



Parks and Community Services Commission

Meeting Staff Report

Date: December 14, 2011

From: Karen McNamara, Public Services Director/Interim Director Parks and Community Services

Subject: Review and Discussion of July 4th Event Alternatives

Recommended Action:

It is recommended that the Parks and Community Services Commission:

- 1 . Review the draft report and preliminary findings presented by staff;
- 2 . Provide input and direction to staff;
- 3 . Recommend that staff finalize the report with direction and input received;
- 4 . Recommend a joint committee meeting of the Finance Committees with the City Council on this matter in January.

Background:

As a group staff from all of the Departments who participate in the coordination and operations of the City's July 4th events have prepared this draft report and preliminary findings, including some recommendations for consideration.

The report outlines the history of the event, concerns and issues identified with the 2011 event and the budget for the current event with recommendations on additional budget requirements for future events going forward.

The City of San Ramon's Star Spangled Spectacular 4th of July event first started in 1985 and has been offered every year since. The Star Spangled Spectacular has been a very successful event for the City of San Ramon to date and has brought significant recognition to the community and the City. As one of the last cities in the Tri Valley holding a fireworks show, San Ramon has become known as the destination for a high quality show and event. However, the event has increasingly become more of a regional event and less of a community San Ramon event. Attendance from outside of San Ramon is equal or higher than attendance by San Ramon residents.

While San Ramon has been fortunate to be able to continue this popular, high profile event each year, cities throughout the Bay Area have begun to cancel their July 4th events due to the costs associated with the event, the staffing requirements, and the limited duration of a single 4 hour event

ITEM #8.2

in the context of all city services that are valued by the community.

For this reason, any decision to modify or restructure the event, cancel or postpone the event must be taken with careful consideration and input from the Commission, the Council and the community. With that said, the need to make a determination about changes to the 2012 event must be addressed quickly in 2012 in order to make proper planning efforts, secure any additional funding, or secure any additional contract/contractors. Likewise, any decision to postpone or cancel the event in 2012 or beyond will also require sufficient lead time to plan for.

The July 4th event includes a 10K run that starts and finishes at the San Ramon Community Center. The run attracts approximately 1000 runners. Set up starts around 6:00am and the event ends by 11:00am.. At the conclusion of the run, city staff transitions the Community Center, Central Park and surrounding parking areas for the evening event. The evening event, known as the Star Spangled Spectacular, includes an aerial fireworks display as the primary feature, along with various other elements such as entertainment, food booths and children's activity areas. For the past several years, the evening event starts at 6:00p.m.; however, the park fills with attendees as early as noon, many of whom make it a full day event with family BBQ's and park activities. The participatory fountain and playground in Central Park is also a big draw.

These events are coordinated by the Parks and Community Services ("PCS") Department staff with significant input, staffing and logistical support by the San Ramon Police Department ("PD"), Public Services ("PS") Department, Engineering Department and the San Ramon Valley Fire Protection District ("S.R.V.F.P.D.") A large majority (nearly all) of the permanent, full time staff from ("PCS"), ("PD"), and ("PS") are on duty on July 4th either a morning shift for the run, or an afternoon/evening shift for the fireworks. All temporary part time staff are assigned to work from ("PCS") and ("PS") equaling about 100 temporary employees. Most are young people who work as lifeguards, day camp leaders for the City during the summer.

Planning for each year's event starts with a debriefing and evaluation meeting from the prior year's event. That meeting generally takes place in September of each year. From there, coordination meetings start in January with all of the Departments and agencies, and at least three meetings are held between January and July to coordinate planning and logistics. A day-of briefing meeting is also held around 4:00pm for all of the staff on duty.

While the location of the event is San Ramon Central Park, for purposes of planning, staffing and City resources, the entire city limits of San Ramon are impacted in some way. Event planning takes into account vehicular traffic impacts throughout the City as the aerial display can be seen from various locations throughout the City. Likewise, the San Ramon Valley Fire Protection District ("S.R.V.F.P.D.") plans for and responds to calls for service throughout the City, not just in Central Park.

Steps Following Approval

The draft report and preliminary findings being reviewed by the Parks and Community Services Commission has also been provided to the City Manager, the Department Heads and the City Council. Staff will incorporate input and direction including other recommendations into the Final Report and re-issue the report. As directed, staff would schedule a joint meeting with the City Council for further input and direction as soon as feasible.

Attachments:

Attachment A: Draft Report and Preliminary Findings on July 4th event