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Operating Funds Request FY 2023-2024

Mission Statement and Program Description

Goals and Purpose

Stamford History Center: A Resource for All of Stamford's Citizens

The Stamford Historical Society, Inc. d/b/a The Stamford History Center, the Municipal Historian of Stamford, is an educational and research institution, whose primary functions are to collect, preserve, conserve, interpret, and exhibit materials relating to Stamford, Connecticut and our region in order to engage all citizens in the telling of their stories.

The Stamford History Center ("SHC") seeks to serve all of the people of the Greater Stamford area through our educational programming, on-site events, community outreach, exhibits and by making our resources as available as possible.

Educational Programming

SHC had been offering a variety of educational programs to the Stamford Public Schools prior to the Covid-19 pandemic at no charge. These programs designed in conjunction with the SPS Department of Teaching and Learning and with input from classroom teachers, are linked to the school curriculum and cover topics from one's understanding of the local community, the Colonial Period of Stamford and the ongoing history of immigration. The programs are especially targeted for the elementary school grades. The Center was awarded a number of grants this past year enabling us to hire a part-time Educational Coordinator to oversee and administer these programs. The response for the SPS has been very positive and we look forward to expanding our offerings in the upcoming year.

On Site Events

SHC offers a number of events to the public during the course of each year. These include our "Haunted Stamford" program in October at the Hoyt-Barnum House, our annual Victorian Tea, the reading of the Declaration of Independence on the 4th of July and our spring Cozy Sunday talks and workshops. In addition, we have programs around our exhibit openings and SHC mounts an annual exhibit dealing with a different facet of Stamford's History.

Community Outreach

SHC speakers frequently deliver talks and cosponsor presentations such as the annual Estelle Feinstein lecture at UCONN-Stamford. Our speakers also have presented to the Stamford Senior Men's Association, Smith House, UCONN-Stamford, Living in Retirement, and a host of other groups. These talks are also a free offering and are tailored to the requests made by the group that arranges for the talk.

Resource Accessibility

SHC has gone to great lengths to make our resources available to the public. While our budget precludes our being open more than 3 days a week, all of our library materials have been linked to the catalog of the Ferguson Library. Anyone visiting our library will be helped in their research by one of our library aides at no charge. SHC volunteers help people doing genealogical research as well as those investigating the history of their homes. In this respect, we also often help realtors with property histories. We also served all independent researchers and scholars who come to use our library. Our photo collection is also a mine of data and volunteers help patrons regularly with finding photos.

Exhibits

SHC mounts one major exhibit in house annually, and we also at times have a secondary minor exhibit. Our last exhibit: *Stamford-150 Years of Entertainment* relives past events and the venues that have provided local entertainment. The exhibit includes loaned artifacts from entertainment venues and photography drawn for the Center's collections. In the past, SHC has mounted exhibits on the history of WWII veterans of Stamford, Sport in Stamford, The Fabric of Stamford and the histories of the Police and Fire Departments. SHC has also mounted off-site exhibits at the Ancient Order of Hibernians Hall, the Italian Center, the Palace Theater and the Government Center. We have also helped others mount exhibits using loans. In addition, we have repurposed areas within our building and now have permanent exhibits of portraits in our library annex, landscape paintings in or library and a special exhibit of the painting of Stamford artist Delos Palmer in our lobby area.

The Stamford History Center is just that, a Center for research by all from elementary school children working on a class project, to long time Stamford residents researching their own pasts. SHC centers the community by preserving its past and engaging all citizens in the process of recording its history.

Fiscal Year 2021/2022 Operating Results

- Revenue decreased by 18% due to the lack of recognizable state and federal grants. Additional tag-sale fundraisers improved revenue.
- Expenses were in line with the previous year.
- We recorded an operating loss of \$24,000 which was \$6,200 higher than last year.

- We did not stage a Gala again this year resulting in Revenue and Expense both being below budget for the year.

Fiscal Year 2022/2023 Operating Budget and Forecast

- We are now projecting total revenue for the year 37% ahead of last year. We will not be having a Fundraising Gala this year but we expect additional Tag-Sale revenue and significant Grant Income.
- Expenses are expected to be 32% higher than last year due to higher Utility Expense and higher Salary Expense for our Education Coordinator.
- We expect an Operating Loss of \$27,000 for the year which is \$3,000 higher than the prior year.
- Revenue is expected to be below budget as a result of not having a Gala. Expenses are projected to be slightly higher than budget as higher Utility Expenses offset the lack of Fundraising Expenses.

2023/2024 Proposed Operating Budget

- The 2023-2024 Budget assumes we are able to hold a Fundraising Gala and provides for upgrades to our computer system. We have raised some funds for the computer project but the current funds will not fully cover the expenses.
- Revenue Budget is higher than 2023 projections primarily due to the addition of the Fundraising Gala and increased Grant Income.
- Expenses are higher due to Gala Expenses and for computer upgrades (depending on amount, some may be capitalized).
- An Operating Loss of \$17,000 is expected unless we can raise additional funding for the computer project.