

TO: City Council Members
FROM: Brekke Hewitt, Acting City Clerk
DATE: March 25, 2022
SUBJECT: Mayor's Veto of Resolution 2022-010 - Providing Up to \$25,000 From the COVID-19 Relief Special Revenue Fund to the Alaska Children's Institute for the Performing Arts for the Purpose of Producing an Outdoor Community Theatre Production at Soldotna Creek Park in the Summer of 2022

On March 24, 2022 Mayor Whitney exercised his right to veto Resolution 2022-010 and formally submitting the required written explanation of his veto, attached.

A veto may be overridden by a vote of two-thirds of the authorized membership of the governing body within 21 days following the exercise of the veto or at the next regular meeting, whichever is later. [AS 29.20.270(b), SMC 2.05.060(c)]

Thursday, April 14, 2022 is the last day the Council may consider or take action to override the veto. Consideration of overriding the veto is not a permissible action during the March 31, 2022 Special Meeting, only agenda items directly related to the purpose of calling a special meeting may be heard by the Council at the special meeting. [SMC 2.04.010(D)]

TO: Vice Mayor Lisa Parker; Councilmembers Linda Hutchings, Dan Nelson, Jordan Chilson, Dave Carey, and Justin Ruffridge

FROM: Mayor Paul Whitney *Paul Whitney*

DATE: March 24, 2022

SUBJECT: VETO MESSAGE RESOLUTION 2022-010
A RESOLUTION PROVIDING UP TO \$25,000 FROM THE COVID-19 RELIEF SPECIAL REVENUE FUND TO THE ALASKA CHILDREN'S INSTITUTE FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS FOR THE PURPOSE OF PRODUCING AN OUTDOOR COMMUNITY THEATRE PRODUCTION AT SOLDOTNA CREEK PARK IN THE SUMMER OF 2022

I cannot support the action taken last night on this Resolution, not because the event is not a worthy project, but because of the process in which the funding is being appropriated. For this reason, I am vetoing Resolution 2022-010.

The mini-grant program was created to avoid the situation where we were continually faced with requests for funding of one thing or another during the year. The CARES Act funds had a process where funds were set aside for specific groups, projects or events, notification given of the funds being available, applications and guidelines provided and a review process to determine suitability for funding. Every group, organization and project were given an equal opportunity to apply for those funds knowing there was a process in place to evaluate the application. Those applications could receive full funding, partial funding, or no funding

In this case ARPA funds are being appropriated to fund an event without any funds being set aside for this type of grant, no notice of funding availability no application process, no guidelines on how awards will be made and no opportunity for any other group or organization to apply.

At the council meeting on March 9 a group which has been putting on an event for probably 30 or more years but has not been able to for the past two years because of COVID requested assistance from the city. This event draws hundreds of local attendees and businesses over multiple days, but no action was taken on the request for assistance.

Until the Council has decided on how the ARPA funds will be used and if funds should be set aside for grants to local groups and activities, I cannot support this type of resolution. A work session should be scheduled to determine how the ARPA funds will be used and if any will be sent aside for grants to local groups, organizations, and projects. If funds are set aside then an application, guidelines and review process should be developed (like the CARES funds) for appropriating those funds and an equal opportunity for all groups, organizations, and projects to apply.

Introduced By:
Date:
Action:
Vote:
Date:
Action:

Ruffridge
March 23, 2022
Adopted
4 Yes, 2 No
March 24, 2022
Vetoed by Mayor

CITY OF SOLDOTNA
RESOLUTION 2022-010

A RESOLUTION PROVIDING UP TO \$25,000 FROM THE COVID-19 RELIEF SPECIAL REVENUE FUND TO THE ALASKA CHILDREN'S INSTITUTE FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS FOR THE PURPOSE OF PRODUCING AN OUTDOOR COMMUNITY THEATRE PRODUCTION AT SOLDOTNA CREEK PARK IN THE SUMMER OF 2022

WHEREAS, during the summer of 2021, the Alaska Children's Institute for the Performing Arts (aka Triumvirate Theatre) utilized a \$55,110 grant received through the Soldotna Coronavirus Nonprofit Response Fund program to produce a free, outdoor community production of 'The Little Mermaid', which ran for two weekends in Soldotna Creek Park and was attended by thousands of people; and

WHEREAS, Triumvirate Theatre believes this valuable community event could become an annual one, with support from the City of Soldotna to help develop a sustainable 'pay what you can' donation model for future productions; and

WHEREAS, on August 25, 2021 the Soldotna City Council enacted Ordinance 2021-017 appropriating \$1,139,130 in grant Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (SLFRF) made available through the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) of 2021; and

WHEREAS, municipalities can use SLFRF funds on 'government services,' a flexible eligible use category that generally includes any service traditionally provided by a government; and

WHEREAS, Soldotna's Envision Soldotna 2030 Comprehensive Plan states that, "Soldotna will develop and encourage the arts and cultural services and facilities to preserve and promote the area's history, and to provide adequate public access to art, music, and other cultural activities"; and

WHEREAS, the total expenses in cash and in-kind contributions for this event is estimated at \$67,330, including the cost of personnel, royalties, set construction, costumes, audio equipment, rehearsal space, advertising, and administrative support; and

WHEREAS, Triumvirate Theatre has requested that the City provide funding in an amount up to \$25,000 for the performances. The actual amount provided by the City will be offset by community donations collected at the performances, and will be calculated as the difference between \$25,000 and the total amount of community donations collected; and

WHEREAS, support for free and cost-accessible community theatre productions aligns with the City's priorities and policy documents, and it is in the best interest of the City of Soldotna to approve funding to support these efforts;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SOLDOTNA, ALASKA:

Section 1. That the Council hereby approves providing an amount not to exceed \$25,000 from the COVID-19 Relief Special Revenue Fund to the Alaska Children's Institute for the Performing Arts (Triumvirate Theatre), to support the production of an outdoor community theatre production at Soldotna Creek Park in the summer of 2022.

Section 2. That Triumvirate Theatre agrees to collect 'pay what you can' donations at each performance, allowing members of the public to support the production as they are able. Donations are not required, and any member of the public shall be allowed to attend for free. Any donations collected at the performances shall be used to offset the total amount of funding provided by the City.

Section 3. That the City Manager is authorized to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding with Triumvirate Theatre for the administration of the funds.

Section 4. This resolution shall become effective immediately upon its adoption.

ADOPTED BY THE CITY COUNCIL THIS 23RD DAY OF MARCH, 2022.

Paul J. Whitney, Mayor

ATTEST:

Brekke Hewitt, CMC, Acting City Clerk

Yes: Ruffridge, Carey, Chilson, Parker
No: Hutchings, Nelson

MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor Whitney and Members of the City Council
FROM: Justin Ruffridge, Council Member
DATE: March 23, 2022
SUBJECT: Resolution 2022-010 - Providing Up To \$25,000 from the COVID-19 Relief Special Revenue Fund to the Alaska Children's Institute for the Performing Arts for the Purpose of Producing an Outdoor Community Theatre Production at Soldotna Creek Park in the Summer of 2022

Last summer many of us were witness to the first large scale musical theater production in Soldotna Creek Park. This event drew in thousands of people over two weekends. One of the key aspects of this event was that it was offered for free to the general public. As we well know, nothing in this world is free and that event was sponsored largely by City of Soldotna grant funds along with other donations.

It is the intent of Triumvirate Theater to continue to perform a musical in the park each summer. In order for that to happen, Triumvirate has asked the City of Soldotna to provide funds up to \$25,000 in order to offset the cost of this production. In order to keep the cost to the city down Triumvirate will collect (in a pay what you can model) dollars upon entry to offset that amount as much as possible. The overall goal will be sustainability and knowing that events like these can be supported in the future in a similar model. The vision for this event matches closely with our city plan and it is my hope to gain your support for bringing that vision to life.

Your consideration is appreciated.

Dear Mrs. Queen:

Triumvirate Theatre is very grateful for the grant that we received through the city last year to produce *The Little Mermaid*, a musical production in Soldotna Creek Park. It was a tremendous success with thousands of people attending, at least half of them, kids. It was also very gratifying for our 60+ member cast that worked all summer to put this production together. After a long Covid induced lockdown, everyone was overjoyed to be together as a community.

We know that this production was done with one-time Covid funds but we believe this valuable community event could become an annual one. Large scale musical productions like *The Little Mermaid* are far more expensive to produce than people generally understand. A barebones budget to produce another musical in the park this summer comes in at \$35,700 cash and \$31,630 in-kind contributions for a total of \$67,330.

We propose that the City of Soldotna make funds available for up to \$25,000 to produce another musical in the park this summer. Triumvirate Theatre will cover the rest of the cash cost. It is critical that this event be made available to the community for free. However, we believe if we ask for donations as people enter the event that we could recoup some of the funds returning them to the city.

We know from doing this production last year that it is incredibly popular and appreciated by the community. We also know a lot more about the logistics and challenges of doing a show outdoors in the park. What we want to find out is, how much of the cost of this event are attendees willing to support with donations to make it available every summer? We need this grant from the city to find out.

Thank you so much for considering this proposal. I have attached a detailed budget of the proposed community event. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,



Joe Rizzo

Budget for Musical Theater Production in Soldotna Creek Park by Triumvirate Theatre.

Personnel:

Full-time Director: \$10,000

Part-time Producer/support staff: \$5,000

Orchestra Director: \$3,000

Choreographer: \$1,500

Music Vocal/rehearsal accompanist \$1,500

Royalty: \$1,500 (This is the cost paid to a publisher to get permission to do a performance of a copyrighted show)

Program Printing: \$2,000

Set Construction: \$1,000

Costumes: \$4,000

Sound Engineer and rental equipment: \$6,200

Total Cash Requirement: \$35,700 (This is approximately a 35% reduction from last summer's production paid with a grant from the City of Soldotna)

IN-KIND

Rehearsal Space provided by the city and potentially KPBSD: \$4,000

Triumvirate Administration Support: \$10,000

Advertising provided by local media outlets: \$5,000

Rental of Sports Center and Park: \$4,630

Triumvirate cash equipment purchase (cordless microphones) \$8,000

Total of In-kind contributions: \$31,630

Total Cost in Cash and In-Kind = \$67,330

Possible income streams in addition to donations:

Concessions: \$2,000

Alaska State Council on the Arts Grant: \$5,000

Sponsorships from area business: \$4,000

Total: \$11,000

Ask of the City: \$25,000