



ST. CHARLES  
SINCE 1834

## AGENDA ITEM EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Title: Recommendation to approve request from St. Charles Festival Committee for funding for 2013 Pride of the Fox Riverfest

Presenter: Brian Townsend

*Please check appropriate box:*

X	Government Operations (1/7/13)		Government Services
	Planning & Development		City Council
	Public Hearing		

Estimated Cost:		Budgeted:	YES		NO	
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If NO, please explain how item will be funded:

This is a request for the FY2013-14 budget, which is in the process of being prepared.

**Executive Summary:**

Pride of the Fox LLC (POFLLC) has decided to relinquish its control and sponsorship of the Pride of the Fox Riverfest event. The St. Charles Festival Committee (STCFC), an Illinois non-profit corporation, is considering its capability to undertake the event in 2013 and beyond.

The STCFC operated Riverfest for many years before transferring responsibility to POFLLC. The group is led by Mr. Tom Anderson as Chairman and Ms. Joy Meierhans as Executive Director. The organization has also received commitments for board membership from several business representatives.

To ensure continuity of the festival's current programming level, the STCFC is requesting a one-time support grant from the City of St. Charles of \$15,000. This is in addition to the City's annual budget allocation of \$18,000. Approval of the request would require an allocation of \$33,000 in the City's FY13-14 budget.

Staff believes that the request is worthwhile to ensure that the festival is on firm financial footing; however, it would be prudent to include a "claw back" provision that requires that any reserves in excess of \$30,000 are returned to the City after the final accounting for the 2013 event.

**Attachments:** *(please list)*

Request from St. Charles Festival Committee

**Recommendation / Suggested Action** *(briefly explain):*

Staff recommends that the Government Operations Committee recommend that the City Council approve the request from St. Charles Festival Committee with the condition that any reserves in excess of \$30,000 are returned to the City after the final accounting for the 2013 event.

*For office use only:*

*Agenda Item Number: 5a*



January 2, 2013

TO: Don DeWitte, Mayor – City of St. Charles  
Brian Townsend, City Administrator

FR: Tom S. Anderson, Chairman – St. Charles Festival Committee

RE: City of St. Charles Support for RiverFest 2013

The City is to be commended for addressing the future of RiverFest now to ensure continuity rather than enduring a delay and later re-start. Missing a year in staging an annual festival is harmful, diminishing its effectiveness and presenting a host of problems in re-starting the event. RiverFest being an annual event, missing a year would impact availability of key programming elements (water ski show, dragon boats, sand sculptor, canine capers dog show, carnival, etc.) as well as vendor availability, volunteer participation, community involvement and attendance.

With these precepts in mind, we propose to transition RiverFest back from Pride of the Fox LLC (POFLLC), a 501(c)(3), to the St. Charles Festival Committee (STCFC), an Illinois not for profit corporation, with myself as chairman and Joy Meierhans, a Certified Festival and Event Executive with 30 years event management experience, as executive director.

The STCFC ran RiverFest profitably for 20 years and following the 2009 festival, transferred \$30,000 to the POFLLC as well as all requested records, including sponsorship details, fee schedules, and operational information. Following three years of festival management, it is our understanding that Jon Olson and Julie Farris are no longer interested in running the festival, have resigned their respective positions, and intend to dissolve POFLLC. We understand that meeting has already occurred.

The STCFC has communicated with POFLLC, and expects to receive all RiverFest financial records, including current sponsorship details. With regards to currently available festival funds, there appears to be a \$15,000 shortfall between funds turned over to POFLLC in 2009 and funds expected to be returned to the STCFC.

To ensure continuity of the event's current programming level during this transition process, the STCFC is requesting a one-time support grant from the City of St. Charles to make up that \$15,000 funding transfer shortfall.

We also request continuation of the City's annual budget allocation of \$18,000 to support the festival.

(continued)

Don DeWitte  
Brian Townsend  
January 2, 2013  
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As of the date of this memo, a Board of Directors to oversee the operations of the STCFC has formed, and currently includes the following members:

Tom Anderson	Chairman, Colonial Ice Cream
Joy Meierhans	Executive Director
Lynne Schwartz	Downtown St. Charles Partnership
Stacey Eckstrom	St. Charles Chamber of Commerce
Sue McDowell	McDowell, Inc.
Ed Bessner	City of St. Charles
Pat Hofstetter	CPR Printing

Upon approval we intend to add a member of the STC Park District staff as well as a representative of the STC Police Department.

In closing, we appreciate the City Council's consideration of our requests to ensure that Pride of the Fox RiverFest continues to be the kick-off event for summer in downtown St. Charles, as it has for the last 30 years.

If any questions, please call Joy Meierhans at 630/557-2575 or Tom Anderson at 630/247-9592.