



Staff Report

City Council

Item No. {{section.number}}.{{item.number}}

Meeting Date: May 22, 2024

From: Ryan Hunt, Communications & Events Manager

Title: SoundSkilz Taste of Jalisco Contract Renewal

RECOMMENDATION:

To approve a one-year contract extension with SoundSkilz, Inc., to produce the 2025 Taste of Jalisco Festival.

BACKGROUND:

For the past six years, the City has contracted with third parties to produce and manage our signature events under the direction of the Communications & Events Manager. Reasons behind this decision are due to the growth of the events over time, their continued growth is too large for one person to manage, and it allows the Communication & Events Manager to more evenly divide the duties of running the special events with the need to relay city information to the media and our residents.

SoundSkilz, Inc. was the producer of Taste of Jalisco Festival from 2022-2024. Soundskilz has more than 20 years of experience running large and small, indoor and outdoor events. They currently produce and/or manage the San Bernardino County Fair, Boots in the Park concerts, WellHaus (cannabis festival), City of Huntington Beach 4th of July Festival, and produced over 1,000 talent-driven global events in music, film, sports, culinary, fashion, art, eSports/gaming, and much more. They have produced concerts for U2, John Legend, Black Eyed Peas, Lenny Kravitz, Rush, and One Republic. Additionally, they have produced the Cuervo Nation Festival founded by Jose Cuervo Tequila – a 5-day multi-island festival in the British Virgin Islands. Stephen Clayton, president of Soundskilz, has been an Event Educator at University of California Riverside.

DISCUSSION:

SoundSkilz produced the 2024 Taste of Jalisco Festival at a much higher production level than any other time before. Their talented team features several staff members who come in and take over a blank space and transform it into a wonderful oasis to be enjoyed by all. The largest carnival footprint in the event's history was a particular standout for residents and visitors to experience in 2024.

First, SoundSkilz is proposing to keep the same weekend for the 2025 Taste of Jalisco Festival, which would run from Jan. 31 – Feb. 2, 2025. The 2024 Taste of Jalisco Festival had a crowd estimated at 10,000+ attendees (despite wet weather and cooler temperatures). Visitors enjoyed the biggest carnival in the event's history, Lucha Libre wrestling in the Community Amphitheater, Mexican-inspired food vendors, merchandise vendors, a low-rider car show, and much more. The event received extensive local media coverage both on television and radio and featured Agua Caliente Casinos as the presenting sponsor.

As consideration for SoundSkilz performance of this one-year agreement to the City's reasonable satisfaction, and subject to any limitations set forth in this agreement, the City of Cathedral City would agree to pay SoundSkilz an amount not to exceed \$82,687.00 to produce the 2025 Event.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The fiscal impact for the Taste of Jalisco Festival is simply a 5% increase year over year to offset rising production costs. This has been planned for and is included in the biennial budget.

FIVE-YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN:

Action F-6: Promote additional community events and celebrations.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Taste of Jalisco Contract 2025