

**CITY OF WARRENVILLE****MEMO**

To: Mayor and City Council  
 From: Monica Johnson, TAC Chair  
 CC: Alma Morgan, Assistant City Administrator  
 Subject: FY 2024 Hotel Tax Grant Application Recommendation  
 Date: January 13, 2023

**OVERVIEW**

On behalf of the Tourism and Arts Commission (TAC), I am pleased to present a recommendation for the FY 2024 Hotel Tax Grant Program for review. This year, 15 applications were submitted by the required deadline, requesting funds for 15 projects/events. All the applications are for events/projects that have been previously recommended for funding by TAC, although one of the applications is for an event that would have debuted in 2020 and was canceled due to the pandemic. That event, called Projecting Art, has been resubmitted for consideration in an expanded format for this summer.

Grant requests for the proposed FY 2024 projects totaled \$141,006.24 for 15 projects, which is a significant increase in funds from last year’s requests, which totaled \$131,900.93 across 16 projects. After a review of this year’s applications, a total of \$138,896.74 is recommended for funding projects, which is within the \$150,000 budget. TAC believes the funding recommendation will help provide a variety of events for the enjoyment of residents and out-of-town guests, who, we hope, will again be supporting our local businesses and hotels at or exceeding the level we had experienced in pre-pandemic years.

**BUDGET**

Council raised TAC’s budget for FY2024 to \$150,000 from \$125,000 last year. Per Council policy, TAC must make their recommendations within the \$150,000 budget and is also tasked with ensuring that no one category would be awarded more than 50% of the hotel grant funding. TAC’s FY 2024 recommendation adheres to this policy.

**FY 2024 HOTEL TAX APPLICATIONS AND TAC RECOMMENDATIONS**

Exhibit 1 lists the proposed projects in the first column. The second column shows a series of numbers going down starting with the total grant funding request amount, followed by the total recommended grant award, and the grants awarded in the previous two years, if available. The remaining columns show the breakdown of funding into each of the four funding categories. A detailed narrative about each project is provided in Exhibit 2.

Summarizing TAC’s recommendations, the largest grant award would be for CoffeeCon at \$35,000 with Warrenville in Bloom following at \$31,419.50. The Park District’s Multi-Cultural Festival and Art on the Prairie are both being recommended for funding at \$18,233.73 and \$16,589 respectively, while funding for the Park District’s Fall Fest is being recommended at \$11,205.63. The Library’s Concerts on the Commons are being recommended for funding at \$9,021, while the Library’s Musical Matinees are recommended for funding at \$3,871. Funding for the Park District’s Lunchtime Live summer children’s music program is suggested at \$3,125, and the seven remaining grants are being recommended for funding at less than \$3,000 each.

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The Commission finalized its review of the applications at its January 12, 2023, meeting. The following Commission members were in attendance: Commissioners Osborn, Wilkie, Owens, and Piscoran. Also in attendance was Interim Staff Liaison Alma Morgan and Council Liaison Clare Barry. I was not in attendance and had communicated my final comments at the December meeting. The Commission unanimously passed a motion recommending funding of the applications in the amounts shown.

**Exhibit 1 – Projects**

<b>CATEGORICAL BREAK DOWN OF FUNDS</b>					
<b>Project</b>	<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>EVENTS</b>	<b>TOURISM</b>	<b>ARTS</b>	<b>CAPITAL</b>
<u>CoffeeCon</u>					
Request Total	\$35,000				
Recommended	\$35,000	\$29,060	\$5,000	\$940	\$0
FY23 Award	\$25,000	\$25,000	\$0	\$0	\$0
FY22 Award	\$25,000	\$25,000	\$0	\$0	\$0
<u>Spring Tea</u>					
Request Total	\$800				
Recommended	\$750	\$350	\$0	\$400	\$0
FY23 Award	\$700	\$300	\$0	\$400	\$0
FY22 Award	\$650	\$350	\$0	\$300	\$0
<u>Cemetery Walk</u>					
Request Total	\$225				
Recommended	\$225	\$0	\$0	\$225	\$0
FY23 Award	\$225	\$0	\$0	\$225	\$0
FY22 Award	\$225	\$0	\$0	\$225	\$0
<u>Albright Inspired Artist-in-Residency</u>					
Request Total	\$1,800				
Recommended	\$1,800	\$300		\$300	\$1,500
FY23 Award	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
FY22 Award	\$1,500	\$0	\$0	\$1,500	\$1,500
<u>NEW-Projecting Art</u>					
Request Total	\$2,800				
Recommended	\$2,800	\$600	\$0	\$0	\$2,200
<u>Paint the Ville</u>					
Request Total	\$1,150				
Recommended	\$1,150	\$150	\$0	\$1,000	\$0
FY22 Award*	\$1,840	\$140	\$0	\$1,700	\$0
FY21 Award	\$2,321.25	\$140	\$481.25	\$1,700	\$0
<u>Walking (Mobile) Tour</u>					
Request Total	\$2,112				
Recommended	\$2,112	\$2,112	\$0	\$0	\$0
FY23 Award	\$2,257	\$2,112	\$145	\$0	\$0
FY22 Award	\$2,112	\$2,112	\$0	\$0	\$0
<u>Concerts on the Commons</u>					
Request Total	\$9,021				
Recommended	\$9,021	\$0	\$71.00	\$8,950	\$0
FY23 Award*	\$9,775.52	\$0	\$1,000.52	\$8,775	\$0
FY20 Award*	\$13,198	\$0	\$118	\$13,080	\$0

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<u>Musical Matinees</u>					
Request Total	\$3,871				
Recommended	\$3,871	\$0	\$71	\$3,800	\$0
FY23 Award*	\$3,654.52	\$0	\$154.52	\$3,500	\$0
FY20 Award*	\$3,140	\$0	\$90	\$3,050	\$0
<u>Art on the Prairie</u>					
Request Total	\$18,644				
Recommended	\$16,589	\$3,975	\$5,064	\$7,550	\$0
FY23 Award	\$15,262	\$5,047	\$3,065	\$7,150	\$0
FY22 Award	\$17,402	\$5,060	\$5,192	\$7,150	\$0
<u>Fall Fest</u>					
Request Total	\$11,205.63				
Recommended	\$11,205.63	\$6,431.85	\$1,288.38	\$2,675	\$810.40
FY23 Award	\$9,632.57	\$5,782.57	\$1,100	\$2,750	\$0
FY22 Award	\$8,936.75	\$4,903.17	\$583.58	\$3,450	\$0
<u>Lunchtime Live</u>					
Request Total	\$3,125				
Recommended	\$3,125	\$0	\$250	\$2,875	\$0
FY23 Award	\$2,900	\$0	\$250	\$2,650	\$0
FY22 Award	\$2,092.12	\$0	\$242.12	\$1,850	\$0
<u>Movies in the Park</u>					
Request Total	\$1,594.88				
Recommended	\$1,594.88	\$1,395	\$150	\$0	\$49.88
FY23 Award	\$1,462.98	\$1,312.98	\$150	\$0	\$0
FY22 Award	\$1,507.12	\$1,265	\$242.12	\$0	\$0
<u>Multi-Cultural Festival</u>					
Request Total	\$18,233.73				
Recommended	\$18,233.73	\$6,118	\$2,915.01	\$8,009.01	\$1,191.71
FY23 Award	\$16,896.33	\$5,029.68	\$3,587.40	\$8,279.25	\$0.00
<u>WIB</u>					
Request Total	\$31,424.00				
Recommended	\$31,419.50	\$3,100	\$1,469	\$0	\$26,850.50
FY23 Award	\$26,656.73	\$3,063.73	\$1,210	\$0	\$22,383
FY22 Award	\$32,504.19	\$31,079.64	\$2,245.55	\$0	\$179.00

**\*No Requested Funding in Fiscal Year 2021, 2022, or 2023**

## **Exhibit 2 - FY 2024 Grant Application Information**

Provided below is a brief description of each project. The projects are listed in the same order as shown in Exhibit 1.

### **Programs**

#### **CoffeeCon**

**Description:** This event has been hosted in Warrenville as a grant-sponsored event in previous years (2012, 2013, and 2018, and as a streaming event in 2021, due to Covid-19.) Due to the many hardships that Covid-19 still places on the small-business coffee roasters this event relies upon, the organizers of CoffeeCon forfeited their grant award for FY23 and chose to focus on FY24. The event is a festival for coffee enthusiasts, where exhibitors demonstrate coffee products and provide samples. Coffee experts are featured as guest speakers and workshop facilitators for this event, which has a following across the United States and beyond. This year's event will be held at St. James Farm and will, for the first time, be produced by a professional event management firm. New this year will be a 5K run at the farm, and the announcement that the Fluid Bed Coffee Roasters Forum will hold their meet-up right at CoffeeCon this year, potentially increasing attendance by several hundred, as well as the need for hotel rooms.

**Attendance:** 3,000 +attendees; approximately 200-300 projected overnight stays

#### **Annual Spring Tea**

**Description:** April 2024 will feature the 20th Annual Spring Tea hosted by the Historical Society, taking place once again at the VFW. The Tea features a luncheon and includes entertainment that is historic in nature. The event helps to raise funds for a college scholarship award for Warrenville teens.

**Attendance:** 130; no overnight stays

#### **Cemetery Walk**

**Description:** The Historical Society's Cemetery Walk, in its sixteenth year and still growing in attendees, is an educational program that explores the history of Warrenville in a unique setting. Participants walk through the candle-lit Warrenville Cemetery one Sunday evening in October as costumed interpreters "come to life" at the graves of past residents, telling the stories of their contributions to the community.

**Attendance:** 450 in-person/virtual viewers; no overnight stays

#### **Albright-Inspired Artist-in-Residency Program**

**Description:** This program began in 2015 to further promote the Warrenville connection to the internationally known Albright family artists, Adam Emory and his sons, Ivan and Malvin. Each year, the Historical Society puts out a call for artists, asking for a proposal for new artwork to be created that will be inspired by one of the three Albright artists. Work by the chosen artist will begin in the fall and will include public programming throughout the spring and fall, as well as resident-artist artwork to be displayed at various business and public locations.

**Attendance:** 1500; no overnight stays

### **Projecting Art**

Description: Proposed for 2020, but canceled due to Covid-19, this Historical Society event returned for consideration in an expanded version for the summer/fall of 2023. Hoping to further enhance Warrentville's status as an art destination, a series of evening events are proposed where short films and/or artworks will be projected on the outside of the Albright Building/Museum. The program will begin in late May with an outdoor screening of short films by WWS High School art students, paired with an indoor exhibit of their artwork. A series of projection evenings will continue over the next five months, paired with short talks about the subject matter. Themes will tie to Warrentville's history and artist's traditions, and parts of the program will also be available virtually. In late October, an Ivan Albright themed event will play up his unique style for the Halloween season, closing the series.

Attendance: 1500; no overnight stays

### **Paint the Ville Plein Air Painting Competition and Show**

Description: The Historical Society is proposing its 4<sup>th</sup> Plein Air Painting Competition. ("Plein Air" refers to the act of painting subject matter in outdoor daylight, rather than in the studio) Interestingly, the idea originated from a suggestion by an America in Bloom judge, who was inspired by Warrentville's Artist-in-Residency program and the Historical Society's tradition for sponsoring art exhibits. Selected artists will paint on as many of the three planned plein air event dates as they'd like, at various locations around Warrentville, and the public will be invited to enjoy the artistic processes on display as they work. Paintings from these three dates will be submitted for exhibit at the Historical Museum and Art Gallery in the fall, where the public will be encouraged to vote for the painting that will become part of Warrentville's permanent collection. An artist panel talk/open house will also be a part of the program.

Attendance: 1,000 and no overnight stays

### **Historic Warrentville Mobile Tour**

Description: The mobile tour has had ten successful years and continues to engage users by focusing on a variety of topics, including general history, historical architecture, art history, local family history, business history, and topics that are popular in pop culture. This year, new sites from outside the historic section of Warrentville will be added, and the public will be allowed to interactively submit their own pieces of history for inclusion. The tour is free and can be accessed through the tour's website or by using a smart device throughout Warrentville on the TourSphere/OnCell app. Users can listen to or read descriptions of specific sites in Warrentville, as well as see associated historical images.

Attendance: 3,500; no overnight stays

### **Concerts on the Commons**

**Description:** A series of six, free, outdoor musical performances at Bob Walters Commons will be sponsored once again by the Warrenville Public Library on the second and fourth Thursdays from June to August. This popular concert series, now in its 15<sup>th</sup> year, features a wide variety of popular music from rock and pop to country and oldies, and is attended by all age groups.

**Attendance:** Attendance has averaged 320/concert; no overnight stays

### **Sunday Musical Matinees**

**Description:** Sunday Musical Matinees is a series of free, live concerts that are held at the Warrenville Public Library. Seven concerts will be held during the season, once a month on Sunday afternoons from September 2023 through March 2024.

**Attendance:** 50 attendees per concert; no overnight stays

### **Art on the Prairie**

**Description:** This is a two-day, outdoor Art and Music Festival that features artwork and performing artists co-hosted by the Warrenville Park District and the Warrenville Library. Art on the Prairie attracts both local and out of town artists for a Juried Art Fair and features ethnic, folk, and various dance groups, along with a variety of musical performers. Street performers such as a juggler, face painter and a balloon artist have become family favorites at this event, as well. Wine and Microbrew tasting will be available. There will be a hands-on art project available for adults and children to experience artmaking.

**Attendance:** 1200 estimated; Overnight stays will depend on the artists

#### Notes and Restrictions

- Reimbursements cannot be used for Park District staff
- FY24 Theatre and Music Performers Line Item can only be used for performers

### **Fall Family Fun Fest**

**Description:** Highly popular and family-centered, this annual Park District event includes costume judging, games and prizes, crafts, live entertainment, inflatables, a petting zoo, costumed characters, and fresh grilled food and beverage for purchase.

**Attendance:** 850+ people; Overnight stays are unlikely

#### Notes and Restrictions

- Reimbursements cannot be used for Park District staff

### **Lunchtime Live**

Description: The Park District is proposing to continue this children's summer concert series for its 5<sup>th</sup> year. Studies have shown an overwhelmingly positive effect of great music upon the human intellect and spirit. The grant would fund five children's entertainers performing in June, July, and August at Cerny Park.

Attendance: 75/event and no overnight stays

#### Notes and Restrictions

- Funds cannot be used for Park District staff
- Must apply for Park Rental prior to event(s)

### **Summer Movies in the Park**

Description: The Park District is again requesting funding for their 6<sup>th</sup> Annual Summer Movies in the Park, which is free to the public. Family friendly movies are projected on a 16-foot inflatable screen beginning at dusk at Cerny Park one evening per month in June, July and August.

Attendance: 100+ and no overnight stays

#### Notes and Restrictions

- Funds cannot be used for Park District staff
- Must apply for a Temporary Use Permit and Park Rental prior to event(s)

### **Warrenville Multi-Cultural Festival**

Description: The Warrenville Multi-Cultural Festival, now in its second year after a rousing premiere, will continue to celebrate the vibrant cultures that make Warrenville a strong and diverse community. This free event, held outdoors at the City Hall complex, will be a fun afternoon of live performances to encourage social cohesion and inter-community harmony, hoping to enrich our cultural vitality in ways that may impact generations to come. A student art contest will be held during the event.

Attendance: 800+ with few to no overnight stays

### **Warrenville In Bloom Beautification**

Description: WIB is requesting funds to continue their mission to beautify strategic locations in the community with plants and flowers and to maintain those planters and gardens as long as possible through the summer. The Curb Appeal program acknowledges citizens' efforts with yard signs for lawns that are well-cared for and beautified.

Attendance: 25-30 volunteers for planting events and no overnight stays –beautification of Warrenville can be enjoyed by residents and visitors alike