

COUNCIL ACTION FORM

SUBJECT: MODIFICATION TO COTA ANNUAL GRANT FOR INDIA CULTURAL ASSOCIATION

BACKGROUND:

India Cultural Association (ICA) receives funding through the Commission on the Arts (COTA) Annual Grant funding process. In FY 2019/20, ICA was awarded a contract of \$6,054 for its annual grant. On February 11, 2020, the City Council approved COTA's recommendation to allocate \$8,951 in the FY 2020/21 Budget for ICA's annual grant.

ICA's annual grant application for FY 2020/21 included a variety of activities taking place this spring, including the annual ICA Talent Nite (February 29), a comedy show (March), and Sports Day (May). These activities would actually be taking place in FY 2019/20, although it appears this fact was not clarified for ICA during the COTA annual grant review process. Earlier this month, ICA volunteers realized that the FY 2020/21 funds would not be available for activities taking place before July 1, 2020. Because it learned of the timing issues only recently, ICA has planned these events and booked venues and performers.

To rectify this issue, ICA requests that \$5,000 be moved from its FY 2020/21 allocation into its FY 2019/20 allocation. This requires a budget amendment for each fiscal year. Over the two-year period, ICA's total funding would not be changed. The current year contract with ICA is written broadly enough to allow the shifted funds to be drawn down for the spring events without a modification to the scope of services.

Normally, modifications to COTA contracts such as this would involve COTA reviewing the request and recommending the change prior to City Council action taking place. However, COTA does not meet again until April 6, by which time several spring events for ICA will have already taken place. Therefore, City Council is requested to approve this request prior to review by COTA. The COTA commissioners have been made aware of this request and that it will be under consideration by the City Council.

Separately, an issue has arisen with ICA's FY 2019/20 Spring Special Project Grant contract. This issue is less time sensitive and will therefore be discussed at COTA's April 6 meeting before being submitted to City Council for further action.

ALTERNATIVES:

1. Approve the request from India Cultural Association to amend its FY 2019/20 Annual Grant allocation by adding \$5,000, and amend its FY 2020/21 Annual Grant allocation by reducing \$5,000.
2. Refer this request to COTA, which would review it at its April 6 meeting.
3. Do not approve the request.

CITY MANAGER'S RECOMMENDED ACTION:

Due to a misunderstanding, India Cultural Association has planned for activities to take place this fiscal year, which were intended to be funded with its COTA annual grant allocation for next year. The timing and requirements of the grant process have been clarified for ICA. Shifting funds from next year's allocation into the current year will allow ICA to conduct the activities and be reimbursed for them, without increasing the overall funding amount across the two-year period.

Therefore, it is the recommendation of the City Manager that the City Council adopt Alternative No. 1 as described above.

From: "Anand Balasubramanian" <anand.bala@icaiowa.org>
To: "Brian Phillips" <bphillips@city.ames.ia.us>
Cc: contactus@icaiowa.org

Date: Wednesday, February 19, 2020 11:21AM
Subject: ICA request to city council | Transferring portion of FY20-21 COTA grant to our FY19-20 grant

Dear members of the city council,

I'm writing on behalf of the India Cultural Association of Central Iowa (ICA) regarding a request to transfer a portion of our 2020-21 COTA grant towards our 2019-20 COTA grant.

The City awarded ICA with \$6,054 for FY19-20 and \$8,951 (towards hosting a stand up show) for FY20-21 in COTA grants. Our organization has utilized all of the \$6,054 awarded to it in FY19-20.

Owing to lack of experience of current volunteer executive board and a mis-understanding on our side of the definition of the COTA fiscal year, we have scheduled a standup comedy show on Mar 28, 2020. We planned for this show assuming we could use funds from the FY20-21 COTA grant. We did not realize (until after contracts with the performer were signed and after we started selling tickets for the show) that the FY20-21 COTA grant would not cover events hosted during March 2020. This was a sincere mistake from our side. We understand the timing of the COTA grants fiscal year now.

Based on discussions with city staff including Brian Phillips (Asst. City Manager), we would like to request a one time waiver from the City to transfer \$5,000 from our FY20-21 grant to our FY19-20 grant. We would plan to use this money to meet the expenses of the stand-up show (by Atul Khatri) that we are hosting on March 28th. ICA is also planning to host a couple of other events (Talent Nite on Feb 29th and Chai Tunes Bollywood concert on April 11th) that are free to the public to attend.

Since the COTA committee is not meeting next until April, I'm approaching the City council directly with this request for consideration during its meeting on February 25th.

Within the ICA executive committee, we will plan to document

information around raising grants through COTA (which we will use for training of our future boards) in order to avoid the above situation from happening again.

Thank you for your consideration. Please let me know if there are any questions or concerns.

Best Regards,

Anand Balasubramanian
President, Executive Committee
India Cultural Association of Central Iowa
(979) 324-6880