



City of Huntington Beach

File #: 21-477

MEETING DATE: 6/15/2021

REQUEST FOR CITY COUNCIL ACTION

SUBMITTED TO: Honorable Mayor and City Council Members

SUBMITTED BY: Oliver Chi, City Manager

PREPARED BY: Chris Slama, Director of Community & Library Services

Subject:

Consideration of Proposed Pilot Concert Program in conjunction with the Pacific Airshow

Statement of Issue:

Since 2014, the City has followed a practice of denying large-format, ticketed concert events at the City Beach. Given prior City Council direction, there is an opportunity to coordinate a pilot concert program to be embedded into the 2021 Pacific Airshow event in October 2021.

Financial Impact:

If authorized by the City Council, all direct public safety staffing and operational costs associated with the proposed pilot concert program will be reimbursed by the promoter. In addition, a \$5.00 per person charge will be paid to the City by the event promoter, Code Four, to offset various indirect administrative costs.

Recommended Action:

- A) Authorize a one-time pilot concert program at the City Beach, to be embedded into the Air Show event on the evenings of October 1 and October 2, 2021; and,
- B) Cap attendance for the concert at no more than 12,000 people per evening; and,
- C) Direct that the event would be authorized at the City Beach located adjacent to Beach Boulevard / Pacific Coast Highway; and
- D) Through the Special Event permitting process, direct that staff require the following:
 - Event organizer would have to provide a full event security plan vetted and approved by the Police Department; and,
 - Full general liability and ABC liability insurance coverage would be required; and,
 - Require direct payment for all City-provided services, including public safety costs, and institute a \$5 per person charge to be paid by Code Four (the event promoter) to offset various indirect administrative costs.

Alternative Action(s):

Do not approve the recommended actions, and direct staff accordingly.

Analysis:

In the early 1990's, the City permitted concerts and live music in conjunction with Specific Events at the beach. Around 2010, the concerts coordinated as part of the U.S. Open of Surfing began to grow in popularity and size. In 2013, a civil disturbance occurred downtown during the U.S. Open of Surfing, an event which incorporated a music/concert program component. Of note, the 2013 civil disturbance did not occur on the same day as a concert.

Following a City Council Study Session in 2014, the determination was made to employ a practice of denying any Specific Event permit that contemplated large-format ticketed concerts. Further, on August 20, 2018, the City Council directed that the practice should be maintained.

The City is regularly approached by professional event promoters regarding possible production of large-scale ticketed concerts at two City venues. One such venue is at the City Beach. Our current practice has been to allow live entertainment as part of smaller scale events focused at Pier Plaza, such as Surfin' Sundays. A small concert venue has also been allowed south of the Pier as part of the US Open of Surfing.

Central Park is the other City venue where concerts are requested. We have hosted ticketed and non-ticketed cultural festivals at Central Park. The Cherry Blossom Festival, Pacific Islander Festival, and the BB Jazz Festival are event examples that incorporate significant live music components. These events typically benefit local non-profit organizations.

Within City limits, the State Beach also frequently hosts many large-scale concert events, with minimal issues. The State considers concerts to be a high quality outdoor recreational experience, and has embraced concerts on State Beach property for many years. Since 2013, Huntington State Beach has hosted several multi-day concert festivals on the sand. Typically, attendance at these events is capped at around 12,000-15,000 people per day. Further, the State Beach charges concert promoters \$10.00 per person, which covers costs for applicable public safety efforts and permit fees. Starting in 2022, the State will be hosting large-scale concerts two weekends per year, in the Spring and in the Fall.

On April 5, 2021, the City Council voted unanimously to direct staff to develop updated procedures that would "...facilitate ticketed, stand-alone musical entertainment events at certain appropriate City venues." Staff was also asked to assess the viability of instituting a per-person charge to reimburse City costs.

Benefits of bringing larger scale concert-type events to Huntington Beach include strengthening our "Surf City" brand, enhancing community pride, and providing an additional outdoor recreational opportunity. As with all large community events here in Huntington Beach, there is opportunity for increased tourism and positive economic impact.

While those benefits can be significant, concerns also have to be weighed in the consideration of hosting large-scale events. These include challenges such as impacted traffic and parking, noise disturbances, and commercial/residential impacts. Large group gatherings also create potential for

public safety impacts.

Based on City Council direction, staff has been reviewing the possibility of permitting large-scale, multi-day musical events at the City Beach and at Central Park.

City Beach event considerations identified include:

- Possibly permit two multi-day events per year - one in the Spring and one in the Fall
- Concert attendance should be capped at no more than 12,000 attendees
- Concert venues should be limited to the area between Huntington Street and Beach Blvd.

Huntington Central Park event considerations identified include:

- Possibly permit two multi-day concert events per year, aside from existing annual permitted events
- Events could be allowed between Memorial Day and Labor Day weekends
- Concert attendance should be capped at no more than 3,000 attendees
- Potential venue locations could be at the Huntington Central Park Bandstand or at the Huntington Central Park Sports Complex facility

As staff works to refine and develop the overall concert program, an opportunity to conduct a pilot trial concert has presented itself. Code Four has approached the City regarding the possibility of embedding a concert into the 2021 Pacific Airshow event. That proposal is as follows:

- Concert would occur on Friday, October 1, and Saturday, October 2.
- Attendance would be capped at 12,000 maximum.
- Event would be located adjacent to Beach Boulevard / Pacific Coast Highway.
- Musical acts contemplated for Friday evening are of the Sammy Hagar / REO Speedwagon genre.
- Musical acts contemplated for Saturday evening are of the Florida Georgia Line / Nelly genre.

If the pilot concert program concept is authorized by City Council, staff would permit the event through our existing Special Event permitting process in conjunction with the Pacific Airshow event. Key permitting considerations would include:

- Code Four would have to provide a full event security plan vetted and approved by the Police Department.
- General liability and ABC liability insurance coverage would be required.
- Direct payment for all City provided services would be required, including public safety costs
- Per prior City Council direction, consider charging Code Four \$5.00 per person to be paid to the City as part of the permitting process to recover administrative costs.

Environmental Status:

Not applicable.

Strategic Plan Goal:

Community Engagement
Economic Development & Housing

Attachment(s):

None.