



701 East Broadway, Columbia, Missouri 65201

Department Source: Convention and Visitors Bureau

To: City Council

From: City Manager & Staff

Council Meeting Date: December 15, 2025

Re: Authorizing a tourism development sponsorship agreement with "We Always Swing," Inc. for the 2026 We Always Swing Jazz Series.

Impacted Ward: Citywide

### Executive Summary

This resolution would authorize the City Manager to sign an agreement with "We Always Swing," Inc. for the use of \$12,500 in Tourism Development funds for the 2026 We Always Swing Jazz Series.

### Discussion

On October 27, 2025, Jon Poses, Executive Director of We Always Swing, Inc., presented a Tourism Development Program (TDP) Signature Series funding application to the Convention & Visitors Bureau (CVB) Advisory Board.

Founded in 1995, the We Always Swing Jazz Series is one of the Midwest's most respected community-based jazz organizations. The proposed 2026 season includes a performance by the Branford Marsalis Quartet. Saxophonist Branford Marsalis is a multi-Grammy Award winner and is widely regarded as one of the most influential figures in contemporary jazz. In addition, the Pat Metheny Group is scheduled to perform at the Missouri Theatre in April marking Metheny's first Columbia appearance in 20 years.

The organization also plans to celebrate Jazz Appreciation Month throughout April by coordinating several community events in partnership with local jazz organizations and area schools. These efforts are intended to expand access to jazz programming and further elevate Columbia's national reputation as a jazz-friendly destination.

After reviewing and discussing the application, the CVB Advisory Board voted unanimously to recommend \$10,000 in Tourism Development Program funds to support marketing, promotional efforts, and a portion of artists' fees associated with the 2026 series.

In addition, the Board voted to recommend \$2,500 in supplemental TDP funding to support the completion and premiere public screening of *A Life of Jazz Composition, Performance, Music & Words*. This film was shot in April 2025 during a special performance in Columbia by renowned saxophonist and composer Bobby Watson, accompanied by the Columbia Jazz Orchestra.

### Fiscal Impact

Short-Term Impact: \$12,500

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:

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

**Legislative History**

Date	Action
October 2024	R199-24: Authorizing an agreement with "We Always Swing," Inc. for \$10,000 in Tourism Development Funds.
October 2023	R177-23: Authorizing an agreement with "We Always Swing," Inc. for \$10,000 in Tourism Development
November 2022	R186-22: Authorizing an agreement with "We Always Swing," Inc. for \$10,000 in Tourism Development Funds.
November 2021	R182-21: Authorizing an agreement with "We Always Swing," Inc. for \$10,000 in Tourism Development Funds.
November 2020	R147-20: Authorizing an agreement with "We Always Swing," Inc. for \$10,000 in Tourism Development Funds.

**Suggested Council Action**

Approval of the legislation.