

RESOLUTION NO. 20240215-023

WHEREAS, Citywide events that are free and open to the public reflect the City's cultural identity as the 'Live Music Capital of the World' for all Austinites and its visitors; and

WHEREAS, the City of Austin recognizes the economic and social benefits of supporting free community events, attracting visitors, fostering local business growth, and creating opportunities for residents to engage with their city in meaningful ways; and

WHEREAS, the City of Austin acknowledges the rising costs and challenges faced by community event organizers and stakeholders; and

WHEREAS, access to private and philanthropic contributions is essential to supplement public support and ensure the long-term sustainability and growth of community events like 'Blues on the Green,' acknowledging the valuable role private and philanthropic contributions play in enhancing the vibrancy and accessibility of such events, and

WHEREAS, the City of Austin's Small Business Division provides business training, educational events, and coaching to empower entrepreneurs to foster job creation and support the growth of new and existing businesses by providing capacity-building information, tools, and resources; and

WHEREAS, The City of Austin Small Business Division offers a comprehensive directory of resources offered by local, state, and federal governments and non-profit agencies to increase awareness and use of the programs that provide aid in business development; and

WHEREAS, Blues on the Green is a free live music event that has been drawing thousands of attendees from communities all over the city together for over 30 years; and

WHEREAS, the Blues on the Green experience has evolved to a concert series with a various lineup of bands and genres to reflect the diversity of Austin; and

WHEREAS, Blues on the Green features local food and drink vendors as well as sponsor booths; and

WHEREAS, Council adopted Resolution No. 20230720-123, establishing the City's standard pay rate for commissioning live music performances; and

WHEREAS, The Music and Entertainment Division of the City of Austin provides various programs and services to facilitate the growth and innovation of Austin's commercial and nonprofit music and entertainment industries. It also serves as a valuable connection point and a resource for the local music industry, promoting job and compensation growth, sector development, nightlife compatibility, and talent export; and

WHEREAS, Austin has several higher education institutions such as Huston-Tillotson University, The University of Texas at Austin, and Austin Community College, that provide opportunities for students to engage and learn in the music and arts sector to develop and advance local talent; and

WHEREAS, Huston-Tillotson University offers a specialized Music Business Certificate Program open to adult learners featuring a curriculum developed and taught by working industry professionals; **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF AUSTIN:**

The City Manager is directed to identify ways to support and sustain an annual event currently known as ‘Blues on the Green,’ as a free and publicly accessible event that showcases Austin’s live music talent.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

The City Manager is directed to negotiate with the organizers of Blues on the Green regarding the potential of becoming a City co-sponsored event with commitments to achieve the following goals:

- Sustaining a cherished Austin tradition without interruption,
- Preserving free access to the public,
- Ensuring diverse local musicians are provided performance opportunities,
- and
- Requiring the City of Austin’s adopted musician pay scale is observed

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

The City Manager is directed to return to Council by February 29, 2024 with an ordinance for any associated fee waivers, co-sponsorships, or related budget authorizations needed to effectuate these goals.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

The City Manager is directed to establish public safety requirements before, during, and after community events like 'Blues on the Green,' ensuring adequate resources and planning are in place to address potential safety concerns and promote a secure environment for all attendees, participants, and residents of Austin. This includes collaborating with relevant City departments, law enforcement agencies, and event organizers to implement effective safety protocols and communication strategies.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

The City Manager is directed to explore and provide recommendations on ways to support and preserve accessible, inclusive, open-to-the-public events and Citywide traditions comparable to 'Blues on the Green' and community festivals, including permitting the sale of alcoholic beverages for such events, where appropriate. The City Manager is directed to solicit the input of the Arts, Music, and Quality of Life commissions in developing any recommendations.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

The City Manager is directed to identify and utilize partnerships across all areas of expertise involved in the live music and arts event space to further expand opportunities for the City to co-sponsor community events that are centered around locality, diversity, and inclusivity. These partnerships should encompass a wide range of stakeholders, including educational institutions, such as Huston-Tillotson University, The University of Texas at Austin, and Austin Community College, as well as industry organizations, non-profit entities, and other relevant community groups.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

The City Manager is directed to create an equitable and accessible application process for City co-sponsorship of free or low-cost, open-to-the-public, events. The application process could include, but should not be limited to:

- Technical assistance for applying and adhering to guidelines,
- Education on event management and sustainable business planning best practices, and
- Connectivity to local resources and other City partners who can provide additional opportunities and resources related to event production.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

The City Manager is directed to enhance the application program's eligibility criteria by providing comprehensive assistance to potential applicants. This

assistance should include education on event planning and organizing, marketing strategies, as well as guidance on loan and grant qualifications, and sustainable business development strategies.

ADOPTED: February 15, 2024 **ATTEST:** Stephani Hall for
Myrna Rios
City Clerk