

2021 FOURTH OF JULY CELEBRATION PROPOSAL

ITEM #21-219

CITY OF HUNTINGTON BEACH
MARCH 15, 2021



4th of July Tradition

The annual Huntington Beach 4th of July Celebration, including the parade, fireworks show, and pier festival, is an iconic experience and beloved tradition here in Huntington Beach.

- The Fourth of July Executive Board, City Staff, contractor Soundskilz, and consultant Stacey Newton have created a wonderful collaboration to ensure the tradition of a Celebration on the 4th will continue in 2021



COVID-19 Impact on 4th of July Celebration

Planning for the 2021 Celebration has been heavily influenced by the ongoing effects of the COVID-19 pandemic.

- Social distancing, limited attendance, and other restrictions may still be in effect in early July
- Widespread negative economic impacts are creating difficulties in securing previous financial partnerships as well as the ability to attract new sponsors



Proposed 2021 4th of July Celebration

At the March 3rd meeting, the Board voted unanimously in favor of modifying the 2021 Celebration to contain the following elements:

- Neighborhood parade
- Pier Plaza Festival
- Home decorating contest
- Modified 4th of July 5K run
- Fireworks display over the Pier



Neighborhood Parade

Rather than a traditional parade route through Main Street, the Board, City Staff, and Contractors are proposing a modified neighborhood parade to address all social and economic challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic.

- The neighborhood parade concept allows the 4th of July Celebration to maintain the City's record of 117 consecutive years for the parade
- The 2020 neighborhood parade concept would be expanded upon to create additional parade routes and would include creative ways to engage potential sponsors



Pier Plaza Festival

The Pier Festival is an important component of the Celebration. It traditionally includes sponsor booths, food trucks, and vendor activations.

- Footprint of the event would be expanded from years past to allow additional vendor opportunity and adhere to guidelines for distancing between booths
- Outdoor marketplaces are currently permissible under COVID-19 restrictions
- An enhanced Pier Festival will establish an anchor activity downtown and provide needed revenue for the 2021 and 2022 Celebrations



Home Decorating Contest

The home decorating contest provides an additional way to maintain the sense of hometown pride for the Celebration, especially for residents who wish to celebrate from home.

- Includes homes and businesses citywide and would encourage a larger cross-section of the community to participate since the parade will visit neighborhoods throughout the community



Modified 5K Run

As large gatherings may not be permitted or welcomed, the proposed plan is to modify the traditional 5K route to take place over several days on a pre-designed course at Huntington Central Park.

- Staggered start times of limited-sized groups over the 4th of July weekend would ensure guidelines regarding social distancing and group gatherings can be easily followed
- A virtual race component will also be included and would allow participants to race on their own time and comfort level
- The use of existing park space for the course allows costs to be kept to a minimum and ensures a fiscally sustainable and authentic 5K experience



Fireworks Show Over HB Pier

The proposed plan for the 2021 Celebration includes the possibility of a traditional fireworks display over the Pier.

- Due to the social gathering and fiscal uncertainties regarding the COVID-19 pandemic, the fireworks show is the most susceptible to COVID-related impacts
- The proposal includes a 24 to 26-minute fireworks display choreographed to a custom soundtrack



Soundkilz Contract Amendment to Facilitate 2021 4th of July Events

Due to potential pandemic related financial shortfalls, staff is recommending the implementation of an amendment to the original contract between the City of Huntington Beach and Soundkilz, Inc.

- Amendment allows the City and Soundkilz to mutually agree in writing that the City may directly pay certain approved prepaid vendor expenses and/or deposits
- Soundkilz would be required to include such expenses paid by the City in its budget reconciliations and repay the City from event revenues/profits
- Given COVID-19 impacts, if net revenue generated in 2021 are insufficient, the amount would be reimbursed following a return to a traditional Celebration in 2022



Recommended Action

- A.** Direct staff to proceed with a modified version of the traditional 4th of July Celebration as approved by the Fourth of July Executive Board – to include a neighborhood parade, home decorating contest, Pier Plaza Festival, modified 5K run, and fireworks show; and
- B.** Approve and authorize the Mayor and City Clerk to execute Amendment No. 1 to the Professional Services Contract between the City of Huntington Beach and Soundskilz, Inc. for the production and management of the Annual Fourth of July Celebration.



QUESTIONS?

