

Christa Gerloff  
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La Crosse, WI 54601

Dear Members of the Parks Board:

I am writing this letter as per the conversation I had with Kerry Gloede to request to have a policy change implemented. I know the current policy on Free Speech Events—(Free) are for the Parks but not the Park Shelters as these areas would still require full payment to reserve the space. I appreciate the fact that the Parks Board has updated the policy to include “solely expressive activity such as march, rally, or demonstrations” to be free in any areas except the Park Shelters or any areas that require a reservation. I am asking that the Board would consider amending the Policy to include the areas requiring reservations to be open for Free Speech Events to Churches, Evangelists, and Missionaries of ALL Faiths. Faith Baptist Church has currently reserved the Riverside Park Bandstand for September 8, 2019 from 9AM to 12PM and 5:30PM to 7:30PM. This is a Free Speech Event in which Bibles will be given out without charge. It is open to all members of the public, provides a public benefit (I would like to explain just how at the meeting), and based in the community (3615 South 28th street, La Crosse is our Church address). I would like to request that the policy be amended and thus be Free for this event. If the Board doesn't approve the amendment to the current Policy, then I would request that we be included in the 50% off Designated Fee for Community Events. I would personally like to present the reason for this request and present the case for approving the amendment. I would ask for 10-12 minutes to make the presentation and any extra time to answer questions.

I did meet with the Board about 1-2 years ago and presented my concern, and although the Policy didn't get changed at that time; we did reserve the Riverside Park Bandstand for “Worship in the Park” and had over 200 people attend the event with many other walkers stopping to listen! There were many Bibles handed out as well, all free of charge. I will restate briefly my concern: I am a grandfather of 15 grandchildren and I want them to be able to enjoy what God has created, but at the current direction the world is going that won't happen. The problem, simply stated, is this: “... men loved darkness rather than light because their deeds were evil” (John 3:19) In the last 36 years, the United States has endured 109 mass shootings! The criteria used to establish this figure are 4 or more deaths caused by an unrelated shooter and excluding the death of the shooter. If you change the criteria to 4 or more people killed or wounded, the total escalates!!! In the 1st 6 months of 2017 using this criteria there were 154 mass shootings! This fact is appalling and should be of concern to every city in the United States! Police and Emergency Response Preparedness are important, but are merely damage control. The objective of the response team is to contain the shooter and minimize those harmed by the shooter. This seems to be damage control. Another suggestion is to control or remove guns, but guns are not the enemy; the heart of the shooter is! What has changed in America? I believe the idea that there is no accountability to a higher power after we die has contributed to this disregard for human life. In 1859 Charles Darwin suggested: there is no god and that man has evolved and was not created. In 1925, the case of the Scopes Monkey Trial brought about the theory becoming treated as fact and being taught in public schools. Then in 1962-63 two Supreme Court Decisions came about outlawing Prayer and the Bible from our public schools. Let's do the math: 55 years ago teaching creationism was replaced with evolution, and 36 years ago the mass shootings started. That means it took only 21 years of teaching man is no more than an animal for us to act like an animal. Consider that America has 5% of the world's population and 31% of the world's mass shootings!

My proposal is to return to the teachings that our country was founded on including freedom to worship. Our currency still states “In God we trust” and the Pledge of Allegiance still states “One Nation under God,” but are we? I believe the only way to turn back the progression toward Lawlessness and Evil is to return to what made us a great nation. I believe our Founding Fathers' vision for America was “Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people.” (Proverbs 14:34) I hope the city can see that the current policy: “to minimize the damage done by the shooter” is insufficient, but changing the heart of the potential shooter is vital to resolve the problem! Let's make America great again by inviting God back into it!

Thank you for considering this request. Please contact me at 526-9250 or at 618 Alpine Lane, Holmen to follow up.

Sincerely,





## Parks, Recreation, and Forestry

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City of La Crosse  
Parks, Recreation, & Forestry

# Special Event Fee Structure for City of La Crosse Parks & Park Shelter Use

1. **Athletic Event – (100% of Designated Fee)**
  - Sports or athletic activities including run/walks, cycling, other types of races, or recreational and competitive contests
  - Typically requires individual or team registration
  - Participation is generally not free or open to all members of the public
  - Requires Board of Park Commissioners approval
2. **Commercial Event – (100% of Designated Fee)**
  - Controlled or ticketed entry or suggested donation posted at entrance
  - Event name features a for profit or non-profit organization
  - May require Board of Park Commissioners approval
3. **Political Meeting or Event – (100% of Designated Fee)**
  - Political campaign events or meetings with local or visiting politicians
4. **Community Event – (50% of Designated Fee)**
  - Free and open to all members of the public
  - Provides a public benefit and or stimulates broad economic or cultural activity within a neighborhood
  - Organized by a neighborhood-based, community-based, or groups that do not have a geographic base
  - May require Board of Park Commissioners approval
5. **Free Speech Event – (Free)**
  - Solely expressive activity such as a march, rally, or demonstration
  - Does not include non-expressive or commercial activity, such as commercial food or sales

\*Fee structure in effect for all reservations for dates beginning January 1, 2018

\*Board of Park Commissioners reserve the right to change, amend or modify the Special Event Fee Structure based on an individual requests to the Park Board at their regular scheduled meetings the third Thursday of each month, January – November.