



AGENDA MEMORANDUM

First Reading Ordinance for the City Council Meeting of October 31, 2023
Second Reading Ordinance for the City Council Meeting of November 14, 2023

DATE: October 31, 2023
TO: Peter Zanoni, City Manager
FROM: Heather Hurlbert, Assistant City Manager
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Type B Economic Development Grant for The Ritz Theatre

CAPTION:

Ordinance authorizing an agreement between the Type B Corporation and Corpus Christi PATCH, Inc., for the securing and stabilizing of The Ritz Theatre effective upon signature of the City Manager or designee; appropriating funds in the amount of \$230,000.00 from the Type B Economic Development Fund.

SUMMARY:

This ordinance authorizes an agreement with Corpus Christi PATCH, Inc., to provide funding to complete roof repairs, exterior wall repairs and weather seal the entire Ritz Theater building with priority on securing and stabilizing the building.

BACKGROUND AND FINDINGS:

On October 16, 2023, the Corpus Christi B Corporation approved an agreement with Corpus Christi PATCH for a grant up to \$230,000.00 from the Type B Corporation for exterior repairs to the Ritz Theatre. This is a time sensitive grant and will be paid up front due to a Texas Historical Commission (THC) grant that was awarded to CCPATCH for completion of roof repairs, exterior wall repairs and weather seal the entire Ritz building to repair damages caused by Hurricane Harvey. The grant from the THC is on a reimbursement basis upon completion but work must be completed prior to March 31, 2024 to be eligible for the reimbursement.

The Historic Ritz Theatre was once the heartbeat of Downtown Corpus Christi and was opened as a first-run movie theatre and vaudeville house (stage entertainment offering a variety of short acts such as slapstick, song-and-dance routines, and juggling performances). During World War II, big-name bands entertained military personnel as well as the local community. "Big Screen" movies came on the scene and forced Ritz management to strip many of the theatre's embellishments to make room for the bigger screens. This included the ornate proscenium, the permanent framed opening through which the audience would see the play or entertainment. But The Ritz continued to thrive until the last regular scheduling of films in 1972. It re-opened as The Ritz Music Hall in 1974 and then Ritz Productions in 1976 and featured such acts as Willie Nelson, Jimmy Buffet, Bruce Springsteen, Metallica, Def Leppard, Motley Crue, and many

others. Later, the Performing Players, an amateur theatre group, held shows at the theatre, followed by another amateur group, The Encore Theatre Corporation. The latter occupied The Ritz until the 80's.

There has been a renewed interest in the rehabilitation of the theater. This will provide funding for the securing and stabilization of the building while plans for a masterplan and fundraising are created.

ALTERNATIVES:

The council could choose to not fund this agreement or could choose to fund at a lesser amount.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The financial impact is an amount not to exceed \$230,000.00 to be funded with the Type B Economic Development Fund in FY 2024.

Funding Detail:

| | | |
|------------------------|--------|-------------------------------|
| Fund: | 1146 | Economic Development Fund |
| Organization/Activity: | 15020 | Small Business Projects |
| Mission Element: | | |
| Project # (CIP Only): | | |
| Account: | 530000 | Professional Services Expense |

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval of the Ritz Theatre agreement in an amount not to exceed \$230,000.000 to be funded by the Corpus Christi B Corporation in FY 2024 and be advanced to the organization prior to work being performed.

LIST OF SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS:

Ordinance
Agreement
PowerPoint Presentation