

## **Item 25-0065: Approve Memorandum of Understanding between the City of Appleton and Wisconsin Entertainment Group LLC to manage the City of Appleton**

**Common Council**

Wed, Feb 19, 2025 7:00PM

**Mayor Jake Woodford** 49:52

All right. Let's move on to Parks and Recreation Committee. This is item 25-0065 approve memorandum of understanding between the City of Appleton and Wisconsin Entertainment Group LLC to manage the city of Appleton Independence Day celebration. We have a motion. Is there a second? We have a motion and a second to approve. We'll begin discussion with Alder Hartzheim.

**Aldersperson Sheri Hartzheim (District 13)** 50:29

Thank you, Chair. I watched this meeting and also had a very nice discussion with Deputy Director Flick in this regard. My question is really more of a perhaps legal question. This item is asking us to approve a memorandum of understanding. The memorandum of understanding, it's my understanding, has not even been drafted yet. So I'm confused about—I would like to approve moving forward with issuing or negotiating a memorandum of understanding, not approve the actual memorandum of understanding, which we don't know what it is about yet.

**Mayor Jake Woodford** 51:09

I would say that's absolutely fair. And really that's what we're looking for, is direction, so there's maybe a little imprecision in the item. So, if you wouldn't mind making an amendment to that effect, that that I think would clarify the matter.

**Aldersperson Sheri Hartzheim (District 13)** 51:23

I would love to amend this item to state that we are approving the negotiation of a memorandum of understanding with the Wisconsin Entertainment Group LLC.

**Mayor Jake Woodford** 51:34

All right, we have a motion and a second to amend. Is there any discussion on the amendment? Hearing none. Please cast your votes.

**Mayor Jake Woodford** 51:56

Thank you, Alder Alfheim. All right, that motion passes 15 to zero. The item has been amended.

**Mayor Jake Woodford** 52:04

All right, back to discussion on the item as amended. Hearing none, please cast your votes. Oh, Martyn, did you—excuse me, Alder Smith, you snuck in there. All right, go ahead.

**Aldersperson Martyn Smith (District 4)** 52:22

Got in just under the bell there. I'm on the Parks and Rec committee, and I voted to approve this because it seems like Wisconsin Entertainment Group is a is a good organization, and they could be able to pull this off. A question that I had after the vote, and which I'd like to see if I get answered, is the Jaycees who ran this before, I believe, were a nonprofit, and they could get contributions from the city, from Festival Foods, from other places. Will there be any problem if this is run by a for-profit group, which I think Wisconsin Entertainment Group is.

Will that lead any problems getting donations from places like Festival which are might feel more comfortable giving to a nonprofit?

**Mayor Jake Woodford** 53:04

Director Gazza.

**Director Dean Gazza (Parks, Recreation, and Facilities)** 53:06

Thank you. So, the donation, I'll start with that one from Festival Food, that one's going to be donated to the city. So, the fireworks component is outside of the requirements of the group putting on the celebration for Independence Day. They are very seasoned and experienced at getting donations and sponsorships. So, they're seeking sponsorships for, say, the music, certain bands, the stage, the children's area, and other areas throughout the day. And they have had a lot of success in the past getting sponsorships, because people you know would like to have their name be part of something like this, with so many people in attendance and so forth, and it's a family friendly event and lot of lot of spectators. So, I think they won't have any problems getting additional sponsorships.

**Mayor Jake Woodford** 54:02

Further discussion? Hearing none we have a motion and a second to approve the item as amended. Please, cast your votes. Thanks, Alder Alfheim. That motion passes 15 to zero. So, we'll proceed with negotiating a memorandum of understanding, and we'll bring that back to you. Thanks.