

CITY OF VENICE

Office of the Mayor

Interoffice Memorandum

TO: City Council
FROM: Mayor John Holic
RE: Fox Lea Farms
DATE: December 2, 2015

We recently had a presentation from Fox Lea Farms (Farms) in which we were given the statistics and data showing this business to be a significant economic driver for Venice. Part of that presentation included a solicitation for the City of Venice to become a sponsor for a couple of new jumps that will be installed at the Farms this spring. The cost for sponsorship is \$20,000 and as the Farms is not a 501c3 organization, the Economic Development Advisory Board cannot take action on this request.

As you may recall, in fiscal 2015 we set aside \$40,000 for marketing (10% of the sales tax rebate from the State). In fiscal 2016, the money set aside was supposed to increase to 20% of the rebate or \$80,000; Finance Department neglected to make this adjustment so EDAB still has only \$40,000 before the end of fiscal 2016 and I am certain they will budget the full \$120,000 for 2017 (30% of rebate) and continue to increase the percentage until a full 50% is budgeted. As there have been two instances where we have searched for additional funds already this year; the Chalk Festival for \$10,000 and now the Farms for \$20,000; I suggest that the marketing money be considered split between EDAB and City Council so that larger one-time expenses such as these two can be handled in the future without strain on the budget. That would mean this year EDAB has \$40,000 to work with according to their formula and City Council has \$40,000 to work with for unbudgeted marketing opportunities that do not fit the EDAB guidelines.

Suggested action:

- 1.) I move to direct the City Manager to find \$40,000 in the fiscal 2016 to be used in conjunction with EDAB as marketing expenditures to promote the City of Venice. The City Manager has until the end of Fiscal 2016 to locate the funds.
- 2.) I move to approve a \$20,000 sponsorship for Fox Lea Farms horse jumps at their facility.

JH/ht