

COUNCIL ACTION FORM

SUBJECT: AUTHORIZATION TO USE COTA GRANT FUNDS FOR AMES COMMUNITY ARTS COUNCIL MOBILE STAGE PROJECT

BACKGROUND:

In 2020, the City Council approved a Commission on the Arts (COTA) Spring 2021 Special Project Grant for Ames Community Arts Council (ACAC) in the amount of \$953. The grant was for ACAC to deploy a mobile musical stage to provide entertainment programming to neighborhoods throughout Ames. ACAC's proposal was to organize the music performances and provide them for various neighborhoods during the spring.

In March 2021, ACAC indicated that the costs for the mobile stage were significantly higher than anticipated. Instead of costing \$1,000 - \$3,000 as originally expected, ACAC received estimates of approximately \$6,500. **Therefore, ACAC requested that, in addition to the special project grant funding to operate the program, COTA allows ACAC to use a portion of its FY 2020/21 COTA Annual Grant to construct and outfit the mobile stage.**

ACAC's FY 2020/21 Annual Grant was approved in the amount of \$11,288. The relevant portion of the scope of services for this annual grant contract states this amount is to allow "[...] ACAC to promote cultural events, recognize excellence through annual Arts Awards, offer small grants for Arts in Education, and provide opportunities for artists to promote their work to the Ames community."

COTA discussed ACAC's request on April 5, 2021. **COTA expressed concern about its ability to authorize the use of COTA funds to support the entire construction of the mobile stage rather than to provide operational support, due to the fact that COTA's special project grant and annual grant criteria prohibit the use of COTA funds for capital expenses and permanent supplies and equipment.**

The prohibitions on the use of COTA grant funds for capital expenses and permanent supplies and equipment are self-imposed. **COTA members expressed support for ACAC's request and recommended that the City Council waive the capital and permanent equipment prohibitions of the COTA grants to allow the purchase to proceed.** If approved, no additional funds would be provided to ACAC beyond what have been already budgeted and awarded.

ALTERNATIVES:

1. Authorize staff to allow Ames Community Arts Council to receive reimbursement for construction expenses related to the mobile music stage under ACAC's existing FY 2020/21 Spring Special Project Grant and FY 2020/21 Annual Grant.
2. Do not authorize Ames Community Arts Council to utilize its Annual Grant funds for construction of the project.

CITY MANAGER'S RECOMMENDED ACTION:

Ames Community Arts Council was originally provided special project grant funding to produce the performances that would take place using this mobile music stage. Cost estimates have greatly exceeded ACAC's expectations, and ACAC is requesting to access its other COTA grant funds to complete this project. There is no increase in the total City funds to be provided to ACAC. COTA has recommended approval of this request.

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