

Happy Days Committee Meeting

Minutes

Thursday, May 14th 2020, 5:30 pm

This meeting was conducted over Zoom conference call

Present at the meeting were Committee Members Anne Madison, Jason Tossey, Jason Sufka, Dan Specht, Shannon Hepner, Tim Frankfurth and Kristine Anderson. The meeting was led by Staff Liaison Megan Thorstad.

1. The Meeting was called to order at 5:34 pm
2. Liaison Thorstad gave a COVID-19 update, reviewed statements from Minnesota State Fair Officials, reviewed what other Counties and Cities around the Metro are doing, offered ideas as to what a modified festival could look like and shared concerns regarding the budget, staffing, the Governor's recommendations and the burden to public safety. *See attachment.*
3. Liaison Thorstad then opened the meeting for comments –
 - Committee Member Madison stated that she did not have interest in meeting in-person for future meetings and would only be able to volunteer the day of the event as she cares for a vulnerable adult.
 - Committee Member Sufka, who runs the Memorial Golf Tournament the Sunday after Happy Days, said he hopes the golf tournament would continue, but the Fire Relief Association would cancel the banquet at the end of the tournament to maintain social distancing guidelines.
 - Committee Member Tossey asked how many sponsorships we have received thus far.
 - Liaison Thorstad said we have not received any for 2020 at this time, but also that we have not started marketing Happy Days heavily at this time.
 - Committee Member Tossey asked that staff gauge the interest of the business community given the impacts the virus has had on them.
 - Committee Member Anderson stated that the Lion's organization has not been able to fundraise as much as in previous years due to COVID-19. She stated their primary fundraising tool is selling pull-tabs, which they have not been able to do since the Governor's Stay at Home order took effect.
 - Committee Member and Police Captain Frankfurth stated that his concern was the health and safety of his staff. He stated that the Ramsey Police Department has not

been hit with the virus thus far, but anticipates their luck to run out. He stated if the virus were to circulate within the department, officers would need to be quarantined for 14 days and the department could be short-staffed. He said he felt the officers time to be best spent responding to emergency needs and questioned if the department would have the staff capacity to monitor traffic and police social distancing guidelines on top of its daily functions.

- Committee Member Madison said, given these reasons, she didn't think it would work to have a Happy Days Festival in 2020.
- Committee Member Specht asked what events could be modified.
- Committee Member Hepner, a representative from Northgate Church, said she wasn't sure what the church's involvement would look like. She stated that she didn't think the kids tent and inflatables could be modified to accommodate social distancing. She asked if the concert could be made virtual and if we could still have fireworks and have folks watch from their apartments and cars.
- Committee Member Specht said he would be in favor of exploring those options.
- Committee Member Tossey said before he makes a recommendation, he wanted to know sponsor interest. He said if we don't have any money to fund a festival he didn't see how it could work.
- Committee Member Anderson said she didn't think the virus situation would improve enough by September for vendors, staff and patrons to gather safely in one area.
- Committee Member Madison agreed.

4. The Meeting Adjourned at 6:18 pm