



MEMORANDUM

To: Mayor and Members of the City Council

From: Reginald Goodson, Interim City Manager

Date: January 10, 2025

Re: Consideration – TDA Application for Elizabeth City Rowing Club

BACKGROUND / ANALYSIS::

The Elizabeth City Rowing Club has prepared an application seeking TDA funding for the purpose of creating a certified race course for 1,500 meter competitions. This request has also been issued to Pasquotank County and the Tourism Development Authority.

Further information about the program and course construction are attached in the TDA application included herein. The breakdown of the amount requested between the three entities comes to \$19,333.33.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

By motion, authorize submission of an application to TDA for funding in support of Elizabeth City Rowing Club in an amount to be determined by the City Council.



Elizabeth City – Pasquotank County Tourism Expenditure Restricted Funds APPLICATION

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

| | |
|---------------------------|---|
| Local Government Name | Pasquotank County, City of Elizabeth City, Visit Elizabeth City |
| Contact Person & Title | Carol Terryberry, Head Coach/Founder Elizabeth City Rowing Club |
| Email Address | ElizabethCityRowingClubNC@gmail.com |
| Phone Number | 252-340-3638 |
| Project Name | Certified Seven-lane Buoyed Course |
| Project Address | Newbegun Creek |
| Website | Elizabeth City Rowing Club |
| Total Cost of the Project | \$57,230 |
| Tourism Funding Requested | \$58,000 |

Please thoroughly answer the following questions.

1. Provide a detailed description of Project. Include goals and outline intended results.

The Elizabeth City Rowing Club requests funding for the installation of seven buoyed lane lines in New begun Creek to establish a certified racecourse for 1500-meter competitions. This racecourse improvement would allow ECRC to host more frequent and larger events and attract more and larger teams as the desirability of our improved venue. Today we host five regattas annually in Elizabeth City, this certified racecourse would improve the desirability of our venue and allow us to scale these events and add others while increasing the desirability of the venue.

2. What is the anticipated Project timeline, including start and finish dates?

The installation of the certified racecourse takes approximately three days. Ideally, this work would finish prior to our Season Opener on March 22, 2024. The buoys are on a suspended cable grid system 1.5 meters below the water and are completely removable using an electric winder except for the anchors, following each event.

3. Provide an outline of the scope of work and anticipated costs, including an itemized budget.

See below for itemized cost.



| North Carolina Quote 6 lane 1500 meter | | | |
|--|---|-------|---------------|
| Number | Description | Cost | Total |
| 7 | Lane Lines - 100% Stainless Steel Cable and Lugs | 2,250 | 15,750 |
| 5 | 6 Lane Laterals - 100% Stainless Steel Cable and Lugs | 550 | 2,750 |
| 1150 | Buoys - Majoni Inflatable Buoys - FISA Approved | 7.5 | 8,625 |
| 1150 | Leaders for Inflatable Buoys with Stainless Steel Clips | 3 | 3,450 |
| 22 | Rope Locks | 75 | 1,650 |
| 7500 | Feet 1/8" Stainless Steel Extender Cable - For Anchors | 0.35 | 2,625 |
| 24 | Concrete anchors | 50 | 1,200 |
| 24 | Marker Buoys | 70 | 1,680 |
| 1 | Maintenance Kit | 2,000 | 2,000 |
| 1 | Electric Winder for Course Removal | 3,500 | 3,500 |
| 1 | Shipping | 1,500 | 1,500 |
| Materials Total | | | 44,730 |
| Installation and Training | | | 10,000 |
| Travel | | | 2,500 |
| Total | | | 57,230 |

4. Describe information about proposed firm or partnership contracted for the project, if any.

Precision Racing, founded by former national champion and longtime rowing coach, Tim Royalty, has designed and installed racecourses around the world for rowing, canoe/kayak, and swimming. He installed and designed the 1984 and 1996 Olympic racecourses, the World Cup Course in Princeton, NJ, the World Championship Course in Sarasota, FL, and numerous courses across the country, including courses for the NCAA, ACC, and Big 10 Championships. "There are few rowers in America who haven't benefited from Tim's behind-the-scenes involvement in regattas," said US Rowing Chief Executive Officer Glenn Merry. "His courses provide the backdrop for champions and competitors to demonstrate their skills. His reputation as a skilled tradesman is recognized by top regatta organizers in our country."

5. Does this Project have the potential to attract new overnight visitors? Explain.

The Elizabeth City Rowing Club has been the host racecourse since 2022 for the Eastern Virginia Scholastic Rowing Association (EVSRA), an organization with sixteen member schools in Chesapeake, Virginia Beach, Norfolk, Newport News, Gloucester, Williamsburg, and Richmond. This organization chose Elizabeth City as their chief venue because of our pristine, 58-acre location on Newbegun Creek, with ample parking and spectating. These teams were unable to find a comparable location elsewhere in the Tidewater area.



In 2023, we invited teams from Raleigh, High Point, Charlotte, Greensborough to all our regattas. These rowers, coaches, and families must stay overnight prior to each regatta. In 2024, as our events continued to increase in size, we averaged over 200 rowers from just North Carolina teams who stayed in local hotels. In anticipation of these additional teams, in 2023 we installed two more sixty-foot rowing launch docks (for a total of three), and there is room to increase our launch capacity. The only constructive criticism of our course from visiting coaches was that it lacked a buoyed course, which enables fair and safe competition, trains rowers to row evenly and thus more efficiently, and can serve as a qualifying event for regional and national regattas.

6. Does this Project have the potential to attract new visitors on a continuing basis? Explain.

We have hosted five annual regattas between March and November for the past two years and will continue to attract visitors on a continuing basis. We are already drawing between 250 and 350 rowers per event from VA and NC. With spectators and the families of the participants, we have between 800 and 1,000 people at each of our five annual events.

Adding a certified racecourse to our venue could significantly increase the number of overnight visitors, as there are no other such courses between Aiken, SC, and Philadelphia, PA. Elizabeth City is centrally located between these courses. More teams will choose to travel here with a buoyed course because a buoyed course is a fair course. More importantly, a buoyed course enables rowers to train for similar regional and national championship races. Attending and winning regional and national regattas is a top goal of every coach with whom I have interacted.

7. Describe how this Project will increase the economic impact to the region.

One of US Rowing's directors has asked the Elizabeth City Rowing Club to consider becoming part of a new region, called the "Upper South" region, and hopes to help us establish our venue as a site for major US Rowing Regional Events, in order to increase the opportunities available for youth rowing in the mid-Atlantic region. Currently, competing at US Rowing regional events requires travel to either Sarasota, Florida or, to Princeton, NJ, where there are certified buoyed courses. If Elizabeth City became a regional location for US Rowing, every team from Washington DC to South Carolina would attend our regatta, as it would be a selection event for US Rowing Nationals.

In 2023, ECRC helped establish a rowing program in Plymouth, NC. We have donated equipment and time to assist them in getting started. They are currently in the process of ensuring their future



rowers can swim, and they hope to have a program in place in the next year. Having a local venue enables start up teams to compete affordably and increases the exposure to rowing in our area, where most residents are unfamiliar with the sport.

As a young team, we have enjoyed significant success at both national and international events. Elizabeth City Youth have had opportunities to travel to Ontario, Canada, Boston, Massachusetts, Chattanooga, Tennessee, and Sarasota Florida. In 2025 we will add Philadelphia, Pennsylvania to our schedule, and in 2026, we hope to travel to Henley, England to row in the Royal Henley Regatta outside of London. Our silver medals at US Rowing Youth Nationals and at the Royal Canadian Henley have qualified us for this once in a lifetime opportunity. One local ECRC rower received funding to attend UNC Chapel Hill because of his rowing skills. Clemson University, MIT, and UVA and others are currently recruiting our rowers this season. Clemson Coach Adrienne Martelli, two-time Olympian, and World Champion and 2024 Olympic Coach, plans to travel to Elizabeth City in 2025 for a recruiting trip!

8. How will this Project enhance Elizabeth City and Pasquotank County as a travel destination?

Signage In addition to the above increase in the number of annual events and participants attending them, a certified buoyed course could easily draw both college and high school teams from outside our area for spring and winter training. All colleges and most high school teams spend their spring break, and/or part of their winter break, rowing in a protected location with fair weather. We have been asked by groups in Cincinnati, Ohio, and Ithaca College in upstate NY, who have the desire to train at a buoyed course, if we would be interested in hosting them at our site. The teams of 40-90 rowers would stay in our hotels and dine in our restaurants for 6-7 days each winter and spring.

Future uses of a buoyed course could be for other types of sports. For example, the buoyed course in Sarasota, FL, is in constant use by swimmers, canoeists, dragon boat paddlers, kayaks, and paddle boarders, in addition to rowing, for competitive racing.

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



Elizabeth City Rowing Club

December 1, 2024

708 Riverside Ave.
Elizabeth City, North Carolina 27909

Angela Welsh

Executive Director Mayor, Visit Elizabeth City
400 South Water Street,
Elizabeth City, NC 27909

Subject: Elizabeth City Rowing Club Grant Request for Building Signage & EZ Dock

Dear Ms. Welsh,

The Elizabeth City Rowing Club has prepared the attached Elizabeth City – Pasquotank County Tourism Expenditure Restricted Funds Application to enable exhibition rowing events downtown and improve the downtown vibe.

In 2025 ECRC is hosting all Eastern Virginia Scholastic Rowing Association (EVSRA) regattas in Elizabeth City (Bugsy Beach) along with our own regattas. These weekend events bring 9-13 teams that bring between 600-700 athletes, families and coaches that drive significant local hotel and bed and breakfast occupancy as teams from Charlotte, Raleigh, and the Tidewater area of Virginia stay in Elizabeth City for these competitions. Carol Terryberry had previously shared occupancy numbers and can provide these again to support this application.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth City Rowing Club