



# Wildwood Celebration Commission Minutes

## Meeting Date:

- January 5, 2022
- 5:00 p.m.

## Commission Members Present:

- Libby Wilson
- Sharon Hutson
- Cory Lawson
- Vicki Helfrey
- Joe Garritano, Council Liaison
- Gary Crews, Staff Liaison
- Susan Siebert, Chair

### **I. Call to Order and Opening Remarks**

Chair Siebert opened the meeting at 5:07 p.m. and welcomed everyone.

### **II. Roll Call**

A roll call of members was conducted, and the following individuals were in attendance, via Zoom Webinar Platform:

#### Commission Members:

Libby Wilson  
Sharon Hutson  
Cory Lawson  
Vicki Helfrey  
Joe Garritano, Council Liaison  
Gary Crews, Staff Liaison  
Susan Siebert, Chair

Absent Members: Commission Members Karen Stevens, Patricia Ward, and Jaclyn Tripp.

#### Other Officials & City Staff:

Joe Vujnich, Director of Planning and Parks  
Travis Newberry, Senior Planner  
Officer Steve DeGhelder, St. Louis County Police – Wildwood Precinct

### **III. Approval of Minutes from the November 3, 2021, Meeting of the Commission**

**A motion was made by Commissioner Hutson, seconded by Commissioner Wilson, to approve the meeting minutes of November 3, 2021. A voice vote was taken to approve the motion, with unanimous, affirmative result. The motion was declared approved by Chair Siebert.**

### **IV. Public Comments**

There were no public comments.

## V. Adopted Budget for 2022 Celebrate Wildwood Event by City Council

Director of Planning and Parks Vujnich advised the Commission the City Council adopted/approved the budget for the 2022 Celebrate Wildwood Event.

Discussion among Commission Members included the following: the fact the total amount approved was one hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000.00); the question of whether the approved one hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000.00) was the absolute cap? Or if there was *wiggle room* in the budget, if it was discovered the cost to present the event significantly changed due to the COVID situation; the suggestion to begin marketing for sponsorships much earlier than past years; and the fact funding issues/adjustments could be addressed by the City Council, if needed.

## VI. 2022 Celebrate Wildwood Event Details

### a. Combined Event or Separate Celebrate Wildwood/Art Festival

Director of Planning and Parks Vujnich reminded the Commission it had not *officially* decided whether the 2022 Celebrate Wildwood Event would be a combined activity again or whether the City would attempt to support two (2) separate events, i.e. anniversary and Art Festival.

Discussion among Commission Members included the following: generally, all Commission Members supported a combined event, once again in 2022; the opinion the approved budget for the 2022 Celebrate Wildwood Event might not support, or be adequate, for two (2) separate events; and the opinion the combined event might attract more attendance.

**A motion was made by Commission Chair Siebert, seconded by Commission Member Hutson, to present/organize a combined Celebrate Wildwood/Art Festival Event in 2022. A voice vote was taken to approve the motion, with unanimous, affirmative result. The motion was declared approved by Chair Siebert.**

### b. Date or Dates of the 2022 Event

Director of Planning and Parks Vujnich reminded the Commission a final decision had not been made as to whether the event would be held in September or October 2022 and, whether the event should be a one (1), two (2) day, or three (3) day event.

Discussion among Commission Members included the following: general agreement among Commission Members the 2021 event was held at the perfect time of the year (end of September); the opinion that having the event during the first two (2) weeks of October is a gamble with weather, while temperatures hard to predict; the question of whether the event should begin on a Friday Evening, a complete day on Saturday, then half a day on Sunday for the artists; the general opinion a *half day* is not very productive; and a final agreement that an all-inclusive, one day event would be the best decision.

**A motion was made by Commission Chair Siebert, seconded by Commission Member Wilson, to plan/organize a one day Celebrate Wildwood/Art Festival Event on September 24, 2022. A voice vote was taken to approve the motion, with unanimous, affirmative result. The motion was declared approved by Chair Siebert.**

### **c. Location of the Event**

Director of Planning and Parks Vujnich advised the Commission the 2022 event would definitely have to find a new home. The open field utilized over the last few years would finally be under construction by the summer 2022. Referring to the memorandum each Commission Member received in the meeting packet, he noted five (5) suggested locations and the criteria that must be met to support the Celebrate Wildwood Event.

Discussion among Commission Members included the following: the general opinion the Babler State Park location, while very nice, was just too far of the beaten path and the city/event would actually be subject to the control of the State; the general opinion the St. Louis Community College – Wildwood Campus had the wrong *feel*, was subject to the outside control/regulation of another agency, and was also an *invisible location* that is out of sight of the community; the general opinion that Wildwood Community Park would be a great location, but had serious parking considerations, which would almost certainly require shuttle arrangements; the general opinion that Lafayette High School would be the perfect location for a number of reasons however, the serving of adult beverages is not be allowed, event organizers would likely have to work around scheduled school activities, and the event/planning would actually have to meet the requirements of another organization; and the general opinion organizing the event in the Wildwood Town Center in the area of Main Street, Market Street, and the future Village Green Property, would actually be the best choice for the 2022 event.

### **d. Parade Component**

Director of Planning and Parks Vujnich advised the Commission the Department/staff is seeking suggestions/opinions on the organization of the 2022 parade. He noted that some criticism was received concerning the parade in 2021 and, if the parade portion of Celebrate Wildwood Event was intended to take place once again in 2022, it should be the goal of the Commission/staff to improve the organization of this portion of the Celebrate Wildwood Event.

Discussion among Commission Members include the following: while frustration with the parade in 2021 surfaced early, once the parade was over, a realization set in that it was actually done pretty well; the opinion staging, and flow of the parade, needed to be *tweaked*; the fact the staging portion of the parade became confusing with parents demanding to drive their vehicles onto the lot to drop off children; the fact that last minute parade participants created mini staging difficulties; the general opinion more control needs to be placed on golf cart movement/stopping and the giveaway of candy; the opinion the parade needed to have a flow of a constant movement; the fact that units in the parade, stopping to interact with the spectators, created numerous *problems*; the suggestion to utilize more of Manchester Road for the set-up of parade participants; and the Commission being informed the parade will be on every Wildwood Celebration Commission Agenda, until the actual event takes place in September 2022.

### **e. Other, including Advertising**

Director of Planning and Parks Vujnich reminded the Commission that advertising became a strong topic, just before the 2021 Celebrate Wildwood Event. He suggested the issue of advertising the 2022 event should be a subject matter addressed earlier, rather than later.

Discussion among Committee Members included the following: the opinion that signage needs to be a major focus for the 2022 event; the suggestion to concentrate on subdivisions and somehow get each one involved to advertise to its residents; the subject of texting or emailing to advertise the event was discussed at length; the possibility of sending a survey to Wildwood residents to determine the best method/approach of advertising was discussed; the use of electronic message boards to advertise the

event was discussed at length; and it was suggested the Department reach out to other communities to determine if they have any experience with texting/emailing advertisements.

## **VII. Next Meeting Date**

The Commission was reminded the next meeting date will be Wednesday, February 2, 2022, at 5:00 p.m.

## **VIII. Adjournment**

**A motion was made by Commissioner Helfrey, seconded by Commissioner Lawson, to adjourn the meeting. Having no further business to discuss, and hearing no objections, a voice vote was taken to approve the motion, with unanimous, affirmative result. The motion was declared approved by Chair Siebert. The meeting concluded at 6:16 p.m.**