



CITY OF SANTA BARBARA

PARK AND RECREATION COMMISSION REPORT

AGENDA DATE: December 12, 2007

TO: Park and Recreation Commission

FROM: Recreation Division, Parks and Recreation Department

SUBJECT: Community Special Events Held in City Parks and Beaches

RECOMMENDATION: That the Commission hear a report from staff regarding the Department's work with community and City special events.

DISCUSSION:

COMMUNITY SPECIAL EVENTS OVERVIEW

City parks and beaches play host to about 80 community special events per year. Of these 80 events, about 80% of them are organized by local non-profits as a way to fundraise for their organizations, and 20% are for-profit ventures. These events generate about \$60,000 in revenue for the Department, with a portion of these monies used to cover the staff costs involved in maintaining parks and beaches.

The Facilities and Special Events Supervisor is the Department's staff person working with community special events. Unlike a picnic rental, which may take no more than 20 minutes to handle from initial inquiry to the issuance of the permit, the Facilities and Special Events Supervisor puts in many hours of conversation, review, paperwork processing, and meetings to ensure all the requirements are covered from beginning to end. This level of detail is necessary since many of these events are publicly visible, and without solid oversight from staff, they can potentially impact the City and park resources in a negative way.

THE STAGES OF A COMMUNITY SPECIAL EVENT

Inquiry Stage

The process starts with event organizers checking on the availability of a park or beach on a certain date. This simple date request can never be answered easily as multiple calendars need to be checked to ensure returning events get first priority over particular dates and sites, events at certain sites don't get placed on back-to-back weekends, there are no nearby events on the schedule that could conflict, etc. Additionally, the Facilities and Special Events Supervisor must get preliminary details of the event to see whether its size is appropriate for the

site, whether the event itself is appropriate for the site, whether there are restrictions on what they plan to do at the site, and whether the site has amenities needed by the event.

Once it is determined that the date and site will work, organizers are sent to the City's website to download a Special Events Guide and Application. This comprehensive document describes the permitting process and provides information, rules and regulations required of community special events. This website page, guide, and application are updated by the Facilities and Special Events Supervisor when needed.

Application Stage

Once the application is received, the Facilities and Special Events Supervisor reviews it to get a mental picture of the size and scope of the event since fees are based on these criteria. In addition, the group's previous application and folder are reviewed to see what the prior issues were in order to correct them for the current event. Confirmation paperwork is then generated, listing fees, deadlines, conditions, permit requirements and pre-event meeting dates and times. This step can take about an hour or more to complete.

Pre-Event Stage

Since many events submit their application more than six - eight months prior to their event before all details are finalized, questions for the Facilities and Special Events Supervisor continually come up during this period as new elements are added to an event or initial ideas are developed. Sometimes the Supervisor must consult with others in the Department for answers within their area of expertise, but the Supervisor always functions as the primary contact for the organizers. At least one pre-event meeting is scheduled with the organizer one month prior to the event. Other City staff from Police, Fire, Public Works, and Waterfront Parking attend this meeting in order to go over the final site maps of the event, reiterate rules and regulations, discuss what is still needed and clear up last minute questions, and approve or deny last minute changes.

Setup, Event and Breakdown Stage

This stage involves the set-up and breakdown of the event and the actual event itself. If an event occurs on the weekends, park monitors are given permit details and conditions in order to provide department oversight during this stage. If an event occurs on the weekdays, it is the Facilities and Special Events Supervisor who handles this oversight task. Periodically visiting recurring events and new events allows for the initial "mental picture of the event" to be replaced with the real thing. Because issues and problems have been worked out prior to the event, few unexpected issues come up during at this stage.

CITY SPONSORED EVENTS

The Parks and Recreation Department deals with a handful of events that are sponsored by the City. Sponsorship can mean an event receives City community promotion grant funds, such as Summer Solstice and Fiesta. It can also mean that the Department supports what the event brings to our community, such as the Oak Park Ethnic Festivals, which are provided with print publicity and free meeting space in order for the organizers to share information with one another and with the Supervisor. Lastly, it can mean the City helps organize the event and assumes some of its costs, such as the 4th of July Celebration and the Amgen Tour of California.

City sponsored events are very labor intensive for the Facilities and Special Event Supervisor since meetings have to be scheduled, agendas prepared, meeting minutes typed and details coordinated. The Fiesta event averages about a dozen pre-event meetings because it is the largest and most complex community event. The Oak Park Ethnic Festivals meet about once a month to share ideas and thoughts with one another, and the 4th of July Celebration and Amgen Tour of California have numerous meetings in advance in order to plan and coordinate event details. Additionally, event day oversight is required for 4th of July and the Amgen Tour in order to ensure that the event proceeds as planned.

In summary, Department staff finds that working so closely with these community and City special event organizers is rewarding work especially when staff sees the enjoyment these events bring to thousands of people in our community.

ATTACHMENTS: Special Events Guide and Application

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SUBMITTED BY: Judith Cook, Recreation Programs Manager

APPROVED BY: Nancy L. Rapp, Parks and Recreation Director