



Interoffice Memorandum

TO: Mayor Jerry L. Demings
-AND-
County Commissioners

FROM: Ray Walls, Deputy Director
Orange County Convention Center
Contact: (407) 685-5684

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ray Walls", written over the printed name and title.

DATE: February 18, 2022

RE: **Consent Agenda Item – March 8, 2022**
Sports Incentive Committee Funding Requests

On November 1, 2016, the Board authorized consolidated sports funding under the tourist development plan for incentivizing sporting events in Orange County venues. Since 2017, Visit Orlando has provided professional assistance in evaluating sports incentive funding proposals before the Tourist Development Tax Sports Incentive Committee (SIC). Sports incentive funds are held in a separate Visit Orlando account. On October 22, 2019, the Board approved a new tourism promotion agreement pursuant to which Visit Orlando will now administer both the evaluation of proposals and enter into funding agreements with applicants after the SIC funding recommendations have been approved by the Board.

At its January 31, 2022 meeting, the SIC recommended approval of five funding requests after hearing presentations from the applicants. Visit Orlando staff provided an evaluation of each proposal.

2022 US Men's National Soccer Team FIFA World Cup Qualifier Match

The SIC unanimously recommended approval of a request by the Greater Orlando Sports Commission (GOSC) for funding in the amount of \$50,000 for bid fees for the staging of a U.S. Men's National Soccer Team FIFA World Cup Qualifier Match to be held at Exploria Stadium on March 27, 2022. Of the five qualifier matches to be held in the U.S., this would be the fifth and final. The other four matches have been complete sellouts in their respective locales. It should be noted that on July 7, 2020, the Board approved \$50,000 in funding for this same qualifier match, however the date of the match was to be sometime in 2020 or 2021. The match was postponed as a result of COVID-19 and no funding was paid out. This request replaces the previous one approved on July 7, 2020.

2026 World Cup Funding

The SIC unanimously recommended approving additional funding in the amount of \$155,586 sought by the GOSC for the pursuit of the selection of Orlando as a host city for the 2026 World Cup. On April 9, 2019, the Board approved and entered into an agreement with GOSC in an amount of up to \$1,000,000 in Sports Incentive Funds to be used for this campaign. At the time, it was anticipated that efforts to secure Orlando's status as host city for the World Cup would take 20-24 months. COVID-19 has extended that timeline, which has led to estimated costs of the pursuit efforts being higher. GOSC has indicated that these additional funds should carry the campaign through to the anticipated selection decision in late quarter one or early quarter two of 2022. Audited financials will be provided within 60 days after the selection decision and any unspent funds will be returned to the Sports Incentive Fund.

2022 Mexican Men’s National Soccer Team U.S. Tour Match

The SIC unanimously recommended approving funding in the amount of \$90,000 requested by the GOSC as a bid fee to host a Mexican Men’s National Soccer Team match at Camping World Stadium on dates to be determined in late spring/early quarter two of 2022. Attendance is forecasted at 50,000 with an estimated 7,000 room nights. The game is also expected to be televised on Fox and Univision.

Army-Navy Game

The SIC unanimously recommended approval of funding in the amount of \$3,000,000 requested by Florida Citrus Sports (FCS) as a bid fee to host the annual Army-Navy football game at Camping World Stadium in December of 2027. The game drew an announced crowd of 82,282 in Philadelphia in 2021 with more than 70% traveling from outside the area to attend. Estimates of 40,000-50,000 room nights related to holding the game in Orlando were presented to the SIC by FCS. The 2021 game aired on CBS and drew a peak of nearly 10,000,000 viewers. FCS projects the economic impact of the game to be between \$40,000,000 and \$50,000,000. The requested funds would only be paid out if the game is secured in Orlando.

2022-2026 Florida Blue Florida Classic

The SIC unanimously recommended approving annual funding requested by FCS for the years of 2022 through 2026 to be used for bid fees for the Florida Blue Florida Classic rivalry football game between Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University and Bethune-Cookman University at Camping World Stadium. The annual amounts recommended for approval are as follows:

2022: \$600,000
2023: \$625,000
2024: \$650,000
2025: \$675,000
2026: \$700,000

The 2021 game at Camping World Stadium attracted an attendance of 54,198 with an estimated 77% traveling from outside of the Orlando area. The previous funding agreements for this event have expired.

ACTION REQUESTED: Approval of the Tourist Development Tax Sports Incentive Committee’s recommendations for sports incentive funding pursuant to the terms and conditions of funding agreements between Visit Orlando and the following applicants and authorization for Visit Orlando to enter into such agreements as follows: 1) \$50,000 to the Greater Orlando Sports Commission to be used as bid fees for the 2022 US Men’s National Soccer Team FIFA World Qualifier match to be held at Exploria Stadium; 2) \$155,586 to the Greater Orlando Sports Commission for pursuit of the selection of Orlando as a host city for the 2026 World Cup; 3) \$90,000 to the Greater Orlando Sports Commission to be used as bid fees for the 2022 Mexican Men’s National Soccer Team U.S. Tour Match to be held at Camping World Stadium; 4) \$3,000,000 to Florida Citrus Sports to be used as bid fees for the 2027 Army-Navy Game; and 5) annual payments from 2022 through 2026 to Florida Citrus Sports to be used as bid fees for the Florida Blue Florida Classic football game in the following amounts: 2022 - \$600,000; 2023 - \$625,000; 2024 - \$650,000; 2025 - \$675,000; and 2026 - \$700,000.

C: Byron W. Brooks, AICP, County Administrator
Jeffrey J. Newton, County Attorney
Kate Latorre, Senior Assistant, County Attorney
Mark Tester, Executive Director, Orange County Convention Center
Fred Winterkamp, Manager, Fiscal and Business Services Division