



Minutes

Lakewood City Council

Adjourned Regular Meeting held
April 14, 2009

MEETING WAS CALLED TO ORDER at 6:38 p.m. by Mayor Rogers in the Executive Board Room at the Civic Center, 5000 Clark Avenue, Lakewood, California.

ROLL CALL: PRESENT: Mayor Todd Rogers
Vice Mayor Joseph Esquivel
Council Member Steve Croft
Council Member Diane DuBois
Council Member Larry Van Nostran

CIVIC CENTER BLOCK PARTY STATUS REPORT

Recreation and Community Services Director Lisa Litzinger displayed slide and gave a presentation on tentative plans for the annual Civic Center Block Party. She stated that the event, which had begun as part of the City's 50th Anniversary celebrations, had grown in attendance to be the largest, single-day City event, with over 19,000 people attending in 2008. She noted that expenses had been reduced since much of the necessary equipment and items were re-usable items; and that revenues had increased with expanded children's rides and expanded Taste of Lakewood fundraiser for the Friends of the Lakewood Libraries.

Council Member Croft stated that the Friends had raised more money since there were more restaurants participating in the Friends' Taste of Lakewood event. Ms. Litzinger stated that the revenue received from the Friends was for the actual cost to stage their portion of the event.

The proposed band for this year's event was a country-western band and would be accompanied by line dancing. The event would again include the Taste of Lakewood, Family Fun Zone and possibly a fireworks show.

Trey Lindle, Senior Manager, Property Management, for the Lakewood Center Mall, stated that with the completion of the Costco store, Costco now controlled by lease the adjacent parking area where the fireworks show had previously been staged. He noted that since the event occurred on a Saturday and the Costco store closed at 6 p.m. on Saturdays, it might be possible, with the concurrence of Costco management, to do a quick set-up after the parking lot was cleared. He concluded by stating that although the Lakewood Center Mall had sponsored the fireworks show in past years, with the poor economy causing store vacancies, the Mall would not be able to fund a show this year.

Council Member Van Nostran questioned whether, in a time when other communities were having to cut back on events, if we were unable to fund a fireworks show, would people still turn out for the event in sufficient numbers to justify the event. Ms. Litzinger responded by stating that an option would be to move the event up earlier in the day and end before nightfall. Council Member Van Nostran stated that the only way to make that work would be to move the event to a different time of year when people would not be expecting fireworks.

CIVIC CENTER BLOCK PARTY STATUS REPORT - Continued

Council Member Croft stated that while he was concerned about the cost of the fireworks show making the event appear to be an extravagance, the level of attendance showed that the event had value to the community. Ms. Litzinger noted that the same number of people attended last year's Civic Center Block Party as the 3-day total attendance for the Pan American Fiesta.

Vice Mayor Esquivel stated he was concerned about the impacts of the economic times on Lakewood families and inquired if there was an alternate location that could be used for the fireworks, such as Rynerson Park. Ms. Litzinger stated that Rynerson would not be feasible because of the overhead power lines and vehicle parking issues.

Council Member DuBois stated that she would not like to see the event terminated, even if it had to be scaled down and did not attract as many people.

Mayor Rogers stated that he agreed that it was important not to be too extravagant in economic times when many were struggling, but that it was important for the City to provide opportunities for family activities within the community.

Mr. Lindle stated that the Mall had inquired of the Fire Department whether it might be possible to stage a smaller show on a different part of the Mall property, but had yet to receive an answer.

Mayor Rogers stated that he felt the fireworks show was key to getting folks to turn out for the event. He stated he would support a cost sharing strategy with the Lakewood Center Mall.

City Manager Howard Chambers stated staff could structure a scaled-down event and that if Fire Department approval could be achieved, community support could be sought for funding the fireworks show.

Council Member Croft stated that there were options that could be explored to help with cost sharing, like soliciting donations from the public at the event or ask for additional help from the Friends.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to be brought before the City Council, Mayor Rogers adjourned the meeting at 7:12 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Denise R. Hayward, CMC
City Clerk