

Tourism Committee Recommendations on 2/4/16

Recommend authorization of \$15,000 to Light up Pineland Organization for the inaugural "Christmas Between the Lakes" events to be held on 3 Saturdays prior to Christmas in the Pineland City Park. Costs to include Lighting, Decorations, Christmas Trees; Rental of Snow Machine and Advertising.

Recommend authorization of \$1,500 to Chamber for Sale on the Trail advertising consisting of joint marketing advertising to the El Camino Real de los Tejas Caddo Group for 2015 & 2016 and advertising in Sabine County for March & April.

done

Tourism Funds Request Application

Date: 1-15-16

Step One: Organization Requesting Funds, Support or Grants

Name: Light Up PINELAND (JUST NEAL)

Address: P.O. Box 1200 PINELAND TX 75968

Telephone: 409-584-3111 Additional Contact #: 409-594-7464 Fax: 409-584-3310

Step Two: Type of Organization

- Tax Free per (C) (3)
- Private Enterprise
- Government Entity
- Other (Describe fully): _____

Step Three: Description of Organization

Please describe your organization in one or more paragraphs. Include all pertinent information including goals, list of officers, sponsors or backers, number of members, if any, a brief history including past tourism events. (Attach additional sheet if necessary.)

PLEASE SEE ATTACHED DESCRIPTION & REQUEST.

Step Four: The Event Itself

Please attach a detailed description of several paragraphs the event or purpose of the Tourism Funds Request. You will want to include the amount of money you are requesting and how you plan to use it.

Note: It is not a requirement for funding, but it would be very nice if your organization would present an informal report to Sabine County Commissioners' Court and/or the Tourism Committee on the outcome and results of your event. Such data is valuable in determining support for future use of the hotel/motel tax monies.



Sabine County Tourism Board
PO Box 717, Kemphill, TX 75948
409-787-2732

The inaugural *Christmas Between the Lakes*, is a new seasonal tourist destination and event hosted by Light Up Pineland.

Light Up Pineland is a non-profit organization established in September, 2015 by a group of Sabine County residents whose mission is to organize and present an all-encompassing Christmas festival. Membership into the organization is open to all Sabine County residents and currently consists of Kim Rhame, Catherine Featherston Reeves, Barbara Fore, David Ebarb, Janet Ebarb, Amy Ebarb, Patsy Kilcrease, Sherry Boyette, Carita Barnett, Ronald Barlow and Josh Neal.

3. Christmas Between the Lakes will promote beautification and tourism by offering a venue of unparalleled entertainment that will act as a platform to advertise all that Sabine County has to offer — from friendly people to shopping; from lake to museums; and from our history to our national forest. It will be a lighted, entertainment filled festival that will bring Sabine County communities together while attracting thousands of non-resident tourists.

The goal for Christmas Between the Lakes is to fill the 25 acre City Park with Christmas lighting/decorations, along with art and crafts vendors, food booths, Christmas caroling, Church Choirs, a live Nativity scene, plays hosted by West Sabine, Hemphill, and Brookeland ISD's drama clubs. We will recreate Santa's workshop within the old train depot and the Polar Express with the old locomotive engine all within the City Park. We will offer a miniature train ride for children, horse and buggy rides with a tour of homes, an inflatable playground for children, a snow making machine, and even possibly an ice skating rink, plus much more.

Admittance into the Christmas Between the Lakes will require a nominal fee as this will generate revenue for Light Up Pineland to add to the grounds and improve the visitors experience in the future.

The goal is to create a family themed festival and experience that can bring Sabine County communities together while offering a tourist attraction that we believe will attract thousands of non-resident tourists. Our goal for the initial year is 2,500 visitors over the three day event. The event will attract visitors for hundreds of miles and, being a night event, will likely require overnight stays from tourists. Our target area of advertising will be all of eastern Texas and western Louisiana.

Preliminary dates have been set for December 3rd 2016, December 10th 2016, and December 17th 2016.

We anticipate an economic impact for local business in both Pineland and Hemphill through increased traffic and sales.

Light Up Pineland is requesting financial support from the Sabine County Tourism Committee in the amount of \$13,895. Funding will be used to purchase decorations/lighting for the 25 acre Katherine Sage Temple City Park in Pineland , as delineated below, along with financial aid for advertising and promotion.

Lighting:

Park Stage	\$860
Train Depot/Train	\$2,000
Concession Stand	\$175
Restroom Building	\$130
Pavilion	\$38
Bridge Railings(5)	\$250
Walking Path	<u>\$500</u>
	\$3,953

Decorations:

(10) Inflatables	\$600
(8) Projectors	\$712
(10)Yard Art	<u>\$1,000</u>
	\$2,312

Christmas Trees:

(2) Artificial Predit	\$640
(4) Spiral motion	<u>\$490</u>
	\$1,130

Rentals:

Snow Machine	<u>\$1,500</u>
	\$1,500

Advertising:

Newspaper
TV
Radio

social Media \$5,000
 \$5,000

TOTAL: \$13,895

5. It is anticipated that, as this event grows in stature, more and more out of town visitors will attend. With them, including relatives of county residents who visit, all could likely require lodging. As this is the initial event, we are unable to estimate the number of lodgings required but anticipate 35% of the initial attendance will be from outside the county.

6. We estimate, given our intended advertising area, that up to 35% of the visitors will be from out of town.

7. We anticipate spill over to local businesses will depend on the number of out of town visitors, the time they attend the event (restaurants) and the hours of operation of local businesses.

8. We anticipate that 65% of the initial attendance will be in county residents.

9.A. Short Term Benefits

- Increase sales tax revenue for local businesses and provide local businesses an additional avenue to advertise their goods and services
- Provide the local citizens another entertainment event.

9.B. Long Term Benefits

- Increase sales tax revenue for local businesses and provide local businesses an additional avenue to advertise their goods and services
- A sustainable long term increase in sales tax enabling cities and county to plan their financial future
- Increased visibility for Pineland, Hemphill, and Sabine County
- Increased visibility of natural resources available in Sabine County including museums, history, Toledo Bend, Sam Rayburn, and National Forest
- Marketing for Sabine County as a long term retirement location.
- Possible additional business opportunities and networking.

10. Expected gross revenue from gate sales, booth rental and beverage sales is anticipated to be around \$5,800

11. While this event is not a fundraiser in the normal sense of the word, funds will be raised that will be reinvested into the event year after year to expand and enhance the visitors experience and grow the event year over year.

12. The amount of money expected to be spent at other businesses is unknown.

13. We anticipate visitors from not only the surrounding counties and parishes, but Lufkin, Nacogdoches, Beaumont, Natchitoches, Alexandria, and Shreveport.

14. We will advertise as stated above.