



MEMORANDUM

PARKS & RECREATION

To: Rachael Arroyo, Recreation Superintendent
From: Geoff Fairchild, Special Events Manager
Date: May 18, 2021
Subject: Special Events Quarterly Q2 Report Fiscal Year 2021

With no annual events scheduled during the Second Quarter of FY21, the Special Events team uses this period of time to secure rentals, book entertainment, update marketing materials, and finalize plans for the upcoming events.

General:

- Continue to contract with a social media coordinator to oversee our social media campaign for all of our events
- Researched holiday lighting options/locations for a future City Council presentation
- Negotiated a new online ticketing platform through a third-party vendor
- Revamped the sponsor packet that incorporates all of the Department's events as well as modified assets and benefits
- Booked concessions for all of our annual events
- Booked musical entertainment for all of our annual events
- Developed a new participation plan for our non-profit organizations and concessionaires.
 - o These non-profits were providing staff meals in lieu of site fees and paying the City a modified commission rate. The City will now take 20% of their food and beverage sales.
- Contributed to the Department's annual event marketing plan
- Secured vendors and contractors for 2021 events (restrooms, light towers, golf carts, stage, sound & lighting, etc.)
- Secured parking lot agreements with local public/private entities
- Met with PARD staff and finalized the 2021 department-wide event schedule
- Met with Historical Park staff on City of Farmers Branch 75th Anniversary Celebration; planning is continuing to evolve and will now be incorporated with the City's annual Independence Day Celebration
- Worked with Varsha in providing input and content for header page for the new Civic Plus website

Independence Day Celebration (IDC)

- Exploring stage special effects to enhance the attendee experience
- Patriotic themed lighted displays along the hedge to add visual appeal
- VIP/Family cabanas are on hiatus for 2021; the existing space in the meadow is needed to allow for more social distancing, and we are optimistic this enhanced feature can return in 2022
- Bringing in additional roaming entertainment that includes an Uncle Sam stilt walker and a living statue of the Statue of Liberty
- Enhanced the fireworks show – increased the budget to \$31,000
- City's 75th Anniversary is now incorporated into IDC – ongoing planning

Bloomin' Bluegrass Festival (BBF)

- Confirmed the main stage, sound, and light contractor for the 2021 event
- Began extending offers to the headliner bands
- Researching design options that would give the BBF website a facelift for 2021
- Designing a themed "Event Staff" shirt to match the new stage backdrop
- Updated the website pages to reflect the 2021 status

Family Night In the Park

- Transitioning these events into two free family-friendly outings that will be programmed around a "School's Out" theme in May and an "End of Summer" theme in August
- The event will continue to feature live music, a movie on the big screen, family-friendly concessions, and an abundance of kids activities
- We will not offer child-care services at the Rec Center for these events
- Continue to offer the VIP cabana experience
- Working with Social Media Coordinator to create contests that will drive engagement on Facebook and Instagram
- Keeping safety still in mind with regards to COVID, we have booked a face painter, balloon artist, carnival ride, and a Petting Zoo

Denton Drive Live (DDL)

- Developed an entertainment strategy for the six events and secured the talent for each night
- Secured concessionaires, logistics vendors, and PD staffing for each event
- Worked with Varsha Sareen to design multiple marketing/promotional pieces – printed and will distribute when appropriate
- Promotional outdoor signage created
- Revamped website to include informational videos that can better identify and highlight our event assets

Christmas in the Branch

- Met with the Dallas Stars and both parties agreed to extend the outdoor ice-rink partnership for an additional three years
- Booked Santa for all three events
- The team is currently building a new website dedicated to 55 days of Christmas
- Set dates of operation for the outdoor ice rink – November 26, 2021 to January 9, 2022

Sponsorship

- Met with potential sponsors and presented packages for sponsoring various events
Agreements are awaiting signature with Dallas Medical Center and Advanced Dental for a combined \$15,750 in sponsorship revenue

Improvements at The Grove (the Special Projects Crew accomplished these):

- Designed and built the Farmers Branch Love Locks display
- Planted sod at the entrance area surrounding the Love Locks display

COVID –

Staff started the year planning for events under the same COVID protocols that had been in place since mid-2020. These protocols included wearing masks by all attendees, mandatory temperature checks, reduced attendance, disinfectant teams, and socially distanced circles in the meadow. In mid-March, the state of Texas relaxed its COVID guidelines, and with more and more of the population becoming vaccinated, the City determined in late March that outdoor events could now operate under less stringent guidelines. A few changes include recommended masks for attendees, not required; attendance caps would be removed; mandatory temperature checks, social circles, and the disinfectant team were all eliminated. Specific safety measures are still in place, such as wearing masks by city staff and event contractors, additional hand sanitizer stations on-site, restrooms placed 6 feet apart, and children's activities modified to allow for safety protocols.

Conclusion

The Special Events team continues to identify and implement best practices, cost-saving measures, programming ideas and strategies, and new sponsorship opportunities and revenue streams.