



Memo

File #: 330-24

Agenda Date: 7/2/2024

TO: Mayor and City Council

FROM: Beth Beatty, City Manager

SUBJECT:

Resolution to Approve the Poet Laureate Contract for 2024 through 2026.

BACKGROUND:

The Joliet Arts Commission is recommending the City approve a contract for the City's Poet Laureate for the 2024-2026 term of service. The Commission held a public reading on May 16, 2024, to select the winning Poet Laureate from a pool of three finalists. The winning Poet Laureate, Mr. Uxmar Torres, has agreed to accept the position. Pending the City Council's approval of Mr. Torres' contract, he will be charged with creating at least two original literary works for and about Joliet and will give ten public readings and workshops that are free and open to the public. Mr. Torres will also be present and read poems specifically created for certain special events as directed by City staff. Overall, the position seeks to promote cultural awareness, literacy, and literature among city residents. Expected benefits from a successful poet laureate program include increased citizen accessibility to poetry and spoken word artforms, a cultivation of more local creative writers and poets, and creation of city specific works of poetry.

The position term as proposed would be between July 3, 2024, and June 30, 2026. The RFQ proposed an honorarium amount of \$6,000 for the two-year term of service, with \$1,500 payments made according to the attached fee schedule in the contract. Funding for the Poet Laureate position is proposed to be drawn from General Operating Support grant funds for the Joliet Arts Commission.

RECOMMENDATION OF THE ARTS COMMISSION:

The Arts Commission discussed this matter on June 19, 2024. Vince Logan motioned, and Peg Stoiber seconded, that the Arts Commission recommend the City Council approve the resolution approving the Poet Laureate Contract for 2024 through 2026. The motion carried by a vote of 6-0. Voting aye were: Romero, Grotovsky, Gorder, Logan, Stoiber, and Summers. Commissioners Franks-Tapley, Simpson, and Wright were absent.

RECOMMENDATION OF THE LAND USE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE:

The Land Use and Economic Development Committee discussed this matter on June 26, 2024. A motion was made by Councilman Guerrero, which was seconded by Councilman Mudron to recommend approval of the Poet Laureate Contract to City Council for final approval. Voting aye were: Councilman Guerrero and Councilman Mudron. Councilman Cardenas was absent.

CONCLUSION:

City Council approval of the subject Resolution will finalize approval of the Poet Laureate contract for the 2024-2026 term of service.

RECOMMENDATION:

The Administration recommends the Mayor and City Council adopt the attached Resolution to approve the Poet Laureate contract for 2024 through 2026.