

CITY OF SEBASTOPOL CITY COUNCIL

AGENDA ITEM REPORT FOR MEETING OF: March 19, 2024

To: Honorable Mayor and City Councilmembers
From: City Administration
Subject: Waiver of Fee Request – Sebastopol Area Chamber of Commerce

RECOMMENDATION:

The item is to recommend denial of the for Consideration of Waiver of Fee Request from the Sebastopol Area Chamber of Commerce.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

Tonight's item is requesting the City of Sebastopol City Council deny the request from the Sebastopol Area Chamber of Commerce for Waiver of Permit Fees as well as Waiver of Costs for Public Works and Police Department Staff time and Materials in a total amount of \$14,781.75 for the 2024 Apple Blossom Parade and Festival.

BACKGROUND:

The Sebastopol Area Chamber of Commerce conducts yearly the Apple Blossom Parade and Festival. This event is the Chamber's only Annual Fundraiser and the funds raised go directly to supporting the Sebastopol business community and the Sebastopol Chamber of Commerce is requesting to have permit & staff time fees waived for the Apple Blossom Festival 2024 as follows:

Special Event Permit Fees:	\$1,750.00 / \$1,000.00 is a refundable deposit
Public Works Staff Time:	\$3,867.75
Materials:	\$3,500.00
Police Department Staff Time:	<u>\$5,664.00</u>
TOTAL	\$14,781.75 (\$1,000 of this total is a refundable deposit for the special event permit)

ANALYSIS:

According to the Chamber of Commerce web site, the Apple Blossom Festival celebrates the community's agricultural heritage and community spirit. It is a weekend worth of activities to market businesses' products and services and bring more attention to what the Sebastopol community has to offer. The Apple Blossom Parade and Festival is a 2-day festival that features local musicians, local food, wine and brews, children's activities, local and out of county artisans and crafters and information booths of local organizations. The festival serves as an attraction to draw visitors to the town and the County and can be seen as an economic development tool.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH:

This item has been noticed in accordance with the Ralph M. Brown Act and was available for public viewing and review at least 72 hours prior to schedule meeting date.

FISCAL IMPACT:

If the Council approved the fee waiver request, the City's General Fund would need to cover the Public Works Staff overtime and materials as well as Police Department staff overtime. This cannot be accommodated for in the current fiscal year budget and staff time and materials will need to be funded by the General Fund. Approval of this request would require a budget amendment (resolution attached).

OPTIONS:

If the Council does not deny the full waiver as requested, the Council has the options of:

1. Approving the request in whole; this would require approval of a Budget Amendment Resolution;
2. Approve a partial waiver such as:
 - a. Waiver of Fee Permit Only/Request payment of \$1,000 refundable deposit/Denial of request for waiver of staff time costs and materials
 - b. Waiver of fee permit and approval of partial staff time and materials (this would require approval of a Budget Amendment Resolution)

ATTACHMENTS:

Request for Waiver (Chamber of Commerce)
Budget Amendment Resolution

APPROVALS:

Department Head Approval: Approval Date: 3/13/24

CEQA Determination (Planning): Approval Date: 3/13/24

The proposed action is not a project under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)

Administrative Services (Financial) Approval Date: 3/13/24

Costs authorized in City Approved Budget: ☐ Yes ☒ No ☐ N/A

Account Code (f applicable) 100-32-02-4012 \$5,664
124-41-03-4012 \$3,867.75
124-41-03-4330 \$3,500

City Attorney Approval: Approval Date: 3-13-2024
City Manager Approval: Approval Date: 3-13-2024

RESOLUTION NUMBER: XXXX-2024

CITY OF SEBASTOPOL

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SEBASTOPOL AUTHORIZING A BUDGET AMENDMENT FOR THE SEBASTOPOL APPLE BLOSSOM PARADE AND FESTIVAL RELATED EXPENSES FOR POLICE AND PUBLIC WORK SUPPORT

WHEREAS, the Sebastopol Area Chamber of Commerce conducts yearly the Apple Blossom Parade and Festival; and

WHEREAS, this event is the Chamber’s only annual fundraiser and the funds raised go directly to supporting the Sebastopol business community and the Sebastopol of Commerce; and

WHEREAS, the Apple Blossom Parade and Festival is a 2-day festival that features local musicians, local food, wine and brews, children’s activities, local and out of county artisans and crafters and information booths of local organizations; and

WHEREAS, the festival serves as an attraction to draw visitors to the town and the County and can be seen as an economic development tool; and

WHEREAS, the Sebastopol Area Chamber of Commerce is requesting to have permit & staff time fees waived for the Apple Blossom Festival 2024 as follows:

Special Event Permit Fees:	\$1,750.00 / \$1,000.00 is a refundable deposit
Public Works Staff Time:	\$3,867.75
Materials:	\$3,500.00
Police Department Staff Time:	<u>\$5,664.00</u>
TOTAL	\$14,781.75 (\$1,000 of this total is a refundable deposit for the special event permit)

WHEREAS; if the Council approved the fee waiver request, the City’s General Fund would need to cover the Public Works Staff overtime and materials as well as Police Department staff overtime; and

WHEREAS; this additional cost cannot be accommodated in the current fiscal year budget for staff overtime and materials and would require a budget amendment; and

WHEREAS, the proposed budget amendment for this request is as follows:

Public Works Staff Time:	\$3,867.75 - 124-41-03-4012
Materials:	\$3,500.00 – 124-41-03-4330
Police Department Staff Time:	<u>\$5,664.00</u> – 100-32-02-4012
Total	\$13,031.75

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the City Council of the City of Sebastopol does hereby approve a budget amendment of \$13,031.75 identified in the account listed above to provide support to Sebastopol Area Chamber of Commerce Apple Blossom Parade and Festival.

The above and foregoing Resolution was duly passed, approved, and adopted at a meeting by the City Council on the 19th day of March, 2024, by the following vote:

VOTE:

Ayes:

Noes:

Absent:

Abstain:

APPROVED: _____
Mayor Diana Gardner Rich

ATTEST: _____
Mary Gourley, Assistant City Manager/City Clerk, MMC

APPROVED AS TO FORM: _____
Larry McLaughlin, City Attorney

From: [Myriah Volk](#)
To: [Don Schwartz](#); [Diana Rich](#); [Mary Gourley](#); [Lawrence McLaughlin](#); [Jill McLewis](#); [Neysa Hinton](#); [Sandra Maurer](#); [Stephen Zollman](#)
Subject: Apple Blossom
Date: Tuesday, February 20, 2024 4:31:36 PM

To Council & Staff:

With the removal of the Community Grants program from the City's budget, the Sebastopol Chamber is no longer receiving the Annual \$12,000 for the Apple Blossom Festival. The Apple Blossom Festival is the Chamber's only annual fundraiser. The Chamber relies on the monies made from the Festival to function as an organization.

Festivals of this size are not by any means cheap to make happen. The cost to put on last year's Apple Blossom was \$94,269. \$16,315 of that amount was paid to the City of Sebastopol. \$9,138 for the Police Dept, \$6427.21 Public Works and \$750 for permit fees. In addition, the insurance required for the Festival cost \$6,697 and with new requirements in place by the city, this amount is expected to double this year which will put our insurance cost at over \$13,000 .

We are grateful for and appreciative of the hard work the Police Dept and Public works put in to make this event happen. It is truly a pleasure working with both departments.

We are requesting that our fees be waved for the 2024 Festival. The money that we make from Apple Blossom goes directly toward supporting our business community.

The Sebastopol Chamber of Commerce is currently the fastest growing Chamber in Sonoma County. Since last September Chamber membership has grown from 175 members to 286. A 65% increase. We are asking for the support of the City of Sebastopol to help us sustain this level of growth and work toward a thriving business community.

The Apple Blossom Festival is almost synonymous with Sebastopol. It is a 78-year-old institution that brings community members together and brings 8-10,000 people to town to enjoy all that Sebastopol has to offer. We recently heard of the Bodega Seafood Art & Wine Festival closing its doors due to the high cost of putting on a festival.

We don't want this to happen to our historic and wonderful Apple Blossom Festival & Parade, so we are asking for your help and support. We are asking the council to make an exception in this case and do what is best for our town by waving these fees.

Supporting Apple Blossom is supporting your Chamber of Commerce which is in turn supporting our hard-working business community.

Today I received the final version of our 2024 Apple Blossom Poster. The Sponsor logos are included on the poster and as of today The City of Sebastopol Logo is absent from the poster. It has always been included and we hope that it can be this year too.

Thank you for your consideration.

Myriah Volk

Executive Director

Sebastopol Chamber of Commerce



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