



Kane County Recreation & Transportation Special Service District

76 North Main
Street • Kanab,
UT 84741
435.644.4964

Board Meeting

September 19, 2023

10:00 AM

Location:

Kanab Center

Pinion Room

20 N. 100 E. Kanab, UT

Agenda

- Call to Order
- Business: Approval of 07-18-2023 RTSSD meeting minutes
- Board Terms/Renewal Discussion
- Financial: Account Updates & Overview – Clayton Cutler
- Discussion/Possible Action for Funding for Highway Corridor Paved Trail
- Discussion/Possible Action for Funding for Stella Vista Observatory Project
- Other Updates and Discussion.

This meeting is available for call in option – # 435-676-9000 –Enter participant code- 168030

-
NOTICE OF SPECIAL ACCOMMODATION DURING PUBLIC MEETINGS:

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, individuals needing special accommodations (including auxiliary communicative aids and services) during this meeting should notify Clayton Cutler. Agenda items may be accelerated or taken out of order without notice as the Committee deems appropriate. All items to be placed on the agenda contact Clayton Cutler by noon Monday, prior to the meeting.

ccutler@kane.utah.gov 435-644-4366



2023 Grant Funding Application

Date: 9/12/23	Primary Contact: Kelly Stowell
Applicant Name: Kane County Paved Trail Planning	Email: stowell@kanab.net
Project Name: Highway Corridor Paved Trail Planning	Phone: 4358990443

Breif Summary of Project:

Design and planning for paved trail from Kanab to Glendale, and from Mount Carmel to east Zion.

See attached project description.

Total Cost of Project \$ 543,000,000.00

Amount Requesting \$ 100,000

Other Sources of Funding: Y N

**If yes, list funding sources:*

Text

Project Start Date: Project has started

Project Completion Date: September, 2024

Additional Comments:

\$20k from Orderville Town, \$25k from Kane Tourism, \$25k from Kane Trails, \$120k from in-kind, \$200k from UORG, \$150k from RTP.

\$540k total appropriated so far. An additional \$810,000 from TIF Active (UDOT) that we're waiting to hear on.

Total to \$1,350,000 if we get everything

I hereby certify that the facts, figures and representation made in this application, including all attachments, are true and correct to the best of my knowledge. Failure to comply with the grant requirements established by the RTSSD may disqualify the applicant for future funding.

Kelly Stowell

Signature

Printed Name

Date

Kane County Recreation Transportation Special Service District Proposal for Planning Funds

To: Kane County Recreation Transportation Special Service District

Subject: Request for Planning Funds for Highway 89 and Highway Project

Funds are sought from the Kane County Recreation Transportation Special Service District for planning and design of the ongoing paved trail project aimed at enhancing the highways connecting Kanab to Glendale, Utah, and Mt. Carmel to the east side of Zion National Park. These critical planning funds will play a pivotal role in advancing our project and positioning us favorably for Utah Trail Network funding from the Utah Department of Transportation (UDOT).

Project Overview: This project aims to create a multi-use trail system along Highway 89, providing a safe and scenic route for pedestrians, cyclists, and outdoor enthusiasts to traverse the stunning landscapes of Kane County. The trail will not only serve as a recreational asset but also promote eco-friendly transportation, reduce traffic congestion, and boost local tourism.

To successfully bring this vision to life, meticulous planning and design are paramount. Comprehensive planning and design work is being worked on right now with UDOT and Sunrise Engineering but additional funds are needed to continue the work. This includes route assessment, environmental impact studies, safety assessments, and the creation of detailed blueprints but the funding is limited.

Positioning for UDOT Funding: The availability of planning funds puts us in a strong position to secure a potential significant amount of funding from UDOT's recently established Utah Trail Network program. By demonstrating our commitment to design planning, we increase our chances of successfully competing for the necessary construction funds. This project aligns seamlessly with UDOT's mission to enhance transportation infrastructure while promoting outdoor recreation and environmental sustainability.

Conclusion: We believe that with the support of the Kane County Recreation Transportation Special Service District, we can advance this project that holds immense promise for our community. The planning funds will not only be an investment in our local infrastructure but also an opportunity to enhance the quality of life for residents and visitors alike.

We kindly request your consideration and support in providing the planning funds required to propel this project forward. We are eager to collaborate closely with the District and keep you updated on our progress.

A feasibility study has been completed and can be found at the following link:
<https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/d94f7ce1d1a345c78f881fd0713d4db4>



"Developing and protecting our water resources one drop at a time."

Aug. 9, 2023

Michael Noel
General Manager
Kane County Water Conservancy District
725 East Kaneplex Drive
Kanab, UT 84741

Re: Letter of Intent regarding Stellar Vista Observatory

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

I am Michael Noel, the General Manager for the Kane County Water Conservancy District (KCWCD). This letter is to affirm to you and your organization that the KCWCD has entered into a joint venture with the Stellar Vista Observatory (SVO) to construct and operate an observatory. KCWCD has committed to construct the observatory on KCWCD property surrounding the Jackson Flatt Reservoir in Kanab, Utah.

This area represents one of the most stunning and preeminent locations for dark sky observation and enjoyment in the nation. Through this partnership with SVO, we envision the creation of a state-of-the-art observatory facility that will serve as a local hub for educational programs, public events, and community engagement regarding the night sky. Your support is not just an investment in a building; it's an investment in the pursuit of knowledge and the cultivation of curiosity. It's a chance to foster a love for science among the young minds of our community, sparking a passion that could shape the future. It's an investment in the preservation of the dark sky for generations to come.

Thank you for considering this opportunity to be a part of something truly remarkable. Together, we can reach for the stars and bring the wonders of the universe closer to home.

Sincerely,

Michael Noel
General Manager
Kane County Water Conservancy District



"Developing and protecting our water resources one drop at a time."

Aug. 9, 2023

Michael Noel
General Manager
Kane County Water Conservancy District
725 East Kaneplex Drive
Kanab, UT 84741

Mr. Rich Csenge
Stellar Vista Observatory
Kanab, Utah

Re: Letter of Intent regarding Stellar Vista Observatory

Dear Mr. Csenge,

I am writing to express the Kane County Water Conservancy District's (KCWCD) commitment to forging a partnership with the Stellar Vista Observatory (SVO) for the collaborative establishment of an observatory facility on District property. We recognize the added potential value and opportunities that the Stellar Vista Observatory brings to our community. Through this partnership, we envision the creation of a state-of-the-art observatory facility that will serve as a local hub for educational programs, public events, and community engagement regarding the night sky.

Our commitment to this partnership extends beyond mere words. We are prepared to work closely with the Stellar Vista Observatory team to ensure the successful realization of this shared vision. Our collaboration will involve the careful selection of an ideal location on District property (a preliminary site has already been selected), the allocation of necessary resources (SVO will take the lead for fundraising for construction of the facility), and the establishment of a framework for ongoing cooperation and joint initiatives.

Many details of this joint venture still need to be finalized, such as the terms of a long-term lease of the building once constructed, insurance and liability issues, and the cost of ongoing maintenance of the building. You have identified many of these issues in your summary of our previous meetings. At this point, KCWCD is fully committed to setting aside land sufficient to accommodate the building of the observatory. However, this letter should not be interpreted as a binding contract. The intent of KCWCD set forth herein could be revoked at any time. Attached you will find an additional letter that may be helpful to SVO in your fundraising efforts.



"Developing and protecting our water resources one drop at a time."

In the coming weeks and months, we look forward to continuing to work with you and your team to further discuss the details of this partnership, including project timelines, resource allocation, and the development of a formal agreement. Your insights and expertise will be invaluable as we embark on this exciting journey together. We are excited about the potential that our collaboration holds and are eager to work hand in hand with the Stellar Vista Observatory to bring this ambitious project to fruition.

Please feel free to reach out to me to coordinate our next steps and schedule a meeting.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Michael Noel", enclosed within a blue circular scribble.

Michael Noel
General Manager
Kane County Water Conservancy District

encl.



Friday, January 24, 2020

To Whom it May Concern,

Kane County Office of Tourism is excited to support the Stellar Vista Observatory (SVO), a nonprofit organization based in Kanab, Utah, working to create and provide programming for a full-featured public educational observatory that would serve all of southwestern Utah. This project is in keeping with our goals to enhance our destination for residents and visitors alike. We have committed \$50,000 to SVO for the purpose of leveraging to receive additional grant funding for this facility.

The popularity of Astro-tourism is growing rapidly across the intermountain West. We are excited about the possibilities the observatory offers to increase over-night stays in Kanab and Kane County. We are also excited about the opportunities for local residents and students of all ages to connect with our incredible night sky here in southern Utah.

Tourism is the dominant industry in Kane County accounting for 42% of our jobs. Each additional asset in Kane County attracting visitors to our area and engaging them in staying longer creates a large positive impact on our local economy, area business growth and opportunities for employment.

We fully support Stellar Vista Observatory's initiative to seek grant funding to develop this project.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Camille Johnson Taylor". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

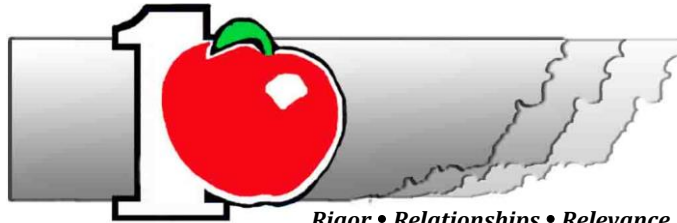
Camille Johnson Taylor

Executive Director
Kane County Office of Tourism
435-644-5033
78 South 100 East, Kanab, UT 84741
cjtaylor@VisitSouthernUtah.com
www.VisitSouthernUtah.com

Kane School District

BOARD OF EDUCATION

Dr. LoRal Linton, President
Kanab
Brian Goulding, Vice-President
Orderville
Karen H. Kelly, Member
Kanab
Danny Little, Member
Kanab
Lisa Livingston, Member
Kanab



Rigor • Relationships • Relevance
Every Student, Every Day

BEN DALTON
Superintendent

CARY A. REESE, CPA
Business Manager

January 23, 2020

To Whom It May Concern:

The purpose of this letter is to provide a letter of support for the Stellar Vista Observatory in Kanab, Utah. Kane County School District has been engaged in productive conversations with Rich Csenge, President and Founding Director of the Stellar Observatory, regarding educational opportunities relating to this organization. We are excited about the potential outdoor classroom opportunities available for our students as a result of this cooperative venture.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ben Dalton". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Ben Dalton
Superintendent Kane School District

STELLAR VISTA OBSERVATORY PROJECT PROPOSAL

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY Revised September 12, 2023

Introduction

It is startling to realize that humanity's view of the stars now resides on the endangered list for most people who can no longer enjoy a starry sky from where they live. Few places remain where people can experience the awe-inspiring night sky filled with stars. Kanab, Utah, is one of those few remaining places. The non-profit Stellar Vista Observatory (SVO) would take advantage of this wonderful circumstance by building a public educational observatory in Kanab where residents and visitors can gather to learn about the universe. The nonprofit Stellar Vista Observatory (SVO) aims to provide observational experiences for people to enjoy, appreciate and comprehend what we can see in southern Utah's starry night skies.

Opportunity to Capitalize on our Location

Kane County is one of the most geographically remote areas in the United States -- and consequently has one of the darkest skies. Its proximity to many national and state parks, national forests and BLM lands and abundant visitor services make Kanab an exceptional location for night sky viewing. Locating the public educational Stellar Vista Observatory here would utilize Kane County's heretofore untapped dark night skies, a key heritage resource, to serve the great number of tourists and visitors passing through or vacationing in the region as well as the local population.

The nearest existing astronomical observatories open to the public are located in Flagstaff AZ, Twentynine Palms, CA, Cedar City, UT, Salt Lake City, UT, and Grand Junction, CO.

Stakeholders

State and local governments, federal land management agencies, astronomy organizations, regional educational institutions, county agencies, local area businesses as well as retired educators, astronomy and STEM professionals who may be attracted to Kanab are natural collaborators for this project.

Goals and Objectives

Dark Sky Tourism, Community Economic Benefits and Job Creation

Astro-tourism is a fast growing subset of the international tourism industry. A startling fact: 80% of the world's population cannot see the Milky Way from where they live. Hence, rural Utah's starry night sky is a promotable natural feature. Building an observatory in Kanab to provide nighttime recreational discovery and learning opportunities as well as proficiency skills in the use of telescopes will increase overnight stays, provide unique daytime and nighttime activities for visitors and create new businesses opportunities.

Preserve Starry Skies in Kane County through Education

SVO will offer learning events for residents and visitors of all ages and backgrounds, collaborate with local schools and colleges in science, language arts and extracurricular programs; host star parties for a variety of interest groups including individuals and families, family reunions and weddings, and utilize traditional astronomy stories and concepts along with the most up-to-date scientific information to provide educational entertainment for students and the general public.

Enhance Regional Science and Language Arts Education

Stellar Vista Observatory's expected learning outcomes for science and language arts students include facilitating process and thinking skills, manifesting interest and shaping attitudes of cultural awareness,

understanding important concepts and principles, obtaining hands-on experience with astronomical telescopes, effective reasoning and communication using language and increasing awareness of the social and historical aspects of science.

Scope of Project

Architectural Design

SVO will be a place where astronomy, science, culture and nature merge with the sky and universe beyond. The building and open-air plaza will emerge from the terrain, in harmony with existing buildings on the property, and blending with the geology of the surrounding landscape.

Facility

The present schematic architectural design for SVO features two large, primary computer driven telescopes for public eyepiece viewing permanently mounted inside the observatory building under a roll-off roof; five to eight portable astronomical telescopes of various sizes for use on an open plaza, an outdoor amphitheater for constellation tours and direct visual observation by up to 100 people, a 50-seat indoor classroom with digital connectivity to the primary telescopes, office/reception/area, storage rooms, bathrooms, ADA compliant auto and bus parking.

Estimated Construction Budget

Components of the facility include a 2,000 square foot open air sky viewing plaza, a 1,944 square foot observatory building and parking for 30 vehicles on two acres for a total estimated price in the range of \$950,000.

Timetable

Year 2023 – design and develop public programs, plan of operations including maintenance, staffing needs, job positions and employment/personnel policies, draft stakeholder and partnership agreements, select and procure site location, commence local and regional fundraising efforts and major grant research, continue revising architectural design details and solicit initial construction bids.

Year 2024 – continue local and regional fundraising, finalize architectural design and construction details, secure final construction bids, launch major fundraising efforts, obtain building permits, begin site improvements for utilities, parking and roadways, start construction of the outdoor plaza and building, continue major fundraising campaign.

Year 2025 – complete construction and landscaping, install and set up primary telescopes, install portable telescopes and related equipment, furniture and fixtures, hire staff, hold a grand opening and roll out programs.

Finance and Fundraising Plan

SVO intends to pursue the following avenues for assistance and funding in order to finance the construction and operation of the observatory:

1. Federal Government (National Science Foundation, National Park Service Challenge Cost Share)
2. State of Utah (Legislative Appropriation) (Governor’s Office of Economic Development and Office of Outdoor Recreation) (Utah Division of Arts and Museums)
3. Utah Association of Counties
4. Kane County (Transient Room Tax Revenue)
5. City of Kanab (Center for Education Business and the Arts)
6. Utah-based Philanthropic Foundations (Willard L. Eccles, George S. and Dolores Dore Eccles, Sorenson Legacy, Steve’s, Val & Edith Green, and others)
7. Utah Community Foundation

8. National Philanthropic Foundations (Walton Family and others)
9. High Net Worth Individuals
10. Astronomy and Dark Sky Preservation Organizations
11. Colleges and Universities (Dixie State, Utah State, University of Utah, Southern Utah University, Northern Arizona University)
12. Corporate Sponsorships (North Face, Keen, Bogs, L.L. Bean, REI, Everyday Capacity Building, Cabella's, Observing equipment Mfgs. etc)
13. Local area businesses (stores, restaurants, hotels, etc)
14. Stellar Vista Observatory Memberships
15. Private fee-based Night Sky Experience Program
16. Special Events Leasing Program
17. Gift Shop Revenue

Operations and Management

The Stellar Vista Observatory nonprofit project is currently led by a group of dedicated community residents. The Board of Directors is unpaid, and all participants in the SVO Working Group are volunteers. When operational, SVO would be expected to require one part-time paid staff position.

An *Operations and Finance Manager* would coordinate the ongoing activities of the facility including maintenance of equipment and premises, event planning and presentations, recruiting and volunteer training, community participation, membership and community outreach, promotional activities for the observatory, participate in fund raising activities, provide accounting services, collect rental fees, manage the gift shop and payroll.

Volunteers will be relied upon for key roles in the operation of the observatory. In the first year, our goal is to engage 20 committed volunteers on a regular basis including retired astronomers, educators, community residents, high school students, college summer interns, and astronomy enthusiasts.

Operational Budget

Utilities and staffing are anticipated to be in the range of \$2,000-\$2,500/month, with a projected overall annual operating budget of \$25,000 to \$30,000.

Observatory Site Considerations

Four or more possible locations in or near Kanab have been considered as suitable sites for locating the Stellar Vista Observatory: one at Jackson Flat Reservoir, one along the Arizona state line south of Kanab, two off US Hwy 89 north of Kanab, one at Best Friends Animal Society, and one near Utah Rte. 9 at East Zion. In 2019 and 2021, sky quality measurements at these sites range between 21.50 and 21.85 mag/arc sec, equivalent to a Class 2 or Class 3 sky on the Bortle Scale of night sky darkness. http://www.bigskyastroclub.org/lp_bortle.html. The Jackson Flat Reservoir site has been secured.

For comparison, Bortle Level 3 equates to the quality of the night sky at Cedar Breaks National Monument, which maintains a robust astronomy program for visitors during its season of operation.

Protecting the Integrity of the Observatory Experience

The Kanab, Utah, area is an ideal location to build an astronomical observatory. The area is undergoing rapid visitor and population growth as well as residential and commercial development. Although Kanab City enacted a night sky friendly outdoor lighting ordinance in 2018, additional steps may be beneficial to help limit light pollution near the observatory site.

Sky quality measurements show that light pollution degrades the visibility of the night sky. SVO may therefore seek *voluntary* commitments from landowners with holdings near the observatory site as well as from the City of Kanab and Kane County to preserve night sky quality for the Stellar Vista Observatory. Such measures might include a buffer zone around the observatory where intensely bright, unshielded or excess lighting is discouraged and airborne dust is minimized.

Evaluation

Four benchmarks will be used to determine success in achieving our mission:

1. Operate the observatory at a break-even level within three years after opening.
2. Demonstrate consistent growth in visitation by people attending night sky programs, measured on an annual basis.
3. Demonstrate rising numbers of hotel occupants who attend SVO night sky programs while staying in Kane County, based on surveys of Kanab area hospitality businesses.
4. Demonstrate increased interest in science education among area students as measured by the number of students engaged in school-organized events at the observatory as well as intern or volunteer opportunities with SVO.

Organizational Information and Corporate Structure

The SVO Working Group was formed in 2018 by Kanab area residents interested in the community enhancement value of creating a public, educational astronomical observatory to serve visitors to southwest Utah and residents of Kanab and surrounding communities. The nonprofit Stellar Vista Observatory organization was incorporated in the State of Utah in 2019 and received federal 501c3 charitable nonprofit status on January 13, 2020, with an effective date of exemption January 10, 2019.

The Kane County Office of Tourism has been a key collaborator supporting the project. To date, more than 60 entities and individuals from the local community have contributed funds. The Amangiri Resort in Big Water, Utah, is a major donor to SVO through our Night Sky Experience program for their guests. As of August 2023, donations of telescope equipment and in-kind volunteer hours have exceeded \$150,000. SVO is currently seeking renewal of a commitment from Kane County for \$50,000 to be used for matching funds in securing grants and amplifying local fundraising efforts. The SVO website: www.stellarvistaobservatory.org, and our Facebook page provide additional information.

Current Programs

In 2020, SVO announced a series of free monthly star parties but due to the outbreak of Covid 19, postponed the series. To create an alternative program that was covid-safe, SVO in 2020 applied for and received a Children's Outdoor Education Grant from the Utah Governor's Office of Outdoor Education to launch its ongoing *Discover the Night Sky* binocular and telescope lending program serving residents of Kane County. To date more than 100 residents and visitors to Kane County have benefited by participating in the program. Our 2023 monthly series of free public star parties is now ongoing, inspiring an estimated 250 persons year to date. Well over 1,000 persons have attended our private Night Sky Experience program, ongoing since 2021. In addition, SVO provides Weekly Sky Reports to several area newspapers, on line venues, and to members of the Lowell Observatory in Flagstaff AZ.

Endorsements

Endorsements in principle for SVO's observatory project from governmental and non-governmental organizations include the Kane County Water Conservancy, Kane County Commission, Kane County Office of Tourism, Kane School District, Colorado Plateau Dark Sky Cooperative and Dark Sky International. SVO continues to solicit additional support.

Stellar Vista Observatory

Statement of Financial Position

As of August 13, 2023

	TOTAL
ASSETS	
Current Assets	
Bank Accounts	
SBSU Checking 7494	43,488.76
Restricted Grant Funds	0.00
Unrestricted Funds	0.00
Total SBSU Checking 7494	43,488.76
Total Bank Accounts	\$43,488.76
Total Current Assets	\$43,488.76
Fixed Assets	
Accumulated Depreciation	0.00
Furniture and Equipment	
Telescope Equipment Donations	4,472.42
Telescope Equipment Purchased	194.51
UCORE Grant -DtNS Kits	3,714.94
Total Furniture and Equipment	8,381.87
Total Fixed Assets	\$8,381.87
TOTAL ASSETS	\$51,870.63
LIABILITIES AND EQUITY	
Liabilities	
Current Liabilities	
Accounts Payable	
Accounts Payable	0.00
Total Accounts Payable	\$0.00
Total Current Liabilities	\$0.00
Total Liabilities	\$0.00
Equity	
Unrestricted Net Assets	27,301.24
Net Revenue	24,569.39
Total Equity	\$51,870.63
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND EQUITY	\$51,870.63

INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE
P. O. BOX 2508
CINCINNATI, OH 45201

DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

Date: **JAN 13 2020**

STELLAR VISTA OBSERVATORY
C/O RICHARD CSENGE
295 N MAIN ST
KANAB, UT 84741

Employer Identification Number:
83-3526645
DLN:
29053231303029
Contact Person:
JAMIE N HEITBRINK ID# 31644
Contact Telephone Number:
(877) 829-5500
Accounting Period Ending:
December 31
Public Charity Status:
170(b)(1)(A)(vi)
Form 990/990-EZ/990-N Required:
Yes
Effective Date of Exemption:
January 10, 2019
Contribution Deductibility:
Yes
Addendum Applies:
No

Dear Applicant:

We're pleased to tell you we determined you're exempt from federal income tax under Internal Revenue Code (IRC) Section 501(c)(3). Donors can deduct contributions they make to you under IRC Section 170. You're also qualified to receive tax deductible bequests, devises, transfers or gifts under Section 2055, 2106, or 2522. This letter could help resolve questions on your exempt status. Please keep it for your records.

Organizations exempt under IRC Section 501(c)(3) are further classified as either public charities or private foundations. We determined you're a public charity under the IRC Section listed at the top of this letter.

If we indicated at the top of this letter that you're required to file Form 990/990-EZ/990-N, our records show you're required to file an annual information return (Form 990 or Form 990-EZ) or electronic notice (Form 990-N, the e-Postcard). If you don't file a required return or notice for three consecutive years, your exempt status will be automatically revoked.

If we indicated at the top of this letter that an addendum applies, the enclosed addendum is an integral part of this letter.

For important information about your responsibilities as a tax-exempt organization, go to www.irs.gov/charities. Enter "4221-PC" in the search bar to view Publication 4221-PC, Compliance Guide for 501(c)(3) Public Charities, which describes your recordkeeping, reporting, and disclosure requirements.

STELLAR VISTA OBSERVATORY

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Stephen A. Martin".

Director, Exempt Organizations
Rulings and Agreements

Stellar Vista Observatory

Statement of Financial Position Summary

As of September 1, 2023

	TOTAL
ASSETS	
Current Assets	
Bank Accounts	46,239.83
Total Current Assets	\$46,239.83
Fixed Assets	8,381.87
TOTAL ASSETS	\$54,621.70
LIABILITIES AND EQUITY	
Liabilities	
Current Liabilities	
Accounts Payable	0.00
Total Current Liabilities	\$0.00
Total Liabilities	\$0.00
Equity	54,621.70
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND EQUITY	\$54,621.70