



# Pinellas County

## Staff Report

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File #: 22-0231A, Version: 1

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### **Subject:**

Revisions to the Elite Event Funding Program Guidelines from the Tourist Development Council.

### **Recommended Action:**

Approval of the Tourist Development Council's (TDC's) recommended revisions to the Elite Event Funding Program Guidelines.

- The Elite Event Funding Program provides funding for eligible major events that generate attendees or room nights in the County.
- Substantive revisions include:
  - 1.) Cultural Heritage category was renamed to category four.
  - 2.) Addition of category five for new, first time events to the County.
  - 3.) Revised room night and attendance thresholds and on categories one through three, revised requirement to meet one "or" the other criteria.
  - 4.) Increased the maximum funding for category one from \$125K to \$200K.
  - 5.) Eliminated the TDC Elite Committee and replaced with staff performing the tasks.
- Recommended revisions were unanimously approved by the TDC.

### **Strategic Plan:**

Foster Continual Economic Growth and Vitality

4.6 Support a vibrant community with recreation, arts, and culture to attract residents and visitors

### **Summary:**

With Board of County Commissioners (Board) approval, the revised Guidelines to administer the Elite Event Funding Program will commence with the upcoming FY23 application and funding cycle.

### **Background Information:**

The Elite Event Funding Program is one of the marketing programs administered by Convention and Visitors Bureau (CVB) staff. The original Guidelines were approved by the Board on February 7, 2012, and amended on January 29, 2013, April 15, 2014, December 12, 2017, December 11, 2018, and March 10, 2020.

Prior to the initiation of the FY23 funding cycle, the TDC had a workshop on November 17, 2021, to discuss the Elite Event Funding Program Guidelines. Following the discussion, the TDC requested staff to develop program revisions for presentation at the next TDC meeting.

On December 15, 2021, staff presented proposed revisions which included the following substantive changes to the Guidelines:

- 1.) Cultural Heritage category was renamed to category four.
- 2.) Addition of category five for new, first time events to the County.

- 3.) Revised criteria for meeting room nights “and” attendance thresholds, to meeting one “or” the other criteria for categories one and two.
- 4.) Increased the maximum funding for category one from \$125K to \$200K.
- 5.) Eliminated the TDC Elite Committee and replaced with County staff performing the tasks.

The TDC was supportive of the revisions and requested staff further review the criteria for room nights and attendance, and if necessary, adjust the thresholds to bring them into alignment with what could realistically be attained.

At the TDC meeting on January 20, 2022, CVB Director, Steve Hayes, presented revised room night and attendance requirements and the underlying methodology for his determination. The TDC discussed the threshold revisions and further approved changing the category three requirement for meeting room night “and” attendance thresholds, to meeting room night “or” attendance, for consistency with categories one and two. The TDC requested final revisions be brought to the next TDC meeting for approval.

On February 16, 2022, staff presented the revised Guidelines to the TDC and they were unanimously approved. If approved by the Board, the revised Guidelines will become effective in the upcoming Fiscal Year 2023 funding cycle.

**Fiscal Impact:**

N/A

**Staff Member Responsible:**

Steve Hayes, Director, Convention and Visitors Bureau

**Partners:**

Tourist Development Council

**Attachments:**

Summary of Changes

Elite Event Funding Guidelines (redline version)

Elite Event Funding Guidelines (clean version)