

RESOLUTION NO. 20200409-086

WHEREAS, Austin Public Health received its first presumptive positive cases of the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) on March 13, 2020; and

WHEREAS, subsequently the City of Austin and Travis County implemented emergency measures, which included the closing of restaurants and bars as well as “non-essential” businesses to ensure social distancing and a “Stay at Home” order designed to slow the spread of the virus; and

WHEREAS, necessary efforts to mitigate the spread COVID-19 have resulted in dire economic circumstances for many in our Austin community, including individuals who have lost jobs as the result of the containment measures; and

WHEREAS, Resolution No. 20200326-091 directed the City Manager to:

- develop programs and consider options to support impacted businesses and workers including those “in the creative, hospitality, service, retail, restaurant, music, child care, construction, and film industries and other associated industries”;
 - explore possible funding sources, including the use of Hotel Occupancy Tax funds;
- and

WHEREAS, multiple resources exist to support small businesses in this crisis, but few opportunities are available individuals who have lost employment as the result of emergency measures; and

WHEREAS, immediate financial support for individuals remains a critical priority, and another Resolution on the April 9, 2020, City Council agenda aims to address that general need; and

WHEREAS, in recognition of the unique financial challenges that our music community faces in achieving economic stability, the Live Music Fund was created by Ordinance 20190919-149 and directed the allocation of an amount equal to 15 percent of the 2 percent authorized for expansion of the Convention Center to be used for local music that meets the requirements of Texas Tax Code Section 351.101(a)(4) and that is not funded through the Cultural Arts Fund; and

WHEREAS, these funds, known as the Live Music Fund, have been the topic of public outreach and deliberations by the Live Music Fund Working Group, comprised of Music Commissioners and representatives of Austin's music community working together to gather and organize feedback on community priorities; and

WHEREAS, Economic Development staff have been exploring opportunities for enhancing coordination among Austin's musicians, live music venues, and music industry professionals and the City's tourism marketing and promotion efforts; and

WHEREAS, this Working Group continues to meet, but to date has not yet formalized recommendations on the use of this fund to assist musicians, and challenges with public engagement may further delay this process; and

WHEREAS, the City Council affirms the importance of the Live Music Fund Working Group and its role in helping guide future investments of this money and fully commits to reinstating this process and the use of the Live Music Fund as originally envisioned once this crisis has passed; and

WHEREAS, the Live Music Fund Working Group met on April 6, 2020 and made a recommendation to the Austin Music Commission, which reviewed and passed recommendation 20200408-2 to the City Council; and

WHEREAS, the Music Commission recommendation 20200408-2 supports using the Live Music Fund to provide emergency assistance to musicians, music venues, and related professionals only if there are no other sources of revenue; **NOW, THEREFORE,**

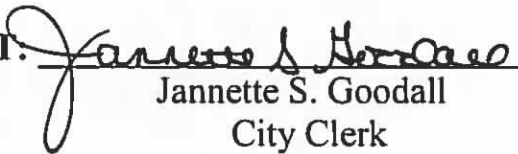
BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF AUSTIN:

The City Manager is directed to consider and make recommendations on the following possible measures to provide support to local musicians, live music venues, and professionals within music-related industries:

- Immediate use of the Live Music Fund for an Austin Music Disaster Relief Fund to provide emergency grants to support the most vulnerable local musicians that would be eligible for such grants under Texas Tax Code 351.101(a)(4), with eligibility to be additionally informed by feedback from the Music Commission and nonprofit partners and in a manner coordinated and not overlapping with financial assistance directed by other Council initiatives and guided by the principles of equity, diversity, and inclusion.

- If the Live Music Fund is recommended to initially fund the Austin Music Disaster Relief fund, the Manager must set forth a plan for replenishment. The Manager is expected to first consider other funding available for this emergency, including but not limited to federal disaster relief funds, or other emergency assistance.
- Explore collaborations among the City's Music & Entertainment Division, Visit Austin, local venues with production assets, and other potential nonprofit partners to provide a promotional digital interface featuring online music performances and resources for viewing audiences to tip artists and purchase merchandise.

ADOPTED: April 9, 2020

ATTEST: 
Jannette S. Goodall
City Clerk