

**TO:** JAMES L. APP, CITY MANAGER  
**FROM:** JOHN R. McCARTHY, DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS  
**SUBJECT:** ESTRELLA WARBIRDS MUSEUM – REQUEST FOR CITY FUNDING FOR FULL TIME MUSEUM CURATOR  
**DATE:** AUGUST 3, 1999

**Needs:** For the City Council to consider a request for funding for a full time museum curator at the Estrella Warbirds Museum.

- Facts:**
1. The Estrella Warbirds Museum is a private-owned museum located on City property at the Airport.
  2. The City of Paso Robles and the Estrella Warbirds Museum entered into a long term lease agreement in October of 1993 for \$1.00 per year.
  3. The lease agreement also allowed the Estrella Warbirds to pay \$10.00 per year against building permit fees, with the balance being due in 2001. At the present time, the Warbirds owe approximately \$7,000 in permit fees.
  4. The City authorized an \$80,000.00 to the Estrella Warbirds Museum on August 15, 1995, to be repaid at 6% interest, compounded monthly. (The actual amount advanced was \$30,500.00.)
  5. The loan agreement states that loan funds shall be used solely for the purpose of construction of the Estrella Warbirds Museum, and that funds shall not be used for any other purpose.
  6. Upon a request by the Estrella Warbirds Museum, on February 3, 1999, the City Council granted a deferral of regular loan payments for six months to help fund a museum curator position.
  7. After the deferral period, the Estrella Warbirds were to come back to the City Council with quantitative data showing the benefit derived from the deferral of payments.
  8. On July 15, 1999, staff received a request from the Estrella Warbirds Museum (attached), requesting \$12,000 from the City to pay for a full time museum curator/director.

**Analysis and Conclusion:**

The City agreed to make a loan to the Estrella Warbirds Museum to enable them to complete construction of the museum building. The City advanced a principal total of \$30,500, and the Estrella Warbirds have been making principal and interest payments since October 1996.

The City Council recently received a request for additional financial aid to hire a museum curator. The Council agreed to defer the regular loan payments for six months to aid in the hiring of the curator. That six month deferral period ends on July 31, 1999.

City staff has received another request from the Estrella Warbirds to provide funding in the amount of \$12,000 for a full time curator/director position at the museum.

The museum currently has revenue from a number of resources, including rent from the Confederate Air Force, rent from the Civil Air Patrol, annual airshow, dinner income, and recently a \$100,000 donation. School visits to the museum are currently coordinated and organized by City Airport staff and are taken to the museum as part of an overall "Airport" facilities tour.

While the museum is recognized as a resource at the Airport, the benefit for expenditure of limited Airport/City funds for support if a curator position is questionable. Revenues generated by the museum appear adequate for their own operation to support this position without City assistance.

**Policy**

**Reference:** None.

**Fiscal**

**Impact:** Approving this request would have a \$12,000 per year impact to the Airport Operations Fund. The Airport is already currently in debt to the General Fund, and is not in a position to fund this request. Additionally, the City will need these funds to match FAA grant funding for Airport improvements, and maintenance costs will be substantially increased with the completion of the new Airport terminal building currently in design.

**Options:**

- A. For the City Council not to approve the request for City funding of the Estrella Warbirds Museum curator/director position.
- B. For the City Council to authorize the funding of \$12,000 for one (1) year for the Estrella Warbirds Museum curator/director and identify suggested funding.
- C. Amend, modify, or reject the above options.

**CONFEDERATE AIR FORCE.**  
**ESTRELLA SQUADRON**  
**ESTRELLA WARBIRDS MUSEUM**  
**P.O. Box 570**  
**Paso Robles, C 93447**

July 15, 1999

City of Paso Robles  
1000 Spring St.  
Paso Robles, California

Atten: Mr. James App/ Mr. John McCarthy  
Subject: Estrella Warbirds Museum request for funding

Dear Sirs,

The projected future of the Estrella Warbirds Museum will focus on educational and preservation aspects of our national and local military aviation heritage, along with related military subjects that have been a part of the Paso Robles area since the early 1940's. To accomplish our task, we need a dedicated experienced person to oversee the development of a first class museum complex emphasizing education and providing a research forum and at the same time recognizing the tourist value it will add to the local area.

Currently for the period from Jan. 2, 1999 to June 27, 1999 six months of raw data is provided. Of people accounted for; 824 persons ( adults and children) have visited the museum, 137.3 per month or 11.44 per day that the facility was open. Note that major construction was taking place and we operated on limited hours with only docents providing coverage of the museum. These conditions were not conducive for visits to the museum and undoubtedly kept the numbers low. Of the visitors, an average of two local schools (public and private) visited per month. The average group was 20 students and 2 adults per visit. This was without an organized educational program in place.

We notice that the number of out of town tourist is increasing due to the exposure efforts of news articles, brochure placement, and the annual air show exposure with its TV coverage.

One of the objectives of the Museum is to provide area schools with materials for aviation related education, using workbooks for the educators and activity books for the students with a field trip to the center at no charge to the school district or private schools.

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The funding of a full time curator/director will assure the growth of the museum with the notoriety of the central coast Aviation Heritage Research Center. The transformation from a collection to a recognized Historical Museum requires a full time curator/director to lead it into the millennium.

The Museum will provide a living history program to assist in the research/education of our youth. Presently, we are establishing a comprehensive research library of over four thousand books and materials that have been donated in memory of a local member who recently passed away.

You may ask yourself what this means to you and the community;

**-Pride in the past accomplishments.**

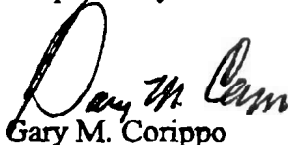
**-Education of our youth.**

**-Hopefully, we can help a child out of trouble by providing a stimulus for learning through exposure and involvement.**

As you look at the airport improvement and the successful establishment of this facility, it will in the long run bring growth to the area, both in tourism and related infrastructure support not limited to dining, lodging and sales to the local merchants. With the projected programs related to the Estrella Warbird Museum, the average tourist stay will be lengthened which will relate to increased revenue for the City of Paso Robles and its merchants. In addition to the above, plans are in the works to add more aircraft and related exhibits to further tell a story of our past history. There are several new items that will make a dramatic impact on the museum and future attendance if we are able to properly staff the facility. A properly trained and knowledgeable person can lead and acquire the items needed to assure that the museum is a place that every will one will want to see.

So with this in mind, we request funding of \$12,000.00 to pay for a full time curator/director. We intend to put the the museum on a program to pay its own way in the future. This financial assistance should not be needed in the future when the museum will be able to fund itself.

Respectively Submitted,



Gary M. Corippo

Director

Estrella Warbird Museum