



CITY COUNCIL AGENDA REPORT

MEETING DATE: FEBRUARY 17, 2009

ITEM NUMBER: _____

SUBJECT: PROPOSAL TO USE A PORTION OF FAIRVIEW PARK FOR A CIVIL WAR REENACTMENT

DATE: FEBRUARY 5, 2009

FROM: PUBLIC SERVICES DEPARTMENT

PRESENTATION BY: PETER NAGHAVI, DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC SERVICES

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: ROBERT STAPLES, FAIRVIEW PARK PLAN ADMINISTRATOR, 714-754-5303

RECOMMENDATION

Consider for approval the proposal by the American Civil War Society and Marching Thru History Exposition to use a portion of Fairview Park for a Civil War reenactment on May 8-10, 2009.

BACKGROUND

The American Civil War Society (ACWS) is a Non-Profit 501 (c) (3) Educational Corporation dedicated to the historical period known as "The War Between the States" (Attachment 1). This war has remained the bloodiest conflict in American's history, pitting brethren against brethren. ACWS is re-enactors portraying these vulnerable pages in our country's history. The re-enactors have researched and developed period-correct uniforms, weapons, civilian attire, and living history encampments to portray some of the conditions back in that period of our country's archives.

Marching Thru History Exposition (MTHE) is the largest time-line living history event west of the Mississippi River (Attachment 2). MTHE has nearly one-thousand historical, interpretive specialists representing many different aspects of world history from Ancient Rome, to Elizabethan England, to Colonial America and beyond. MTHE is a family-oriented, educational atmosphere, celebrating the history of those who have defended their civilizations throughout history. Visitors are invited to walk through the camps of the participants and learn about the lives of the common man or woman, or of the great names in history, through interpretive specialists. There are battle reenactments that demonstrate the technology of the times, and each encampment is an opportunity to walk back into time and relive the rich history that is now only available in two-dimensions – through reading materials or the internet.

ANALYSIS

The ACWS proposes to utilize the landscaped area east of the main parking lot at Fairview Park (Attachment 3) and the Orange County Model Engineers (OCME) parking lot on May 8-10 for a Civil War reenactment. Set-up will begin on Friday, May 8, and tear down of the camps would occur on Sunday evening, May 10. The event would involve 100-150 re-enactors, equipment, and artillery camped out at Fairview Park on Saturday and Sunday. ACWS will set-up two camps on the turf area of the park and perform battle reenactments between the camps. The battles include infantry and black powder artillery being fired. Above-ground cooking fires will be set-up in the camps.

The event will be open to the public for a fee of \$5-7.50 for the day, children \$3-4.00, and children under 11 are free. Parking for the re-enactors and vendors will be at the OCME parking lot on the east side of the park. The public will park at Estancia High School and be directed by ACWS volunteers to the reenactment site. The non-paying public visiting Fairview Park would not have access to the main parking lot during the event and would be directed to Canyon Drive for day parking to use the park.

During the day, visitors to the event will experience living history in the camps which are set up with hospitals, civilian and military tents, trades, and crafts. Two times per day the re-enactors will perform the battle reenactments. Service clubs will be invited to set-up booths and sell food to raise funds for their organizations. On Saturday night, a period-correct dinner and dance will be held for invited guests. ACWS expects approximately 2-3,000 attendees over the two-day period. The program also involves an educational component on Friday, May 8, organized by ACWS and the Newport/Mesa School District. Eighth grade students will be given an assignment for extra credit that requires them to visit the camps and complete a historical questionnaire.

ACWS and MTHE are responsible for all public relations and advertising, providing security, porta-potties, trash containers, insurance, and applying for a Special Event Permit which contains conditions set forth by the Public Services Department, Fire Department, Police Department, and Administrative Services.

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

The Council may approve the request with conditions or deny the use of Fairview Park for a Civil War reenactment.

FISCAL REVIEW

ACWS and MTHE will be funding the event through sponsorships and entrance fees.

LEGAL REVIEW

There is no legal review required with this item.

CONCLUSION

ACWS and MTHE propose to utilize the landscaped portion of Fairview Park for a Civil War reenactment on May 8-10, 2009. The Parks and Recreation Commission reviewed the Civil War reenactment proposal at their February 27, 2008, meeting. The Commission approved of the event provided that ACWS comply with all conditions of the Special Event Permit and offer a \$2.00 discount to Costa Mesa residents.

Peter Naghavi
Director of Public Services

Robert Staples
Fairview Park Plan Administrator

- Attachments: 1- [ACWS Overview](#)
2- [MTHE Overview](#)
3- [Fairview Park Master Plan with Event Layout](#)
4- [Civil War Reenactment PowerPoint Presentation](#)

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