



## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Arroyo Grande Tourism Business Improvement District Advisory Board

**FROM:** Sheridan Bohlken, Recreation Services Director

**SUBJECT:** Consider and Approve Sponsorship Application for Tourist Publication

**DATE:** April 16, 2024

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### **SUMMARY OF ACTION:**

Consider and approve the sponsorship application submitted by Neighbor General Store, owned by Alex Creswell.

### **IMPACT ON FINANCIAL AND PERSONNEL RESOURCES:**

The application for the proposed publication would total \$8,000 of the FY 2023-24 budget of \$20,000.

### **RECOMMENDATION:**

Consider and approve the sponsorship application for \$8,000 to craft a zine and advertise Arroyo Grande as a tourist destination.

### **BACKGROUND:**

The Arroyo Grande Tourism Business Improvement District's (AGTBID) purpose is to promote a positive increase in occupancy rates across all lodging types in the city of Arroyo Grande.

Visit Arroyo Grande offers limited Tourism Event Sponsorship funding for local special events that promote tourism and result in overnight stays in Arroyo Grande. Applications are submitted to the AGTBID Advisory Board. Event sponsorship requests must meet both of the following purposes for consideration: provide tourism promotion advantage to the City of Arroyo Grande, positively impact the slower lodging periods (October through May) and/or expand the impact of the higher occupancy times (June through August). Sponsorship funds can be used for: new destination events to significantly attract tourists, working capital for existing destination events to develop new features to the event offering, promotional funds for an existing destination event to significantly attract tourists, funding for marketing activation, and materials for tourism-related events.

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Applicants must demonstrate they have the managerial and fiscal competence to complete the proposed event. Repeat applicants must have a successful history of using prior funds, as evidenced by a completed and accepted report including tourism and overnight stay data where available.

Request for funding with specific dates must be submitted to the AGTBID, at a minimum, 90 days in advance of the date of the event in order to allow time for processing of the application and agreement and subsequent paperwork. The application will be reviewed at the next available AGTBID Board meeting.

For funding requests of \$19,999 or greater, a submission of 180 days is requested. If funding is approved by the AGTBID Board, the contract will be sent to the City of Arroyo Grande for review and completion. Requests greater than \$100,000 must receive a recommendation from the AGTBID Board and be approved by City Council.

The agreement specifying the terms and conditions for funding will be sent to your organization for signature. After a signed agreement is returned by the organization, funding will be issued within approximately 30-45 days.

**ANALYSIS OF ISSUES:**

Alex Creswell owns Neighbor General Store in the Village (119 E Branch). Ms. Creswell intends to work with other business owners and the City to produce a well-curated City guide for tourists. It would be a newsprint mini zine with historical facts about Arroyo Grande, a shopping and eating guide, a Village map, and other useful information about the City. A resource for tourists and locals, this would be a free resource for hotels, restaurants, and shops. As proposed, the zine would be an annual edition that gets updated every spring.

**ALTERNATIVES:**

The following alternatives are provided for the Advisory Board's consideration:

1. Approve the application for sponsorship of an annual zine for tourists and locals featuring historical and important information about the City; or
2. Do not approve the application for sponsorship; or
3. Provide other direction to staff.

**ADVANTAGES:**

The advantages include having annual and historical events and highlights of the City in one location for tourists, featuring only Arroyo Grande. Another benefit would be that it would be printed only one time per year, saving additional costs and labor to produce bi-annually or more frequently. This publication could be a tangible representation of Arroyo Grande displaying its unique beauty, historical landscapes, community and nature throughout the City.

**DISADVANTAGES:**

Some disadvantages of supporting this request include the following:

1. It is unknown who will be represented in the zine, and how content will be selected;
2. It is unknown how much of an impact the zine will be to attract visitors to come to Arroyo Grande who otherwise would not;
3. It is unknown how local businesses and/or the local community at large will receive and support the zine project;
4. It is unknown where future funding will come from to continue to produce the annual zine project after its first production;
5. This publication may be somewhat duplicative and/or competitive with the South County Chambers publication for visitors;

**PUBLIC NOTIFICATION AND COMMENTS:**

The Agenda was posted at City Hall and on the City's website in accordance with Government Code Section 54954.2.

Attachments:

1. Sponsorship Application