



Legislation Text

File #: 21-0883, **Version:** 1

Agenda Item Name:

Request Approval for Carson Springs Wildlife Foundation to Extend Previously Awarded Grant Funding

Presenter:

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Description:

Carson Springs Wildlife Foundation, located on 275 acres of wooded and naturalistic land, is home to over 100 animals representing approximately 30 rare and endangered species. Carson Springs is one of the County's top-rated visitor attractions on Trip Advisor and regularly sells out their tours and special events. Carson Springs tours are conducted by professional zoologists and include not only the animal's personal story but important details about the species and their preservation.

Carson Springs only used a portion of their FY21 grant award, and has advised that the remaining fund balance is more than adequate to fulfill their marketing and programming needs for the upcoming fiscal year. Proposed programs consist of fall and spring Open Houses, a 3 day Halloween drive-thru event, holiday events, and group tours every Saturday. The grant award will be primarily used for out-of-county advertising and staffing events.

The carry forward request amount is adequate to support their upcoming FY22 marketing and programming, therefore Carson Springs did not submit a new grant application for the FY22 Nature and Culture Destination Enhancement program, thus freeing up funding for other deserving organizations.

Recommended Action:

Approve the use of previously awarded grant funding to support the allowable marketing and operations expenses for Carson Springs Wildlife Foundation for their October 1, 2021-September 30, 2022 event schedule. Make the legislative factual determination that these funded events and activities are related to the advancement of tourism in Alachua County, and authorize staff to carry-forward funding originally awarded in FY21 to support activities into FY22.

Prior Board Motions:

November 10, 2020 - Approval of the \$64,621.45 funding award.

Fiscal Consideration:

Original FY21 award \$64,621.45; remaining balance on Purchase Order 2021-1278 is \$38,501.03 in the Nature and Culture Destination Enhancement Fund 006.45.4540.552.82.61.

Background:

In order to support and enhance Alachua County as a culturally interesting and vibrant destination, the Alachua County Board of County Commissioners has allocated a portion of the Tourist Development Tax revenue to aid in the operations and promotions of arts, cultural, and nature events that have, as one of their main purposes, the attraction of tourists as evidenced by the promotion of the event to tourists through the Nature and Culture Destination Enhancement Grant program.