligible expenses.

Chair Moore moved to recommend to the Finance Committee funding the Wool Bowl in the amount of up to \$2,000 for eligible Lodgers' Tax expenses at a 50% reimbursement rate of eligible expenses. Member Bitzer was the second. The vote was 3-0 in favor. The motion passed.

2. Consideration of Lodgers' Tax Funding Request for Roswell Jazz Festival

Members were asked to consider a request from Pecos Valley Jazz and Arts Festival, Inc., to fund the Roswell Jazz Festival for \$7,467 at a 50% reimbursement rate of eligible expenses.

Member Jones moved to deny funding to the event. The motion died for lack of a second. Member Bitzer moved to recommend to the Finance Committee funding the Roswell Jazz Festival in the amount of up to \$1,500 for eligible Lodgers' Tax expenses at a 50% reimbursement rate of eligible expenses. Jones seconded the motion. The vote was 3-0 in favor. The motion passed.

3. Consideration of Lodgers' Tax Funding Request for Eastern New Mexico State Fair

Members were asked to consider a request from Eastern New Mexico State Fair to fund the 2022 Eastern New Mexico State Fair for \$144,457.25 at a 50% reimbursement rate of eligible expenses.

Member Jones moved to recommend to the Finance Committee to fund the Eastern New Mexico State Fair in the amount of up to \$36,500 for eligible Lodgers' Tax expenses at a 50% reimbursement rate of eligible expenses. Member Bitzer was the second. The vote was 3-0 in favor. The motion passed.

4. Consideration of Lodgers' Tax Funding Request for Bottomless Triathlon

Members were asked to consider a request from Eastern New Mexico State Fair to fund the Bottomless Triathlon for up to \$6,400 at a 50% reimbursement rate of eligible expenses. Mr. Wilson said the July 9 triathlon consists of swimming, bicycling and running at Bottomless Lakes State Park. Organizers estimated 120 room nights booked during the 2019 event and anticipate at least 40 room nights this year. Out of a list of 150 registrants provided to the city, Mr. Wilson said, at least 129 resided more than 30 miles from Roswell. The City Council provided a \$2,480 award to the triathlon in 2019. Staff recommendation is to consider funding the event at 50% of eligible expenses.

Chair Moore moved to recommend to the Finance Committee to fund the Bottomless Triathlon in the amount of up to \$1,800 for eligible Lodgers' Tax expenses at a 50% reimbursement rate of eligible expenses. Member Jones was the second. The vote was 3-0

in favor. The motion passed.

5. Consideration of Lodgers' Tax Funding Request for Roswell Symphony Orchestra

Members were asked to consider a request from Roswell Symphony Orchestra to fund the Roswell Symphony Orchestra for up to \$8,860 at a 50% reimbursement rate of eligible expenses.

Member Jones moved to recommend the Finance Committee to fund the Roswell Symphony Orchestra in the amount of up to \$2,200 for eligible Lodgers' Tax expenses at a 50% reimbursement rate of eligible expenses. Member Bitzer was the second. The vote was 3-0 in favor. The motion passed.

G. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Patricia Andrade-Loranca asked about the typical average amount of requests. Mrs. Jennings said some rounds include up to nine requests, but the five applications the board dealt with during the meeting represents an average amount.

H. ADJOURNMENT

Member Jones moved to adjourn the meeting. Member Bitzer the second. The vote was 3-0 in favor. The motion passed. The meeting was adjourned at 4:28 p.m.