



AGENDA MEMORANDUM

Action Item for the City Council Meeting of April 26, 2022

DATE: April 26, 2022
TO: Peter Zaroni, City Manager
FROM: Dante Gonzalez, Interim Director of Parks and Recreation Department
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FY 2021-2022 HOT Fund Agreements

CAPTION:

Motion authorizing agreements between the City of Corpus Christi and South Texas Institute for the Arts, Inc., The Botanical and Nature Center of South Texas, Inc., and Texas State Aquarium Association from October 1, 2021 through September 30, 2022 wherein the City shall provide funding on a reimbursement basis through the FY21-22 Hotel Occupancy Tax Fund in a total amount not to exceed \$350,000.00 to South Texas Institute for the Arts, Inc., \$65,000 to The Botanical and Nature Center of South Texas, Inc., and \$300,000.00 to Texas State Aquarium Association.

SUMMARY:

The proposed agreements between the City of Corpus Christi and South Texas Institute for the Arts, Inc., The Botanical and Nature Center of South Texas, Inc., and Texas State Aquarium Association will provide funding through the Hotel Occupancy Tax Fund for the purpose of aiding in the continued operation of facilities which provide education and awareness of South Texas art and wildlife in the Gulf of Mexico and Caribbean Sea.

BACKGROUND AND FINDINGS:

The South Texas Institute for the Arts operates educational facilities and art museums throughout South Texas to advance the awareness, knowledge, appreciation, and enjoyment of the visual arts for residents and visitors of South Texas. This is accomplished through various classes, lectures, films, performances, and other activities offered at the Art Museum of South Texas, the Antonio E. Garcia Arts and Education Center, and other outreach venues. The Art Museum of South Texas was founded in 1945 and is currently the only major fine arts museum within a 150-mile radius of Corpus Christi. They also provide programs through the Antonio E. Garcia Arts Education Center.

The Botanical and Nature Institute of South Texas, Inc. began as the Corpus Christi Botanical Society in 1983 and opened a preliminary Corpus Christi botanical Gardens in 1987. The one-

acre “cottage garden” eventually became the 182-acre City parkland located at 8545 S. Staples in 1996 and was renamed the Corpus Christi Botanical Gardens & Nature Center, which ultimately became the South Texas Botanical Gardens & Nature Center. The center has had a significant impact on the community and has provided education, raised awareness, and increased appreciation for plant life, the environment, and the flora and fauna of South Texas through its many exhibits, including floral gardens, natural wetlands, a native habitat, an exotic parrot collection, and resident reptiles.

The Texas State Aquarium Association strives to educate, foster support, and stand as an environmental steward for animals, wildlife, and the conservation of the Gulf of Mexico and Caribbean Sea. The exhibits in the Texas State Aquarium are host to a variety of sea and land creatures which serve to educate and inspire attendees about the importance of wildlife conservation. The Texas State Aquarium Association opened the Gulf of Mexico Exhibit Building in 1990 and the Caribbean Journey in 2017. They have continued to grow and expand while raising further awareness and interest in sea and wildlife engagement and conservation.

Historically, Parks and Recreation has provided funding to the South Texas Institute for the Arts, Inc., The Botanical and Nature Center of South Texas, Inc., and Texas State Aquarium Association through the Hotel Occupancy Tax Revenue. These non-profit, community-oriented organizations have produced several programs and activities which promote the arts. In turn, the programs and activities created by these organizations have caused a direct increase in tourism and the convention and hotel industry in the City of Corpus Christi. The Parks and Recreation Department fully supports continuation of the agreements between the City and South Texas Institute for the Arts, Inc., The Botanical and Nature Center of South Texas, Inc., and Texas State Aquarium Association.

ALTERNATIVES:

The alternative would be to discontinue the agreements. However, these long-standing recurring agreements between the City and South Texas Institute for the Arts, Inc., The Botanical and Nature Center of South Texas, Inc., and Texas State Aquarium Association have led to significant increases in tourism and the convention and hotel industry in the City of Corpus Christi. Discontinuation of these agreements could potentially lead to reduced tourism and reduced income for the convention and hotel industry.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The fiscal impact in FY22 for the Parks and Recreation Department is an amount not to exceed \$715,000 through the Hotel Occupancy Tax Fund.

FUNDING DETAIL:

Fund:	1030	Hotel Occupancy Tax
Organization/Activity:	13492	Art Museum of South TX
	13812	Texas State Aquarium
	13495	Botanical Gardens
Mission Element:	734	Tourism
Project # (CIP Only):	N/A	
Account:	530000	

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval of this resolution authorizing agreements between the City of Corpus Christi and South Texas Institute for the Arts, Inc. and Texas State Aquarium Association.

LIST OF SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS:

Agreement – South Texas Institute for the Arts, Inc.

Agreement – Texas State Aquarium Association

Agreement – Botanical and Nature Center of South Texas, Inc.