



HARRISONBURG | VA
FRIENDLY BY NATURE



June 24, 2025 City Council Meeting

Title

Consider a request to grant Harrisonburg Downtown Renaissance (HDR) permission to use the Turner Pavilion and adjacent lawn to host the Levitt AMP Harrisonburg concert series from June to September in 2026, 2027, 2028— Andrea Dono, Executive Director, Harrisonburg Downtown Renaissance

Summary

HDR has been producing its inaugural Levitt AMP Harrisonburg concert series in the summers for the last two years and will be launching our third concert year on June 10, 2025. The organization would like to submit another application to receive another \$90,000 grant from the Levitt Foundation. The grant application requires a letter stating that HDR has permission to hold the concert series at the Turner Pavilion and lawn. The stage and portable toilets would remain on site and locked for the duration of the concert series.

Recommendation

The City Manager's Office recommends approval of Harrisonburg Downtown Renaissance's request to use the Turner Pavilion and adjacent lawn to host the Levitt AMP Harrisonburg concert series from June to September in 2026, 2027, 2028.

Fiscal Impact

HDR is seeking a \$90,000 grant from the Levitt Foundation and would be required to solicit a 1:1 match in sponsorships for another three-year concert series. HDR pays for police support for each concert. Harrisonburg Public Works would provide support for closing vehicle entrance into the concert area as well as trash toters.

Context & Analysis

HDR is an experienced event planner and has successfully hosted 20 Levitt AMP Harrisonburg concerts during the last two years. When presenting to City Council in 2022 to ask for initial permission to use the Turner Pavilion and lawn, HDR suggested that approximately 350 may attend the concerts. The series exceeded that expectation on the first night and the highest attendance was 1800 people. A volunteer committee solicited feedback from community members about which genres and bands would be desired and work hard each year to book bands that align with that

feedback. HDR's staff and volunteers have been intentionally representing a wide range of artists and genres – this year will showcase reggae to Ukrainian folk music – and made efforts to reflect the diversity of Harrisonburg in both the audience and performers on stage. Event posters were translated into multiple languages and the organizer reached out to various community groups to share with their members and constituents. Visitors and tourists enjoyed the concerts alongside residents, with some sharing that they regularly came from Charlottesville to attend. HDR has ensured that attendees of all abilities can enjoy the show and is able to provide accommodations. Given the nonprofit's mission to support small businesses, many downtown establishments and other area businesses were able to take advantage of the opportunity to be food and beverage vendors, which boosts the tax base as well as gives those businesses a mid-week boost in sales. Nonprofits have also been invited to have a free booth for community outreach so all ships rise. HDR has worked with Harrisonburg Public Works on stage and portable toilet placement to limit impacts to the lawn and attends the Special Events Committee meetings to manage additional details directly with city staff. The organization expects to have another successful three years of concerts if permission to use the site is granted and to continue to bring the community together

Options

1. Approve the request
2. Deny the request

Attachments

1. Memorandum
2. PowerPoint