



Agenda Item: Discuss and Consider Special Event Incubator Funding for 2022 Emancipation Celebration

Background:

To celebrate the legacy of Juneteenth, the Nia Cultural Center will host an Emancipation Celebration event on June 17, 2022, at The Grand 1894 Opera House. The event has a production and marketing budgeted of \$50,000, of which Nia Cultural Center has secured a \$25,000 matching grant (requires matching funds to activate) and has verbal commitments for an additional \$6,000.00 from community businesses. They have requested an expedited contribution from the Park Board in support of the effort. Staff is recommending leveraging the Incubator Fund designed specifically for new products and experiences.

The event will honor pioneers on the local and national levels who have made an impact on history by fighting for freedom, equality, and justice for African Americans. Activities will include awards presentations, guest speakers, and live entertainment by local, regional, and national artists.

The promoter expects over 1,000 attendees and over 480 lodging room nights to be generated by the event, resulting in maximum funding of \$9,202 per the fund established limits. Funds will be utilized for marketing and promotion, performance fees, travel, and lodging for featured performers.

Staff Recommendation: Staff validates the \$9,202 available through an Incubator Funding application. Limited timelines have short circuited standard approval processes, but the appropriation of funding toward this event is an appropriate use of funding. Given the promotional opportunities associated with being the “Birthplace of Juneteenth”, staff supports the need to invest in product to attract visitors. For these reasons, staff supports this request and/ or any additional support for the first year celebration of the national holiday.

Additionally, staff will include a line item allocation for Juneteenth activities in 2023 with a request that any soliciting organizations bring proposals forward by November of 2022.

Funding Source (if applicable):

FY '21-'22 TD 70-7002. Currently the fund has \$46,000 remaining for allocation.