

Daniel Hinderliter

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954-790-1886

May 17, 2025

National Cornbread Festival, Inc.

Attn: Executive Director or Board Chair

P.O. Box 247

South Pittsburg, TN 37380

Email: info@nationalcornbread.com

Subject: Request for Financial Transparency Regarding the National Cornbread Festival

Dear Executive Director or Board Chair,

I am a resident of South Pittsburg, Tennessee, and a supporter of the Annual National Cornbread Festival, a cherished community event that celebrates our heritage and fosters economic and cultural vitality. I am writing to respectfully request financial transparency from National Cornbread Festival, Inc., regarding the festival's financial activities, particularly for the 2024 event held on April 27-28, 2024, and its financial relationship with the City of South Pittsburg. As a stakeholder in our community, I seek to understand how festival funds are managed and to ensure accountability, especially given the event's significant public impact and reported fundraising of over \$1.4 million for community projects since 1997.

The National Council of Nonprofits emphasizes that financial transparency is a cornerstone of ethical leadership for charitable organizations, fostering trust among donors, stakeholders, and the public. Under IRS regulations, 501(c)(3) nonprofits like National Cornbread Festival, Inc. are required to provide copies of their three most recent IRS Form 990s and exemption application upon request. Additionally, best practices, such as earning a GuideStar Seal of Transparency, encourage nonprofits to proactively share financial statements, annual reports, and governance details to build donor confidence.

I am particularly concerned about the lack of festival-related financial data in the City of South Pittsburg's 2024 Annual Financial Report, which does not disclose

revenues, expenditures, or in-kind support (e.g., police services, utilities) provided by the city for the festival. This omission raises questions about the city's financial involvement and the festival's overall financial management. To address these concerns and support transparency, I kindly request the following information for fiscal years 2022 through 2025, with a focus on 2024:

1. Copies of National Cornbread Festival, Inc.'s IRS Form 990s for the three most recent fiscal years, detailing revenue sources (e.g., grants, donations, ticket sales, vendor fees), expenditures, and program accomplishments.
2. Annual or impact reports summarizing the festival's financial activities, including income, expenses, and how funds were allocated to community projects (e.g., the reported \$92,234 in grants provided in 2024).
3. Financial statements or budget documents showing festival-related revenues and expenditures, particularly those involving city funds or in-kind support (e.g., public safety, infrastructure, or utilities).
4. Any contracts, memoranda of understanding, or agreements with the City of South Pittsburg, Lodge Cast Iron, or other partners outlining financial contributions, sponsorships, or in-kind support for the festival.
5. A list of board members and their affiliations, as recommended for transparency by nonprofit best practices, to demonstrate governance accountability.
6. Details of grants or donations received from or provided to the City of South Pittsburg, including applications, award letters, or expenditure reports.
7. Any policies (e.g., conflict of interest, whistleblower) that ensure ethical financial management, as suggested by the National Council of Nonprofits.

I request that these documents be provided in electronic format (e.g., PDF) via email to sthrngntdh@live.com to facilitate access and minimize costs. If any documents are publicly available on your website (www.nationalcornbread.com) or platforms like GuideStar, please provide specific links. I am happy to cover reasonable copying or mailing costs, as permitted by IRS rules for Form 990 disclosure. If certain information is unavailable or confidential, please provide a brief explanation to maintain transparency.

As a nonprofit, National Cornbread Festival, Inc. plays a vital role in our community, and sharing this information will strengthen public trust, align with IRS requirements, and demonstrate your commitment to accountability. I hope to receive a response within 14 days, by May 31, 2025, to discuss the availability of these records or arrange a time to review them. Please contact me at (954) 790-1886 or sthrngntdh@live.com with any questions or to coordinate delivery.

Thank you for your dedication to South Pittsburg and the National Cornbread Festival. I look forward to your response and appreciate your efforts to promote transparency and community engagement.

Sincerely,

Daniel Hinderliter

Daniel Hinderliter

Resident of South Pittsburg, Tennessee