

**Special Events Ordinance and Policies and Procedures Manual.**

*Special event* means a temporary planned occurrence on public or private property when the general public is invited and which is not within the normal and ordinary use of the property or which, by nature of the event, may have a greater impact on City services or resources than would have occurred had the event not taken place. Special events include, but are not limited to, parade, march or procession of any kind including a group walk or run or bicycle tour or race; demonstration, exhibition or rally; festivals and carnivals; outdoor concerts; charity fundraisers and similar events that include any of the following: alcohol beverages, food and/or merchandise vendors, outdoor music, the closure of streets or public way.

Special event policies and procedures will streamline the process for both event organizers and City staff. The permitting process will promote equitable and efficient use of City staff resources through proper planning for such events and will help protect public health, safety and welfare. It is the event organizer's responsibility to ensure that event attendees are provided with a safe and enjoyable event and to make sure that the event venue, the other people in the area and the surrounding neighborhoods are safe and not unduly impacted.

The special event ordinance: defines several terms used throughout the special event legislation, explains when a permit is necessary along with providing some exemptions, provides application process and requirements, defines classes of permits (to determine fees based on duration and whether there are closures of public way or outdoor music), explains investigation requirements, issuance of license and enforcement, revocation and appeal. The ordinance contains the basic authorities and the policies & procedures will contain more detail.

The policies and procedures manual incorporates all relevant information, rules and requirements and necessary applications to assist event organizers through the planning process. The policies and procedures manual will be approved by the Board of Public Works and the Common Council with the City Clerk having the ability to modify as necessary.

When filing an application for a special event, all relevant applications must be filed with the City Clerk's Office as a package no less than 60 days before the event.\* Filing everything at once will allow departments to review the event as a package rather than piecemeal as applications are filed one at a time. The special event application will incorporate closures of the public way, parade/run/walk/processions and outdoor music. Additional needs will be by separate application i.e. temporary alcohol license, carnival, etc. but must be filed at the same times as the special event application. \*If filed less than 60 days but more than 15 days, fees double. In no circumstance may an application be filed less than 15 days prior to a special event.

**Closure of Public Ways/Short-Term Street Privilege Permits.**

Sec. 40-107 authorizes closure of public ways for block parties and other recreational uses. An amendment was prepared to add special event details and definitions and to clean up the section to correspond to the special event process.

Neighborhood block parties will not be required to license as a special event; they will be by separate application and approved by the Street Department (with review by Police). The block party application was modified and includes a fee of \$35.00. The City Clerk will serve as the filing officer and will route the applications and supporting documents to Streets.

All other closures i.e. parades/processions, expansion of alcohol license into public way, etc. will be required to apply for a special event license and the Street Department will be part of the review team.

## **Parades, Run/Walks or Other Processions.**

Because the parade, run/walk or other processions is part of the special event application, we are removing all permit requirements from the parade ordinance and re-directing to the special event process. We chose to leave a parade ordinance in Chapter 40 since they are street and sidewalk related and include only regulations and basis for denial.

Because parades are part of the special event, we are repealing the insurance requirements for parades in Sec. 2-2 and eliminating parade fees from the fee schedule.

## **Special Event Outdoor Cabaret Ordinance.**

We are repealing the special event outdoor cabaret (SEOC) ordinance because outdoor music will be included in a special event permit. The City Clerk's office will no longer be notifying property owners within 1,000 feet. Instead, organizers shall notify property owners of the event and the amplified sound details; however, they must adhere to noise control levels. If complaints are received, Police may instruct music to be turned down or shut down for non-compliance. We will no longer be granting permissions to exceed noise control; however, events in the following locations are exempt from noise control levels: Oktoberfest Grounds, Copeland Park and Riverside Park.

Because we are eliminating the SEOC, we are amending the fee schedule to eliminate the SEOC fee. Special event fees are being incorporated into the fee schedule.

Because we are eliminating the SEOC, we created an ordinance to repeal the SEOC insurance requirements in Sec. 2-2 and replace it with insurance requirements for special events. I sought guidance from TE Brennan (the City's insurer) and they recommend comprehensive general liability, automobile liability and, when there are alcohol sales, liquor liability insurance. Policy limits for each will be \$1 million per occurrence and the City of La Crosse will be named additional insured.

## **Temporary Class B Beer/Wine**

The only change made to the temporary alcohol section is to change the filing date from 15 days to 60 days making it consistent with the deadline for special event applications since everything will be filed as a package. If an alcohol license is filed separately and under 60 days, double fee will be charged per Sec. 4-18; however, in no situation may an application be filed less than 15 days prior to a special event.

## **Vendors.**

Merchandise vendors will be exempt from a Direct Seller Permit when part of a special event; however, the organizer must list all vendors on their application and assure each holds a valid Wisconsin Seller's Permit, if necessary. Merchandise vendors are currently exempt when participating in festivals.

Food vendors will be exempt from an Outdoor Food Stand/Mobile Food Unit License when part of a special event; however, the organizer must list all vendors on their application and assure each holds a valid food-related permit issued by La Crosse County or State of Wisconsin and a Wisconsin Seller's Permit, if necessary. Food vendors are currently exempt when participating in festivals.

Fire Prevention will perform inspections of all vendors when conducting their inspection of the event premises.

## **Animals**

If an event includes animals, certain domesticated animals will be allowed without additional permits i.e. petting zoo animals and semi-domesticated reindeer for Rotary Lights. These animals are allowed only at permitted special events not to include private residential events.

An amendment to Ch. 6 will allow “petting zoo” animals and reindeer only when part of a permitted special event; along with a few other exceptions i.e. public zoo or aquarium and animals under control of DNR or veterinarian.

If an event has exotic or wild animals, they are allowed at special events with an approved Carnival, Circus or Menagerie (CCM) license and an exception for this was included in Sec. 6-9.

## **Carnival, Circus or Menagerie**

Wild animals will be permitted with a CCM license. An ordinance to repeal and recreate of Ch. 10, Art. VIII will clean up that section: added definitions, deadline 60 days, change fee structure eliminating seating capacity fees for circuses and menageries and make all fees per day/per location.

## **Research.**

Research of other municipalities included Appleton, Eau Claire, Green Bay, Kenosha, Madison, Menasha, Mukwonago, Onalaska, Oshkosh and Wausau.

## **Fees.**

Other municipalities’ fees were used as a guide while also considering our current fee. Proposed is a Class I and Class II scale depending on if the event is one day or multiple. Within the class will be price differences depending on the number of participants, whether there are street closures and/or outdoor music.