



City of Columbia

701 East Broadway, Columbia, Missouri 65201

Department Source: Convention and Visitors Bureau

To: City Council

From: City Manager & Staff

Council Meeting Date: March 20, 2023

Re: Authorizing a sponsorship agreement with the Columbia Book Festival, Inc. for tourism development funding for the 2023 Unbound Book Festival

Executive Summary

This resolution would authorize an agreement for the use of \$10,000 in Tourism Development funds for the 2023 Unbound Book Festival.

Discussion

Alex George, with Columbia Book Festival, Inc. has submitted a Tourism Development Festival & Events application for \$10,000 for the 2023 Unbound Book Festival. The festival will take place April 20-23, 2023 at a variety of locations in downtown Columbia.

The Unbound Book Festival creates awareness of the literary arts, to celebrate books and to encourage a love of reading. Nationally-acclaimed and bestselling authors and poets come to Columbia to participate in readings, interviews, panels and other book-related activities. This year keynote speakers will be at Missouri Theatre on Friday, April 21 and include bestselling author Kelly Yang and poets, Ross Gay and Patrick Rosal. All events are open to the public and are completely free for everyone to attend with one exception, the "Write On", which will take place on the campus of Stephens College and is designed specifically for writers and aspiring writers.

The festival has continued to grow and has expanded to four days. It attracts an increasing number of visitors from outside Boone County, which results in overnight stays in Columbia hotels. The CVB Advisory Board reviewed the application at their February 27, 2023 meeting and voted to recommend \$10,000 in tourism development funds to assist with travel and lodging required to bring in visiting authors and poets.

Fiscal Impact

Short-Term Impact: \$10,000

Long-Term Impact: n/a

Strategic & Comprehensive Plan Impact

Strategic Plan Impacts:

Primary Impact: Resilient Economy, Secondary Impact: Secondary, Tertiary Impact: Tertiary

Comprehensive Plan Impacts:



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Primary Impact: Economic Development, Secondary Impact: *Secondary*, Tertiary Impact: Tertiary

Legislative History

Date	Action
February 2020	R26-20: Authorizing a tourism development sponsorship agreement for \$10,000 with the Columbia Book Festival, Inc. for the Unbound Book Festival. The 2020 festival had to be canceled due to the pandemic. The CVB Advisory Board voted to approve rolling over the funds to the 2021 event which was held virtually.
February 2022	R34-22: Authorizing a tourism development sponsorship agreement for \$10,000 with the Columbia Book Festival, Inc. for the Unbound Book Festival.

Suggested Council Action

Approval of the legislation.