



Legislation Text

File #: ID#21-8989, **Version:** 1

SUBJECT/RECOMMENDATION:

Request approval of a funding request from the Downtown Clearwater Merchant's Association, DCMA, for a Special Event grant in the amount of \$30,000 for live music.

SUMMARY:

The purpose of this item is to request approval of a \$30,000 Marketing grant to the Downtown Clearwater Merchant's Association (DCMA) to provide up to 4 live music performances on the 400 and/or 500 blocks of Cleveland Street on a weekly basis from April 1, 2021 through September 30, 2021. This request has been amended since the March 2021 hearing and an updated funding request is attached.

This request aligns with the 20/21 Workplan goal to enhance the temporary closure of Cleveland Street, supports the retention of local businesses, and enhances downtown as a dining destination. The temporary closure of Cleveland Street is supported by the Florida Governor's State of Emergency order. It is difficult to predict when this emergency order will be lifted, and the street will be re-opened and large special events can resume. Given the information we have today, we are assuming Cleveland Street will stay closed through the summer and downtown will continue to benefit from outdoor dining and live music.

Since the beginning of pandemic in March 2020, the DDB has approved \$99,850 in grant funding to the DCMA for organization memberships, live music and marketing expenses related to the establishment of "The District." This amount was divided across three grants. This includes \$31,250 in FY19-20 and \$68,600 in the current FY20-21. These grant requests coincided with a change in the DDB funding process that outlined new reporting requirements and an increase in eligible grant activities.

Prior to 2020, the vast majority of the DDB's funding went to special events requests that were considered once per year and had a verbal report post event. When considering the DCMA's recent grant requests, it would be difficult to compare previous years due to the change in funding process and the impact of the pandemic on special events. Staff recommends you consider this request in light of the DDB's adopted workplan and the effectiveness of the DCMA at meeting the grant requirements. While the financial reporting provided by the DCMA needs improvement, they have met the outcomes of previous grants by providing live music, marketing "The District" and providing memberships to local businesses to join the DCMA. They have included the DDB logo on their marketing materials.

As required in the DDB's funding policy, the funding agreement outlines the reimbursement process for approved expenses and logo requirements recognizing the support of the Downtown Development Board. The DDB can deny, modify, or approve this grant request. Staff recommends approval of this grant request as presented.

APPROPRIATION CODE AND AMOUNT:

Funds for this grant are available in the Marketing category of the DDB FY 20/21 Budget.