



# MEMORANDUM

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**To:** Mayor and Members of the City Council

**From:** Richard Hicks, Interim City Manager

**Date:** June 27, 2022

**Re:** Consideration – Authorize TDA Application for Coast Guard Day

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***BACKGROUND:***

August 4<sup>th</sup> of every year is designated as Coast Guard Day. At Base Elizabeth City, a celebration occurs each year at the Forest Pavilion whereby 3,500-4,000 participants, including Coast Guard active duty personnel, retirees, dependents, civilian contractors and guests attend. Activities are provided for all age groups during this event. The Morale, Well-being and Recreation Program (MWR) of the Coast Guard is soliciting sponsorship for Coast Guard Day. The City of Elizabeth City has helped sponsor this event in the past. The MWR Committee has established various levels of sponsorship for 2022. In the past, the City Council has contributed \$2,500 to help underwrite expenses for Coast Guard Day.

***ANALYSIS:***

Sponsorship of the Coast Guard Day event has been previously funded through an application for Tourism Development Authority (TDA) funds. The TDA funding that the City receives each year is provided through an occupancy tax on hotel rooms rented. The lion's share of this is received from individuals with business connections with the US Coast Guard. Last year, we did not receive notice until after the event had taken place, but were able assist the cause via TDA dollars after-the-fact. This year's notice is attached herewith.

***STAFF RECOMMENDATION:***

By motion, authorize application submission to the Tourism Development Authority in the amount of \$2,500 to support Coast Guard Day 2022.



## Elizabeth City – Pasquotank County Tourism Expenditure Restricted Funds GUIDELINES

Approved by the Elizabeth City – Pasquotank County Tourism Development Authority

July 23, 2020

### INTRODUCTION

As adopted by State legislation HB351 in 2005, the City and the County are authorized to levy a six cent occupancy tax on lodging. The proceeds of this tax are remitted to the Elizabeth City – Pasquotank County Tourism Development Authority, which is a public authority under the Local Government Budget and Fiscal Control Act.

As it specifically pertains to the City and the County, the legislation states,

*“The Authority shall use the net proceeds of the occupancy tax levied under this section as follows:  
... twenty-five percent (25%) [of the First Three Cents] for tourism-related expenditures that are recommended by the Elizabeth City Council and approved by the Authority.  
... twenty-five percent (25%) [of the First Three Cents] for tourism-related expenditures that are recommended by the Pasquotank County Board of Commissioners and approved by the Authority.”*

Under Sec. 2.1. Definitions – the following definitions apply in this act:

Tourism-related Expenditures – *“Expenditures that, in the judgement of the Tourism Development Authority are designed to increase the use of lodging facilities, meeting facilities or convention facilities in the County, or to attract tourists or business travelers to the County. The term includes tourism-related capital expenditures.”*

The Local County Occupancy Tax was enacted into law for the purposes of creating a dedicated funding stream to promote and develop the tourism industry and stimulating economic growth within Elizabeth City and Pasquotank County. Tourism expenditure funds dispersed to the City and County must meet the intent of the tax by supporting the implementation of programs designed to promote and increase tourism in Elizabeth City and Pasquotank County, as well as initiating projects relating to capital and infrastructure investments supporting the further development of the tourism industry with a focus on increasing overnight visitation.

The Elizabeth City – Pasquotank County Tourism Development Authority (EC-PC TDA) has developed the following guidelines to assist with the facilitation of the City/County restricted funds. All requests for funding go to the Visitor Experience Committee for review and making recommendations for funding allocations. The recommendations will be forwarded to the EC-PC TDA Board of Directors for final approval of all funding allocations.

Please note these guidelines are just that – a guide. The EC-PC TDA reserves the right to bring up questions, request additional or supporting information. Our goal is to ensure a clear and direct return on any investment made with occupancy tax dollars, bringing us new and increased future tax collections.

## **GUIDELINES:**

1. Projects must be tourism related and are awarded based on the potential amount of tourism business generated for Elizabeth City and Pasquotank County.

2. Primary consideration is given to projects that are:

- intended to increase the economic impact to the region
- have the ability to attract visitors on a continuing basis
- designed to enhance Elizabeth City and Pasquotank County as a travel destination

3. Examples of Eligible Use of Tourism Related Expenditures

- Beautification and community gateway initiatives
- Placemaking projects such as outdoor sculpture/art projects/murals
- Trail and greenway development
- New facilities for parks and recreation in locations that a visitor might access. I.e. large public parks as opposed to small neighborhood parks
- Feasibility studies for tourism-specific projects
- Projects that support artistic events, programs, or a series of events that seek to promote public engagement and access to the arts and hold the reasonable potential to attract non-county visitors

4. Tourism Funds MAY NOT be used for normal and routine operating and administrative expenses.

Examples include:

- Administrative costs, including salaries
- Scholarships, plaques, prize money
- Promotional items (being sold or given away) including apparel, tote bags, etc.
- Sales tax
- To pay for lodging
- Ongoing business operational expenses such as (menus, signage, ...)
- Mortgage payments
- Facility maintenance
- Activities which do not enhance, advertise, or promote Elizabeth City and Pasquotank County as a destination

5. Projects must take place within Pasquotank County.

6. Grants cannot be transferred or assigned to a third party except as allowed for under item 14, below.

7. Funding will not be approved for already-completed projects.

8. Tourism Expenditure Funds may only be used for the approved use.

9. Modifications or alterations of projects after receiving funding must be approved in writing.

10. Termination or cancellation of a project must be reported to the TDA and the full amount of the granted funds returned to the EC-PC TDA.

11. The use of EC-PC TDA's name and/or social media handles are to be included when sharing information about the project. Visit Elizabeth City; @VisitECity; #VisitECity.

12. All projects must include the official Visit Elizabeth City logo and the following recognition **"Project funded in part by tourism tax dollars and Visit Elizabeth City"**. A photo of an installed sign or copies of marketing materials showing this requirement must be submitted to Visit Elizabeth City within 30 days of conclusion of the Project. If this requirement is not met, future applications will not be considered or approved until either the item is remedied, or a period of 36 months has passed, whichever is first.

13. Projects submitted must include:

- A detailed description of the objectives and goals
- Scope of work and anticipated costs with itemized budget
- Information about proposed firm or partnership contracted for the project, if any.

14. Funding can be requested by the City of Elizabeth City or Pasquotank County on behalf of a non-profit entity with its principal place of business in Pasquotank County, and having its non-profit status conferred in writing under Section 501 of the U.S. Internal Revenue Code. In this instance, the beneficiary should complete the project submittal application, and the City or County should include a brief letter explaining their support of the project.

**Overall, Tourism Expenditure Funding Should:**

- Enhance the destination experience
- Have the potential to attract new overnight visitors
- If event based, should be multiple days, the majority of attendees will come from more than 40 miles away, and be sustainable for future growth
- The EC-PC TDA has a strong preference for projects that have the potential to drive long-term economic impact. I.e. the investment in building South Park continues to drive significant economic impact year after year, plus it is available for both locals and visitors.



**Elizabeth City – Pasquotank County Tourism Expenditure Restricted Funds APPLICATION**

*Please complete the following form and questions to submit your funding request.*

Local Government Name	City of Elizabeth City
Contact Person & Title	Richard Hicks, Interim City Manager
Email Address	<a href="mailto:rhicks@elizabethcitync.gov">rhicks@elizabethcitync.gov</a>
Phone Number	252-337-6864
Project Name	Coast Guard Day 2022
Project Address	306 E. Colonial Avenue, Elizabeth City, NC 27909
Website	<a href="https://elizabethcitync.gov">https://elizabethcitync.gov</a>
Total Cost of Project	\$2,500
Tourism Funding Requested	\$2,500

***Please thoroughly answer the following questions.***

1. Provide a detailed description of Project. Include goals and outline intended results.  
 August 4<sup>th</sup> of every year is designated as Coast Guard Day. At Base Elizabeth City, a celebration occurs each year at the Forest Pavilion whereby 3,500-4,000 participants, including Coast Guard active duty personnel, retirees, dependents, civilian contractors, and guests attend. Activities are provided for all age groups during the event. The Morale, Well-being and Recreation Program (MWR) of the Coast Guard is soliciting sponsorship for Coast Guard Day. The City of Elizabeth City has sponsored this event the past. In addition, a number of City staff and Council members volunteer to help feed event participants each year. The MWR Committee has established various levels of sponsorship for 2022. In the past, the City Council has contributed \$2,500 to help underwrite expenses for Coast Guard Day.
2. What is the anticipated Project timeline, including start and finish dates?  
 Contribution to be made upon approval by the Tourism Development Authority. Sponsorship to be made prior to August 4<sup>th</sup> Coast Guard Day.
3. Provide an outline of the scope of work and anticipated costs, including an itemized budget.  
 It is a one-day event for the celebration of Coast Guard Day.
4. Describe information about proposed firm or partnership contracted for the project, if any.  
 N/A
5. Does this Project have the potential to attract new overnight visitors? Explain.  
 Yes, Coast Guard Day attracts over 3,000+ participants, some of which are out of area individuals. The influx of people for this one-day event has the potential to generate overnight guests.

6. Does this Project have the ability to attract visitors on a continuing basis? Explain.  
Yes, Coast Guard Day is an annual event held on the 4<sup>th</sup> of August.
7. Describe how this Project will increase the economic impact to the region.  
N/A
8. How will this Project enhance Elizabeth City and Pasquotank County as a travel destination?  
N/A

*The EC-PC TDA reserves the right to bring up questions, request additional or supporting information.*

***Submit Completed Applications to:***

Visit Elizabeth City | 501 South Water Street | Elizabeth City, NC 27909

[Info@VisitElizabethCity.com](mailto:Info@VisitElizabethCity.com)

\*Applications must be received no later than the second Thursday of a given month in order to be placed on the upcoming committee agenda and subsequent Authority meeting agenda. [Check our website](#) or call to confirm up-to-date meeting schedules as meetings are not held every month.