



Legislation Text

File #: 1583-2024, Version: 1

This ordinance authorizes the City Clerk to enter into a grant agreement with the non-profit Royal Oak Initiative to support the organization's Summer Youth Engagement Series (SYES).

Founded in Columbus in 2013, the Royal Oak Initiative (ROI) is an innovative chess-based social change agency that uses the wisdom of chess to protect, heal and build community by cultivating collective wellness, mindfulness, and critical thinking. Since then, ROI has partnered with more than 30 local schools, libraries, community centers, businesses, and governmental agencies to provide quality, culturally responsive, trauma informed programming to an estimated 700 youth and adults. This school year, ROI has operated regular programming in seven schools, three libraries and has led youth to chess tournaments, and hosts a biweekly community open chess session every other Sunday. Last summer ROI brought chess components to the Ubuntu Summer Program as well as offered a full week of programming for Columbus' World Chess Week Celebration. As the event organizer for Columbus' celebrations that week, ROI brought the first international chess grandmaster Maurice Ashley to speak and play 20 youth in a simultaneous competition. ROI aims to promote and or create an active chess culture in all CCS schools, community centers, and libraries in Central Ohio.

The goal of the SYES is to transform the self-perception of 400 Columbus youth utilizing an experiential learning model and exciting, culturally relevant, trauma-informed environments which equip youth with chess, literacy, project planning and execution, Chess Maker, and conflict resolution skills. Programming will include the following:

Pop-Up Chess Stations: (100 engaged, 8-18YO and family members) Chess pop-ups are a series youth led and adult supported public chess stations complete with tables, boards, and cultural arts installed at or near major gatherings of youth and community members such as festivals, community centers, pools, and churches. ROI engages youth with music, 60-second chess drills, prizes, and face art. During this engagement, ROI and its partners will collect family contact information, offer invitations to attend SYES programming as well as register youth live for SYES events.

Chess In the Park: (100 engaged, ages 8-18 and family members) Youth will participate in ROI's 3-on-3 Basketball and Chess Tournament in which youth's total points are added from competing in both sports. Food, a DJ, and engagement stations surround the chess boards and basketball court. ROI will engage in a mass chess skills session in which a 30-50 person group will simultaneously learn the basics of chess via our internally created, kinesthetic movement method paired with the DJ's break beats.

Chess Maker Summer Day Camp: (40 engaged, ages 13-18) a two-week day camp engaging 40 youth in chess skills, literacy skills, and Chess Maker skills in which youth design their own chess boards and plan a public exhibition of their board with members of their family, support system, and community. During the camp, all youth will read an entire book of their choosing and integrate the message into the chess board they create. This is a partially youth-led camp in which high school students, with mentoring and leadership from adult coaches, help recruit for and lead the camp. Selected youth from this camp will help to plan and execute World Chess Week events.

World Chess Week Events (200 youth and adults) Chess and Poetry: ROI will collaborate with a local arts group to co-plan and execute a chess-themed spoken word event.

Girls Youth Tournament: to address the intense lack of girls participating in chess programs and tournaments, ROI will bring a middle and high school tournament for CCS students.

World Chess Day Speaker and Simultaneous Competition: ROI aims to bring a highly accomplished woman of color in chess to offer an inspirational message and engage 20 youth in a simultaneous competition.

Chess at the Shop: ROI offers food, chess lessons, and open play simultaneously at 10 barber shops across Columbus. Owners will offer free cuts to youth who pass chess assessment.

Back to School Series: (200 youth and family members) Utilizing hip-hop, life-size chess boards, school supplies, and art, ROI welcomes youth and family members to get in the back-to-school spirit and prepare themselves to reengage with the school year.

Fiscal Impact: Funding is available within the Neighborhood Initiatives subfund.

Emergency action is requested in order to provide the Royal Oak Initiative with the resources necessary to plan and execute summer programming for target youths.

To authorize the City Clerk to enter into a grant agreement with the Royal Oak Initiative to support the organization's Summer Youth Engagement Series; to authorize an appropriation and expenditure within the Neighborhood Initiatives subfund; and to declare an emergency. (\$50,000.00)

WHEREAS, founded in Columbus in 2013, the Royal Oak Initiative (ROI) is an innovative chess-based social change agency that uses the wisdom of chess to protect, heal and build community by cultivating collective wellness, mindfulness, and critical thinking; and

WHEREAS, the goal of the Summer Youth Engagement Series is to transform the self-perception of 400 Columbus youth utilizing an experiential learning model and exciting, culturally relevant, trauma-informed environments which equip youth with chess, literacy, project planning and execution, Chess Maker, and conflict resolution skills; and

WHEREAS, an emergency exists in the usual daily operation of the city Clerk's office in that it is immediately necessary to authorize the Clerk to enter into a grant agreement in order to provide the Royal Oak Initiative with the resources necessary to plan and execute summer programming for target youths; **now, therefore,**

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF COLUMBUS:

SECTION 1. That the City Clerk is hereby authorized to enter into a grant agreement with the Royal Oak Initiative to support the organization's Summer Youth Engagement Series.

SECTION 2: That the City Auditor is hereby authorized and directed to appropriate \$50,000.00 in the Neighborhood Initiatives subfund, fund 1000, subfund 100018, to Columbus City Council per the accounting codes in the attachment to this ordinance.

SECTION 3: That per the action authorized by Section 1 of this ordinance, the expenditure of \$50,000.00, or so much thereof as necessary, is hereby authorized in the Neighborhood Initiatives subfund, fund 1000, subfund 100018, per the accounting codes in the attachment to this ordinance.

SECTION 4. That the Council hereby finds the expenditure of funds for the purchase of reasonable food and non-alcoholic beverages for these events to serve a proper public purpose by improving lives through encouraging participation in events and programming organized by the Royal Oak Initiative, the total budgeted amount for which shall not exceed \$25.00 per person.

SECTION 5. That the City Auditor is authorized to make any accounting changes to revise the funding source for all

contracts or contract modifications associated with this legislation.

SECTION 6. That, for the reasons stated in the Preamble hereto, which is hereby made a part hereof, this Ordinance is hereby declared to be an emergency measure and shall take effect and be in force from and after passage and approval by the Mayor or ten days after passage if the Mayor neither approves nor vetoes the same.