

To: Dan Tripp, Chairman, Committee on Finance  
From: John Hansley, Deputy County Administrator  
Department: General Services

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**Item Title:** Violins of Hope – Community Partner Sponsorship

**Action Taken by Committee previously:** On October 5, 2021, the Committee of the Whole asked the Finance Committee to explore available funding to support a possible sponsorship of the Violins of Hope South Carolina Tour in the range of \$30,000 to \$100,000.

**Motion Requested Today:**

**Staff Recommendation:** Funds are available in the Local Accommodations Tax account to support a community-based sponsorship in the amount of \$30,000 to \$100,000.

**Impact of Action:** Uses local accommodations tax funds to sponsor a state-wide tourism related project in the Greenville area.

**Funding Amount/Source:** Local Accommodations Tax Special Revenue Account

**Requested by:** Committee of the Whole

**Staff Representative:** John Hansley

**Outside Representative:** Sharon Tchonev, Ellen Thompson, Christopher Revells

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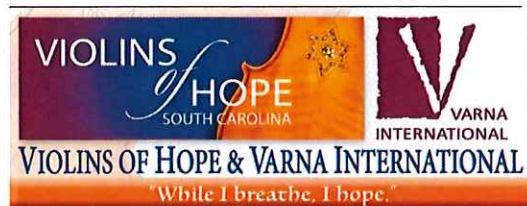
**List of Attachments:**

- Violins of Hope Request

10/20/2021  
Date Submitted

(JFH)  
Approved by the County Administrator

N/A  
Council District



## **Violins of Hope & Varna International South Carolina Tour April 20-May 19, 2022**

In 2022 South Carolinians from all backgrounds and cultures will enjoy inspiring musical and educational events. Picture students from middle school to university campuses in Greenville/Spartanburg holding a restored violin that survived the Holocaust, and hearing stories from a world-famous violin maker. Imagine various synagogues and churches in Charleston hearing the violins sound once again with stories of valor. Envision diverse communities in Myrtle Beach and Columbia venues listening to orchestras filled with the beloved violins uniting audiences with music's power to radiate reconciliation and remembrance.

### **The Opportunity**

These superb opportunities are available for scheduling between April 20 and May 19, 2022, when Violins of Hope travel from Israel to South Carolina to perform with Varna International headquartered in Columbia. For the first time, the two world-class performance companies will combine featuring events with violins, songs, stories, and orchestras. Uniting under the timeless emblem of South Carolina's motto, "While I breathe, I hope," these programs will honor Jewish violinists who perished in the Holocaust and commemorate the mostly unknown rescue of Bulgaria's 49,000 Jewish citizens preventing them from imprisonment in Nazi death camps in 1943.

Violins of Hope will tour South Carolina for four weeks in both large-scale and smaller concerts scheduled for Myrtle Beach, Charleston, Greenville/Spartanburg, and Columbia. These four cities will host the large-scale concerts featuring captivating programs highlighting Varna International's original oratorio entitled "*A Melancholy Beauty*." Local violinists will play the violins lovingly touched by Jewish hands during the Holocaust, now restored thanks to Israeli violin makers Amnon and Avshi Weinstein. Joyful voices will ring out from a folk choir colorfully costumed and coming from Bulgaria. In-between large and small concerts, an array of educational, musical, and cultural programs will be offered at local synagogues, schools, universities, museums, and churches. Visiting authors and an art exhibit, "The Auschwitz Album Revisited" round out four weeks of unforgettable events.

Varna International and Violins of Hope have been featured in concerts nationally and internationally. Their long list of performances includes Varna International at Kennedy Center, and Violins of Hope with the Berlin Philharmonic. As symbols of hope they declare once more, "Never Again." Amnon Weinstein affirms, "Our violins present the victory of the human spirit over evil and hatred. Celebrate it for those who perished, and for those who survived."

### **The Invitation**

We are looking for community partners and funders to:

- Sponsor community-based concerts.
- Support school-based educational and cultural programs

***Our goal is to educate, inspire, and unite audiences across the Palmetto state through the power of music proclaiming a "Never Again" message.***