



CITY OF SANTA BARBARA

COUNCIL AGENDA REPORT

AGENDA DATE: June 24, 2008

TO: Mayor and Councilmembers

FROM: Recreation Division, Parks and Recreation Department

SUBJECT: Proposal To Allow Alcohol Consumption At Louise Lowry Davis Center And Santa Barbara Lawn Bowls Club

RECOMMENDATION: That Council:

- A. Concur with the Park and Recreation Commission recommendation to allow alcohol consumption at the Louise Lowry Davis Center and Santa Barbara Lawn Bowls Club; and
- B. Adopt, by reading of title only, A Resolution of the Council of the City of Santa Barbara Permitting the Consumption of Alcohol in Certain City-Owned Public Areas and Repealing Resolution No. 07-002.

DISCUSSION:

Interest in reserved use of City-owned facilities for public and private events has increased steadily over the years, as has rental revenue to the Parks and Recreation Department. The Department has 13 community buildings of which 11 are available for reservation. The facilities are desirable because they are affordable and generally well-maintained. Many of them include other amenities such as incredible views or settings, parking facilities, tables and chairs, setup-takedown services, and kitchens.

Resolution No. 07-002 permits the consumption of alcohol or the possession of an open container in certain City-owned public areas, including recreational facilities designated for reserved group use, while such areas have been reserved and are being used in accordance with a valid group use reservation agreement or permit issued by the Parks and Recreation Director. Recreation facilities currently included in the resolution are:

- Cabrillo Pavilion Arts Center & Bathhouse
- Chase Palm Park Center
- Casa las Palmas
- Franklin Community Center
- MacKenzie Adult Building
- MacKenzie Lawn Bowls Club
- Ortega Welcome House
- Westside Community Center

Council Agenda Report

Proposal To Allow Alcohol Consumption At Louise Lowry Davis Center And Santa Barbara Lawn Bowls Club

June 24, 2008

Page 2

Current Policies

In order to minimize the impact to neighbors and provide safe public and private events, facility policies regarding alcohol are implemented in a uniform way at recreation facilities.

Policies include:

- Beer and wine only
- Alcohol sales require an Alcohol and Beverage Control permit and City approval
- Alcohol is not allowed at youth oriented parties (birthdays, graduations, rite of passage)
- Music must cease at 9:30 p.m.
- Activities cease at 10:00 p.m.
- Security guards and monitors may be required by City staff

The scope of the event (type of event, number of attendees, type of music, etc.) is also considered when determining whether the event is appropriate for the facility and surrounding neighborhood.

Proposed Request

The Department is interested in allowing alcohol by permit at two facilities, the Louise Lowry Davis Center (Davis Center) and Santa Barbara Lawn Bowls Club, for the following reasons:

- Event requests from the public are exceeding current City facility availability.
- Numerous requests are turned away due to facility alcohol use restrictions.
- These two venues are similar to other Parks and Recreation facilities where alcohol is allowed by permit.
- Increased rentals provide revenue opportunity for the City.
- The Davis Center was recently remodeled and is a smaller, less expensive venue for smaller family or community events.
- Several regular user groups of the Davis Center (AARP, Rose Society, etc.) have requested permission to serve alcohol at annual dinners or events and were denied.
- Santa Barbara Lawn Bowls Club Board of Directors unanimously supports the change.

Public Meeting

In order to receive feedback from neighboring residents and businesses, a meeting notification letter was mailed to residents and businesses within 300 feet of the property, hand-delivered to residents in the 4 adjacent apartment complexes, and posted at each facility for 1 week prior to the meeting.

Council Agenda Report

Proposal To Allow Alcohol Consumption At Louise Lowry Davis Center And Santa Barbara Lawn Bowls Club

June 24, 2008

Page 3

The May 5, 2008, meeting was attended by 2 neighbors (one of which is also a lawn bowls member), 2 lawn bowls board members and a member of AARP. Concerns expressed by neighbors in attendance:

- Excess noise would occur
- Use of alcohol heightens increased volume levels
- The Moose Lodge, Teen Center, and Soho already have noisy events
- Noisy clients stay in the parking lot after the event
- Event parking may take over street parking for apartment residents
- Events would be too big
- Request to limit to Friday and Saturday only

The 3 lawn bowls members and AARP member – representing user groups from the facilities – enthusiastically expressed support to allow alcohol consumption.

Two letters (by email) were also received from neighbors. They are included as attachments to this report. The letters expressed the following concerns:

- Noise
- Impact on residential parking
- Inappropriate use of parking lot

Solutions to Concerns

Staff offers the following programmatic solutions to these concerns:

- Only appropriately sized events would take place at the Davis Center.
 - The room has only two outlets, so amplification of music would be kept to a minimum.
 - Larger events would be asked to move to the Westside Center.
- Monitors would walk around the facility to evaluate the noise level during events.
- If a need was demonstrated, parking spaces could be reserved in the Davis Center lot for events.
- Weeknight events would be restricted to smaller gatherings of a more subdued nature – non-profit dinners, user group mixers, annual dinners, speaker, etc.

In recognition that events permitted to have alcohol might occur during hours that the Teen Center is open, additional security in the parking lot may be required depending on the event to ensure alcohol stays within the facility. Staff will continue to monitor facility use impacts and make adjustments as needed related to this change.

On May 28, 2008, the Park and Recreation Commission unanimously concurred with the recommendation to allow alcohol at the Louise Lowry Davis Center and Santa Barbara Lawn Bowls Club recreational facilities. No public speakers came forward at the Commission meeting.

Council Agenda Report
Proposal To Allow Alcohol Consumption At Louise Lowry Davis Center And Santa Barbara
Lawn Bowls Club
June 24, 2008
Page 4

If the change is approved, alcohol will be allowed by permit beginning July 1, 2008.

ATTACHMENTS: 1. Santa Barbara Lawn Bowls Club Board of Directors Letter dated
October 8, 2007
2. Letter from Sharen Oriordan
3. Letter from Stephanie Sacco

PREPARED BY: Sarah Hanna, Recreation Programs Manager

SUBMITTED BY: Nancy L. Rapp, Parks and Recreation Director

APPROVED BY: City Administrator's Office



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SANTA BARBARA, CALIFORNIA 93101
(805) 965-1773

October 8, 2007

Jason Bryan,
Recreation Supervisor
Parks and Recreation Dept.
PO Box 1990
Santa Barbara Ca 93102

Dear Jason.

The Board of Directors of the Santa Barbara Lawn Bowls Club requests that the Club be included on the "alcohol allowed" list for parks and club houses in the Parks and Recreation Department system.

We have offered wine and beer at our occasional barbeques over the years and have never had a problem with its abuse or with our members over indulging.

We hope you will include us in the alcohol allowed group.

Sincerely,

Carol M. Smith
Corresponding Secretary



Received by email on 5/8/2008

Dear Sarah Hanna,

I'm a neighbor of the Louise Lowry Davis Center and was not able to attend the meeting recently re: serving of alcohol. There have already been some serious noise problems at parties that went on for hours at that location and the police had to be called. I am very concerned about the consumption of alcohol in addition to loud music on the premises. When people drink they're less aware of their behavior and the combination of music and consuming alcohol. Its a situation that is problematic. We already have ongoing noise problems with the teen center on Chapala & Victoria and the Moose Lodge customers.

This is a residential area with many seniors in residence. It is my home -- and like your home --it is my sanctuary. Although I have heard from a neighbor that this is already a "done deal" and the meeting was just to appease neighbors I certainly hope that is NOT so and that you will not implement this new option for the LLD Center renters.

Thank you for your kind and thoughtful consideration of this matter.

Sincerely,

A concerned neighbor

Sharen Oriordan [royal22bard@yahoo.com]

Received by email on 5/6/2008

Hi Sarah,

It was great meeting you last night. Thanks for presenting the material on the reasons why the City of SB is considering Limited Alcohol Use at the Louise Lowry Davis Center.

I live at 136 West Victoria which is directly across from the Center, so this approval would directly impact me. When I walked into the meeting last night, I was completely against having alcohol allowed here. But after hearing that there would be a monitor/security guard at the events with alcohol, I am willing to reconsider my stance.

My main concern is the noise factor. When alcohol and music are combined, the noise factor at parties/events will tend to increase, and the sound will travel directly into my apartment on the 2nd floor. I would prefer that events with alcohol be allowed on Friday/Saturday nights only.

I spoke to several of the other residents at 136 West Victoria, and a big concern was parking. When the Moose Lodge has an event, the guests take up the vacant street parking on West Victoria, as well as the entire Louise Lowry parking lot. If there were 2 events going at the same time, parking for residents would diminish greatly. A lot of party guests also linger out in the parking lots, smoking and socializing loudly from the Moose Lodge events. I know that the City doesn't have any control over the Moose Lodge activities, but what can be done to manage this if there are 2 events that overlap? Will the monitor/security guard be at the event the entire time?

I would be more than willing to have a temporary alcohol permit period of time (maybe 6 months) that the City could review at that time to decide whether it should be a permanent benefit to this location. Is that something you think the City would consider?

Please let me know if I should formalize this email into a letter. I would love to come to the upcoming meetings, but I think it might be difficult for me to get to them as I work out in Goleta. But can you let me know again, when those upcoming meetings will be?

Thank you for your interest in getting public comments.

Stephanie Sacco
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