

## City Council – Action Request Form

**Date:** January 13, 2022

**To:** Mayor, Mayor Pro Tempore, and Members of the City Council

**From:** Ben Rowe, Assistant City Manager

**Council Action Requested:**

Ordinance Amending the Project Budget Ordinance for the City of Winston-Salem, North Carolina for the Fiscal Year 2021-2022 - Film Partnership of North Carolina’s Workforce Development Initiative in Winston-Salem

**Strategic Focus Area:** Economic Vitality and Diversity

**Strategic Objective:** Enhance Skills of Workforce

**Strategic Plan Action Item:** No

**Key Work Item:** No



**Summary of Information:**

The Film Partnership of North Carolina (“Partnership”) is a 501(c)(3) economic development organization structured to grow the film, television, and digital streaming industry in North Carolina through collaboration and to create a pipeline for a diverse, well-trained, and inclusive workforce to support this industry. The Partnership’s leadership is a diverse group of members from the industry who work or invest in filmed content across the state.

In the fall of 2021, the Partnership announced a collaboration with the City of Wilmington and the University of North Carolina School of the Arts to launch a new film, television, and entertainment industry training program using a \$400,000 grant from the Wilmington City Council. The City provided the grant from their allocation of Coronavirus Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (i.e., ARPA). An emphasis of the program is to build the skill set of the local and regional workforce, in particular women and minorities who are largely underrepresented in the industry. Since March, the Partnership’s program has provided training for eight interns, four of which are from historically underserved communities. Most of this cohort have graduated and been placed in permanent positions on active productions in the region.

**Committee Action:**

<b>Committee</b>	Finance 6/13/22 CDHGG 6/14/22	<b>Action</b>	Approval
<b>For</b>	MPT Adams, CM Taylor, and CM MacIntosh	<b>Against</b>	None; Abstaining: CM Clark
	Unanimous		

**Remarks:**

The Partnership is requesting \$100,000 from the City of Winston-Salem to administer a new and specific training program with a focus on diversity and inclusion in the production workforce. Participants would receive paid, on-the-job training at a salary of \$15/hour, including 10 hours of pre-approved overtime at \$22.50. The funds would be used to train interns for an average of five weeks on the job, with a focus in historically underserved communities, for regional production positions related to the film and entertainment industries. The Partnership would spend 90% of the funding on the critical mission, DEI recruitment, promotion, and job training. The remaining funds would be spent on administrative services (e.g., payroll) and enable the Partnership to pursue additional grant opportunities and private funding. The Partnership anticipates they will spend the funds by the end of 2024.

The Partnership also will continue to seek additional partners to support this program, including the North Carolina Department of Commerce's Workforce Development Division, UNC School of the Arts, Winston-Salem State University, and the International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees Local 491. The attached letter provides additional information about the Partnership and their request.

According to Partnership staff, the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic has changed the production industry in multiple ways. Streaming platforms, such as Netflix, have doubled their annual budgets for content development and are aggressively looking for space outside California to shoot. As a result, 2021 was a record year for North Carolina with over \$410 million in direct spending.

The attached amendment to the FY 2021-2022 Project Budget Ordinance appropriates \$100,000 from local economic development project fund reserves to provide the City's contribution to the Film Partnership of North Carolina, consistent with the public purposes established in G.S. 160A-209. The contribution also is consistent with the City Council's Tier 1 Strategic Priority to focus on job creation and workforce development including small businesses and invigorating the local travel and tourism industry. If approved, City staff will execute an agreement with the Partnership to ensure proper use of the funds and reporting on outcomes.