



BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
AGENDA LETTER

Agenda Number:

Clerk of the Board of Supervisors
105 E. Anapamu Street, Suite 407
Santa Barbara, CA 93101
(805) 568-2240

Department Name: General Services
Department No.: 063
For Agenda Of: April 5, 2022
Placement: Administrative
Estimated Time: N/A
Continued Item: No
If Yes, date from:
Vote Required: Majority

TO: Board of Supervisors
FROM: General Services Janette D. Pell, Director (805) 560-1011
Contact Info: Skip Grey, Assistant Director, General Services (805) 568-3083

SUBJECT: Santa Barbara Bowl Foundation 2022 Variance Request – District 1

County Counsel Concurrence

As to form: Yes

Other Concurrence:

As to form: N/A

Auditor-Controller Concurrence

As to form: N/A

Recommended Actions:

That the Board of Supervisors consider the following recommendations:

- a) Consider and approve a one-time waiver of the annual thirty-seven (37) commercial event maximum performances pursuant to the Amended and Restated Management and Lease Agreement between the County of Santa Barbara and the Santa Barbara Bowl Foundation, to allow for up to seven additional events during the 2022 concert season; and
- b) Find that pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (“CEQA”) Guidelines, Section 15162, no substantial changes are proposed which will require major revisions to the prior negative declaration; no substantial changes to the project have occurred with respect to the circumstances under which the project is undertaken; and no new information of substantial importance has come to light regarding environmental effects of the project or of the sufficiency of mitigation measures, and therefore the proposed actions are within the scope of the Mitigated Negative Declaration (“MND”) (Case No. 95-ND-29), adopted by the Board on November 28, 1995, and no subsequent Environmental Impact Report or Negative Declaration shall be prepared for this project.

Summary Text:

This item is brought to the Board of Supervisors on behalf of the Santa Barbara Bowl Foundation Board of Directors to consider a one-time waiver of the annual 37 commercial event maximum pursuant to the May 11, 2011 Amended and Restated Management and Lease Agreement (Lease Agreement) between the County and the Santa Barbara Bowl Foundation (Bowl Foundation), If granted, this waiver will allow for up to seven additional events during the 2022 concert season.

This request is made in conjunction with the Santa Barbara Bowl promoter, Goldenvoice and is due to a variety of factors including those related to the Covid19 Pandemic. The basis for the request is enumerated in detail in the attached letter (Attachment 1) dated March 4, 2022 from the Santa Barbara Bowl. Representatives from the Bowl will be at the hearing and available to answer questions.

Background/ Analysis:

The Santa Barbara Bowl is a world-class 4,562 seat entertainment, culture and arts venue located at 1122 N. Milpas Street in Santa Barbara. Originally constructed in 1936 as a Works Progress Administration (WPA) project. The Santa Barbara Bowl is a County owned property that has been managed and operated under the direction of the Santa Barbara Bowl Foundation since June 1994. The most recent Lease Agreement was executed on May 11, 2011.

The Bowl Foundation is committed to creating and maintaining partnerships that promote the public's appreciation and access to cultural arts in the Santa Barbara community through programs such as Outreach, the Bowl Foundation Arts Subsidy, The Instrument Fund, as well as through community events at the Bowl. In addition, the Bowl has a long history of staging benefit concerts to help a support wide range of not for profit activities.

Section 7B, *Performances* of the 2011 Lease Agreement details the number of events allowed per season. Pursuant to that Section, the Bowl Foundation is allowed to stage a maximum of 37 annual commercial events. Revenue derived from these events fund ongoing operations at the Bowl including two annual Bowl Outreach Grant Funding Cycles, capital improvements, staffing and security.

Due to early demand by artists and citing lost revenue due to events lost during the pandemic, this year's Santa Barbara Bowl calendar is currently full with the maximum 37 events. Bowl staff have never experienced such significant interest this early in the concert season. During the Pandemic, the venue was dark for 22 months before reopening in 2021 with 23 events. Many artists waiting to tour and ready to perform. Staff is concerned that turning away business could hurt future relationships and will likely push artist to other venues. Adding events is expected to have a positive impact on hotels, restaurants, and the local economy.

CEQA Review: A Negative Declaration (95-ND-29) had been adopted for the County Bowl Master Plan and can be found at this link [County of Santa Barbara - File #: 18-00170 \(legistar.com\)](https://legistar.com/View/00000000-0000-0000-0000-000000000000). The potential environmental impacts of County Bowl Master Plan were evaluated in 95-ND-29 and mitigation measures for these impacts were incorporated into the Lease Agreement for the County Bowl Master Plan. This one-year variance for seven additional events would comply with all mitigation measures required in the Master Plan and Lease Agreement. The proposed additional events would be eligible to use the Santa Barbara High School parking lot and would be subject to the same limitations on attendance and hours as other events. Mitigation measures for operational concerns in the previously adopted 95-ND-29, included

parking improvements and noise mitigation. These measures are in place and are maintained through the lease agreement which would adequately address potential environmental impacts.

Fiscal and Facilities Impacts:

N/A

Special Instructions:

None

Attachments:

1. Letter dated March 4, 2022 from the Santa Barbara Bowl Foundation Board of Directors.