

City waives fees for eight community events

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In its first attempt to offer event co-sponsorships through a special application process, the city identified eight nonprofit organizations for which it will waive special event fees.

Because there were so few applications, the city only waived fees totaling \$6,100 from a pot of \$30,000 that was budgeted. All seven applicants got waivers, as did an eighth group that hadn't applied.

The events that will receive fee waivers range from parades to Earth Day to Shakespeare in the park to various fundraisers. Per city regulation, the events must serve a wide swath of people and be associated with a nonprofit. The award range from \$200 to above \$1,500.

One group, Napa High School's homecoming parade, received an award though it did not apply because Vintage High School applied and the city wanted to be fair with the two major schools, according to the city.

For other recipients, the fee waivers amount to more money for their respective charities.

"It means more money for us to donate to the food bank," said Liz Kirkaldie, co-chairwoman of the Napa Chili Cook-Off, which will take place downtown on Aug. 3.

The cook-off, which donates all its proceeds to the Napa food bank, received just shy of \$750 in co-sponsorship from the city. Karen Cherniss, the second co-chairwoman of the event, said in the past, sponsors have had to pick up that cost, but now all the money can benefit Napa's hungry.

"We're thrilled to be partners with the city on this event," Cherniss said. "It is community-based and it benefits a really good cause."

Cherniss said the application process was simple and didn't require much more information than is already required to host a special event in the city.

In the past, the city has awarded co-sponsorship on a first-come first-serve basis as applications were submitted for special event permits, city spokesperson Barry Martin said. This year the city was aiming to make the process more organized and fair.

The application period lasted just shy of a month this summer, something Councilman Scott Sedgley questioned, wondering if a longer period would have resulted in more applications than the seven that were submitted. Martin said staff were overwhelmed with BottleRock this year and intend to have a longer application period next year.

"I think the honest answer is that the BottleRock event was taking up so much time and mental energy that the process wasn't probably as lengthy as it will be in the future," Martin said.

Given that the city awarded less than one-third of the available money for co-sponsorships,

Martin said the city may consider waiving fees for other special events as nonprofits submit permit applications. Mayor Jill Techel, who served on the committee that reviewed co-sponsorship applications, said the committee may meet again to discuss how to award the remaining money.

“We do anticipate that there will be more that come in during the year since this was the first year with this process,” Techel said. “The committee was open to meeting again if need be.”

Recipients of city co-sponsorships

- Celebrating Seniors, \$968
- Napa Valley Coffin Races, \$1,536
- Shakespeare Napa Valley, \$1,060
- Earth Day, \$1,182
- Chili Cookoff, \$748
- Santa’s Sleigh Ride, \$200
- Vintage High School homecoming parade, \$200
- Napa High School homecoming parade, \$200