



TO: Elizabeth Pauli, City Manager
FROM: Lynda Foster, Council Assistant, City Manager’s Office
COPY: City Council and City Clerk
SUBJECT: Resolution – Sponsorship of the Tacoma Refugee Choir’s 2018 Season—December 19, 2017
DATE: December 12, 2017

SUMMARY:

The requested Resolution authorizes expenditure of up to \$20,000 of Council Contingency Funds for sponsorship of the Tacoma Refugee Choir’s 2018 Season; and directs the City Manager to negotiate and execute an agreement outlining the scope of work and deliverables for the funding.

COUNCIL SPONSORS:

Mayor Marilyn Strickland
Council Member Campbell
Council Member Mello

STRATEGIC POLICY PRIORITY:

The strategic policy priority best aligned with this resolution is:

- Cultivate a vibrant cultural sector that fosters a creative, cohesive community; and,
- Ensure all Tacoma residents are valued and have access to resources to meet their needs.

Sponsoring the events of the Choir aligns with the Tacoma 2025 goal areas of Education and Learning, Arts and Cultural Vitality, and Civic Engagement.

BACKGROUND:

The Tacoma Refugee Choir (formally known as the Refugee Choir Project, a Washington non-profit corporation) builds community through music with a special emphasis on welcoming refugees. With the rapid rise in xenophobia and anti-refugee sentiment, there is an urgent need to combat hatred with positive and meaningful interactions amongst community members. The Tacoma Refugee Choir seeks to use music as a tool to support our most vulnerable residents, and educate and encourage actions of compassion and kindness between people of diverse backgrounds, beliefs, ethnicities, and languages as part of creating a more welcoming Tacoma community.

In their first season, the Tacoma Refugee Choir welcomed to their weekly practice sessions more than 150 participants from 24 countries, including Iraq, Ukraine, Vietnam, and DR Congo. They established non-profit status and engaged the support of a diverse all-star cast of Tacoma-area recording artists to deliver their message broadly through their first recorded song. They performed twelve public events, including WE Day for Tacoma School District 7th graders, a full-length Community Sing-along featuring Grammy winner Wanz and *The Voice*’s Stephanie Anne Johnson, and a performance and talk at [TEDxSeattle](#) (2:40-18:50) on November 18. Audience members described their Community Sing-along as “music, community building, social activism, and entertainment all in one,” and one choir rehearsal attendee said, “I’ve been in the U.S. for four months and never felt welcomed until today.”

Their second season seeks to build on the success of their inaugural season to uplift, inspire and unite through the transformative power of music. Their plans include three fully-produced events:



Tacoma Sings at Urban Grace Church (March 10, 2018)

This high-energy community sing-along event first held in November 2017 and features live band, professional lighting and sound, local recording artists, and the Tacoma Refugee Choir. Highly interactive and engaging, attendees will unite in song and celebrate the contributions of all members of our community. Sponsorships will allow free general admission for 750 people at this event.

Refugees: Their Story is Our Story (May 12, 2018)

This fully produced event will focus on refugee stories through video, song and art. Featuring performances by the Tacoma Refugee Choir and refugee recording artists, attendees will gain perspective on the refugee experience both locally and internationally and be encouraged to do their part to make Tacoma a more welcoming place.

Your Voice Matters (November 2018 TBD)

This high-energy production emphasizes the value of all voices in our community and the importance of using our voice for good. Food and activities will add to the festival format of this concert/sing-along. Featuring prominent guest artists and the Tacoma Refugee Choir. The Tacoma Refugee Choir has invited incoming Mayor Woodards to be a featured song-leader at this event.

The Tacoma Refugee choir's emphasis is on building partnerships and working with refugee and immigrant groups and other under-served communities aims to offer support and engage. Collaborative partners include Tacoma Community House, Korean Women's Association, Asia Pacific Cultural Center, Slavic Christian Center, Lutheran Refugee Services, Tacoma Community College, and more.

The requested \$20,000 sponsorship level will assist the Tacoma Refugee choir provide free admission to events for residents of the City who may be disabled or financially unable to attend. The sponsorship would include other benefits to the City including: eight VIP tickets to all three stage events, invitations to free community outreach events, recognition from the stage at all three events, logo on posters, logo on printed programs, feature on Tacoma Refugee Choir website, and recognition in the annual report. In addition, the Choir will advertise the following items: 1) Opportunities for the community to contribute to the City's Deportation Defense Subfund, for providing legal counsel to indigent Tacoma residents at deportation hearings; 2) Participation on the City's Commission on Immigrant and Refugee Affairs; and, 3) Recognition of the City as a member of the Welcoming Cities and Counties Initiative.

ISSUE:

In order to authorize the use of the City Council Contingency Funds for this purpose, a resolution must be adopted.

ALTERNATIVES:

The City Council could choose not to approve or modify the requested expenditure.

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the City Council approve the expenditure of \$20,000 of Council Contingency Funds to sponsor the Tacoma Refugee Choir's 2018 Season.



FISCAL IMPACT:

EXPENDITURES:

FUND NUMBER & FUND NAME *	COST OBJECT (CC/WBS/ORDER)	COST ELEMENT	TOTAL AMOUNT
1030 Council Contingency Fund	660000	5310100	\$20,000
TOTAL			\$20,000

* General Fund: Include Department

REVENUES:

FUNDING SOURCE	COST OBJECT (CC/WBS/ORDER)	COST ELEMENT	TOTAL AMOUNT
1030 Council Contingency Fund	660000	6311010	\$20,000
TOTAL			\$20,000

POTENTIAL POSITION IMPACT:

POSITION TITLE	PERMANENT/ PROJECT TEMPORARY POSITION	FTE IMPACT	POSITION END DATE
TOTAL			

This section should only be completed if a subsequent request will be made to increase or decrease the current position count.

FISCAL IMPACT TO CURRENT BIENNIAL BUDGET: \$20,000

ARE THE EXPENDITURES AND REVENUES PLANNED AND BUDGETED? Yes

IF EXPENSE IS NOT BUDGETED, PLEASE EXPLAIN HOW THEY ARE TO BE COVERED.

N/A