



Office of the Mayor

CONSENT ITEM  
March 21, 2023

TO: Honorable Members of the City Council

FROM: Mayor Arreguín (Author); Councilmember Hahn (Co-Sponsor);  
Councilmember Wengraf (Co-Sponsor)

SUBJECT: City Co-Sponsorship of Bioneers Conference and Relinquishment of  
Council Office Budget Funds to General Fund and Grant of Such Fund

### RECOMMENDATION

Adopt a resolution memorializing City of Berkeley co-sponsorship of the non-profit Bioneers Conference, to be held April 6-8, 2023 and approving the expenditure of an amount not to exceed \$250 per Councilmember including \$250 from Mayor Arreguin, to the Berkeley Chamber of Commerce to offset permit costs, with funds relinquished to the City's general fund for this purpose from the discretionary Council Office Budgets of Mayor Arreguin and any other Councilmembers who would like to contribute.

### BACKGROUND

Now in its 34th year, the Bioneers Conference, viewed by many as the leading independent environmental and social-justice themed annual gathering in the U.S., will be held in Berkeley, California, on April 6-8, 2023. Featuring hundreds of inspiring and visionary leaders, Bioneers 2023 will bring thousands of engaged and civically active attendees to Zellerbach Hall on the UC Berkeley Campus and to venues across downtown Berkeley for three days of riveting talks, movement building, and connections.

The theme for 2023 is "Transformation, Regeneration, Celebration," and keynote speakers include legendary muralist Judy Baca; writer Rebecca Solnit; Chair of the Congressional Progressive Caucus Rep. Pramila Jayapal; activist and cultural leader Casey Camp-Horinek (*Ponca*); activist chef, writer and educator Bryant Terry; journalist Laura Flanders; and clean energy entrepreneur Danny Kennedy, with many more to be announced.

According to Bioneers CEO & Co-Founder Kenny Ausubel, "The big wheels of massive change are turning. Climate disruption bears down daily, and there's a widely felt morning-after awakening that it's going to crash the economy and bring civilization to its

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knees. Although the shift to renewables is now an accelerating inevitability, it's going to take relentless political action. Meanwhile, movements of the past decade for liberation, justice and multicultural democracy are swelling to challenge right-wing populist and neo-fascist forces underwritten by cynical plutocratic elites. Especially in these darkest of times, we come together to celebrate. We invite you to join forces with the Bioneers community of leadership in this time when we're all called upon to be leaders."

For the past three decades, Indigenous knowledge, participants, and partners have fundamentally shaped and guided Bioneers. The annual Indigenous Forum is a Native-led sovereign conference-within-a-conference — a unique cross-cultural and invitational platform. Regularly attracting representatives from dozens of tribal nations, it remains the only gathering of its kind, bringing together Indigenous activists, scientists, elders, youth, culture-bearers, and scholars to share their knowledge and frontline solutions in dialogue with a dynamic, multicultural audience.

Organizers also invest in the potential of youth and educators, with a bustling youth scholarship program bringing upwards of 500 youth and mentors to experience the Bioneers Conference annually.

Described by Bill McKibben as "a crucial organizing principle," the Bioneers Conference has long served as an annual focal point for the progressive community. The gathering strives to feature well known figures as well as emergent leaders who are engaged in exemplary work in their communities. And it's not just the speakers who make a difference. Bioneers attendees are sophisticated and active leaders in their own right, leveraging inspiration and connections built at the event to return to their communities and fields with new energy and momentum for change.

With the move to the East Bay, Bioneers is excited to be located in such a thriving, progressive, and accessible new home. The entire event will be within easy walking distance of the Downtown Berkeley BART Station. For those interested in learning more about cutting-edge work taking place in the region, Bioneers is offering two pre-conference tours on April 5, the first focused on urban farming and food production and the second exploring the vibrant cultural history and ever-developing landscape of the Berkeley and the East Bay as a hub of social justice activism.

Featuring engaged arts, musical performances, and ample opportunities for connection, Bioneers 2023 will bring hope, inspiration, and movement building to the East Bay.

Bioneers is an innovative nonprofit organization that highlights breakthrough solutions for restoring people and the planet. Founded in 1990 in Santa Fe, New Mexico, we act as a

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fertile hub of social and scientific innovators with practical and visionary solutions for the world's most pressing environmental and social challenges. Bioneers is inspiring and realizing a shift to live on Earth in ways that honor the web of life, each other and future generations.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

No General Fund impact; \$250 is available from Mayor Arreguin's Office Budget discretionary accounts.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

There are no environmental impacts associated with the recommendations in this report.

CONTACT PERSON

Mayor Jesse Arreguín      510-981-7100

Attachments:

1: Resolution

RESOLUTION NO. ##,###-N.S.

AUTHORIZING THE EXPENDITURE OF SURPLUS FUNDS FROM THE OFFICE  
EXPENSE ACCOUNTS OF THE MAYOR AND COUNCILMEMBERS FOR A GRANT TO  
PROVIDE PUBLIC SERVICES FOR A MUNICIPAL PUBLIC PURPOSE AND  
CITY CO-SPONSORSHIP OF THE BIONEERS CONFERENCE  
APRIL 6-8, 2023

WHEREAS, Mayor Jesse Arreguin has surplus funds in his office expenditure account;  
and

WHEREAS, a California non-profit tax-exempt corporation, the Berkeley Chamber of  
Commerce, seeks funds in the amount of \$250, to provide the following public services  
for the Bioneers Conference from April 6 - 8, 2023, that will offset the cost of city related  
permit fees (street closure, amplified sound, parking meter, food trucks etc.); and

WHEREAS, the provision of such services would fulfill the following municipal public  
purpose of bringing together communities across the City and the Bay Area region, by  
hosting the Bioneers Conference; and

WHEREAS, the Bioneers Conference will feature hundreds of inspiring and visionary  
leaders, and will bring thousands of engaged and civically active attendees to  
Zellerbach Hall on the UC Berkeley Campus and to venues across downtown Berkeley  
for three days of riveting talks, movement building, and connections; and

WHEREAS, Bioneers acts as a fertile hub of social and scientific innovators with  
practical and visionary solutions for the world's most pressing environmental and social  
challenges; and

WHEREAS, now in its 34th year, the Bioneers Conference, viewed by many as the  
leading independent environmental and social-justice themed annual gathering in the  
U.S., will be held in Berkeley, California, on April 6-8, 2023; and

WHEREAS, the theme for 2023 is "Transformation, Regeneration, Celebration," and  
keynote speakers include legendary muralist Judy Baca; writer Rebecca Solnit; Chair of  
the Congressional Progressive Caucus Rep. Pramila Jayapal; activist and cultural  
leader Casey Camp-Horinek (*Ponca*); activist chef, writer and educator Bryant Terry;  
journalist Laura Flanders; and clean energy entrepreneur Danny Kennedy, with many  
more to be announced; and

WHEREAS, the annual Indigenous Forum is a Native-led sovereign conference-within-a-conference — a unique cross-cultural and invitational platform. Regularly attracting representatives from dozens of tribal nations, it remains the only gathering of its kind, bringing together Indigenous activists, scientists, elders, youth, culture-bearers, and scholars to share their knowledge and frontline solutions in dialogue with a dynamic, multicultural audience; and

WHEREAS, organizers also invest in the potential of youth and educators, with a bustling youth scholarship program bringing upwards of 500 youth and mentors to experience the Bioneers Conference annually; and

WHEREAS, with the move to the East Bay, Bioneers is excited to be located in such a thriving, progressive, and accessible new home, and the entire event will be within easy walking distance of the Downtown Berkeley BART Station; and

WHEREAS, featuring engaged arts, musical performances, and ample opportunities for connection, Bioneers 2023 will bring hope, inspiration, and movement building to the East Bay.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the City of Berkeley that the City of Berkeley hereby co-sponsors the Bioneers Conference and that it has permission to use the City's name and logo in the event's promotional materials and signage naming the City of Berkeley as a co-sponsor solely for the purpose of the City indicating its policy endorsement of the event.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the City of Berkeley that funds relinquished by the Mayor and Councilmembers from their Council Office Budget up to \$250 per office shall be granted to Berkeley Chamber of Commerce for the purpose of offsetting the cost of city related permit fees (street closure, amplified sound, parking meter, food trucks etc.).

