**CITY OF JOPLIN**

**COUNCIL AGENDA ITEM**

**ITEM**:

Council Bill No. 2026-609 - Approves the Convention & Visitor Bureau's grant funding distribution for FY2026 related to special events, festivals, and marketing.

**MEETING DATE**:

May 4, 2026

**ORIGINATING DEPARTMENT**:

Convention & Visitors Bureau

**REVIEWED BY**:

Director of Convention & Visitors Bureau-Patrick Tuttle, Director of Finance-Leslie Haase, City Attorney-Peter Edwards, City Manager-Nicholas Edwards

**SUMMARY REQUEST**:

This Council Bill approves the Convention & Visitor Bureau's (CVB) grant distribution for FY2026 special events, festivals, and marketing. Funding comes from a portion of the Occupational License Tax (Hotel/Motel tax) collected under Ordinance No. 2000-048, as authorized by the City of Joplin voters on November 7, 2000.

**BACKGROUND**:

This CVB grant program aims to assist qualified organizations in promoting tourism activities that directly increase hotel/motel occupancy and create a positive image for Joplin. Qualifying applicants must meet the following criteria:

- Not-for-profit and for-profit organizations may apply
- Events must be held between November 1, 2025 & October 31, 2026
- Events must be held within 20 miles of Joplin city limits
- Events must be open to the general public

At the January 20 Joplin Convention & Visitors Bureau Advisory Board meeting, they reviewed two additional FY2026 CVB Grant applications and heard from the requested organizations. At the conclusion of the meeting, the board determined where appropriate, funding allocations and the amounts.

Two applications were reviewed, totaling $40,000 in funding requests. Funding for the grant program is capped at $140,000. At the start of FY2026, the council had authorized $110,000 to thirteen organizations.

In their review of all applications, the board considered many factors, including an event's tourism draw, potential room nights, growth potential, previous funding and reporting standards, overall appeal, and community development.

Applications are worth 100 points, with a 60-point benchmark as the minimum funding threshold. Each board member scored the applications individually, and the highest and lowest scores were removed. All were ranked by their average score.

Scoring criteria included the ability to increase event attendance, to attract new visitors to Joplin (from 70 miles+ one-way) outside the market, to retain a visitor in the area (for at least 3 hours), to generate overnight stays, marketing efforts shown to be 40% or more on a digital platform, event scheduled during low-occupancy time of year, show projected growth based on previous year's post-event summary, plus the overall composition and impression of grant application. After scoring and ranking all applications, the advisory board members discussed each application and made final funding decisions.

**FUNDING SOURCE**:

The grant funding comes from a dedicated portion of the CVB's annual budget. It is 100% funded from the Lodging Tax. No portion of the General Fund or any other revenue stream is used.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**:

The Convention & Visitors Bureau Advisory Board respectfully submits the following grant funding expenditure from the FY2026 CVB Budget:

1. Tuff Bull Productions for the Route 66 Pro Rodeo, in the amount of twenty-five thousand dollars ($25,000).
2. Bright Futures/Safe and Sound Schools, for Bright Futures Coordinators Summit, in the amount of five thousand dollars ($5,000).

The CVB Advisory Board and staff recommend passing this bill on the first reading.

**ATTACHMENTS**:

Council Bill No. 2026-609

**COUNCIL BILL NO. 2025-616 ORDINANCE NO.**

AN ORDINANCE approving the applications of Tuff Bull Productions and Bright Futures/Safe and Sound Schools for utilization of FY2026 Festivals and Celebrations support pursuant to Ordinance No. 2000-148, as authorized by the voters on November 7, 2000; authorizing the City Manager to execute appropriate agreements with each such organization for the utilization of such funds.

WHEREAS, the voters of the City of Joplin approved an increase in the Occupational License Tax for transient sleeping accommodations at an election held on November 7, 2000, and,

WHEREAS, pursuant to the provisions of Ordinance No. 2000-148, a portion of said funds are to be utilized for events, festivals, and marketing intended to attract visitors from the region to the City and other related activities in the City; and,

WHEREAS, the Convention & Visitors Bureau Advisory Board established an application procedure and reviewed the applications of numerous organizations, and has recommended to the City Council that those festivals, celebrations, events, and attractions be funded utilizing a portion of said proceeds; and,

WHEREAS, after having a Public Hearing thereon, as required by said ordinance, the Council of the City of Joplin desires to utilize a portion of the proceeds from said tax following the recommendations of the Convention & Visitors Bureau Advisory Board.

**BE IT ORDAINED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF JOPLIN, MISSOURI, as follows:**

Section 1. That the applications of Tuff Bull Productions for the Route 66 Pro Rodeo, in the amount of twenty-five thousand dollars ($25,000), and Bright Futures/Safe and Sound Schools for the Bright Futures Coordinators Summit, in the amount of five thousand dollars ($5,000), for utilization of FY2026 Festivals and Celebrations support pursuant to Ordinance No. 2000-148, as authorized by the voters on November 7, 2000, be and the same are hereby approved.

Section 2. That the City Manager is hereby authorized and directed to execute appropriate Agreements, by and on behalf of the City of Joplin, with each said organization for the expenditure of said funds following the recommendation of the Joplin Convention & Visitors Bureau Advisory Board and in accordance with Ordinance No. 2000-148.

PASSED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF JOPLIN, MISSOURI, this _____ day

of _____, 2026, by a _____vote.

_____

Keenan T. Cortez, Sr., Mayor

ATTEST:

_____

Holly Nagy, City Clerk

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

_____

Peter C. Edwards, City Attorney

I hereby certify that sufficient funding is available in the CVB Fund, Accounts No. 105-4080-560-7505, to pay the grant amounts awarded.

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Leslie Haase, Director of Finance