



HOWELL CITY COUNCIL SPECIAL MEETING AGENDA

City Council Chambers, Lower Level – 6:00 P.M.

611 E. Grand River, Howell, MI 48843

Visit the City of Howell website at www.cityofhowell.org

Friday July 30, 2021

COUNCIL - MANAGER GOVERNMENT

Council members and
other officials normally
in attendance:

1. Dennis L. Perkins
City Attorney
2. Jan Lobur
Mayor Pro Tem
3. Randy Greene
Council Member
4. Nikolas Hertrich
Council Member
5. Erv Suida
City Manager
6. Nick Proctor
Mayor
7. Angela Guillen
City Clerk
8. Jeannette Ambrose
Council Member
9. Bob Ellis
Council Member
10. Steven L. Manor
Council Member

SEATING:

Above list arranged
according to seating
order; left to right.

1. Call to Order
2. Discussion/Action – Melon Fest Civic Event Application, Howell
Social District
3. Citizen’s Comments
4. Adjournment

*Visitors are cordially invited to attend all meetings of the Council.
If you wish to address the Council, you will be recognized by the Mayor.
Please refer to the printed guidelines on the back of the agenda.*

Public Comment Guidelines

Members of the public are permitted to address a meeting of Council upon recognition by the Mayor. Each person shall begin by stating their name and address and shall be permitted to speak once on each agenda item for three (3) minutes. Agenda item 4 allows for Citizens' Comments on any non-agenda item. Where the Agenda provides Public Hearing comment, each person addressing the Council shall be limited to five (5) minutes regarding the specific agenda Public Hearing item. The Mayor may allow additional time at his/her discretion.

All remarks shall be addressed to the Council as a body, and not to any member. No person, other than members of the Council and the person having the floor, shall be permitted to enter into any discussion, either directly or through the members of the Council. No questions shall be asked the Council Members, except through the Mayor. Any person making personal, impertinent, or slanderous remarks, or who shall become boisterous, while addressing the Council, may be requested to leave the lectern.

Interested parties, or their authorized representatives, may address the Council by written communication in regard to any matter concerning the City's business or over which the Council has control at any time by direct mail or by addressing the City Clerk, and copies will be distributed to Council Members.

CITY OF HOWELL
MEMORANDUM

TO: MAYOR & CITY COUNCIL
FROM: ERVIN J SUIDA, CITY MANAGER
DATE: JULY 30, 2021
RE: MELON FESTIVAL CIVIC EVENT

Sometimes life presents problems that have no good solutions and requires action that will undoubtedly make many angry and disappointed. We are facing one of those moments tonight. After careful consideration and consultation with our Chief of Police, Mayor and HAPRA leadership I am prepared to make a strong recommendation for City Council to consider action on.

As you all are aware our Melon Festival is typically a celebration of the Howell Melon that is enjoyed by all people. Those of us who attend can attest to the diverse crowds of people at past Melon Festivals that have enjoyed the tradition of the Howell Melon and the many attractions and activities. It doesn't take much to walk downtown on a Saturday or stand in the long line at MStreet Bakery to notice the positive changes in Howell. In fact, the Celebration of Pride month with a Pride Parade in Downtown Howell was an excellent demonstration of how accepting and diverse this community has become.

Unfortunately, social and political views are being argued under the umbrella of this event and it has reached a point where continued agitating behavior from all sides of the issue has resulted in divisiveness and emotional anger amongst some in and around our community. After consulting with the Chief of Police regarding safety and strategies to keep the community safe, we feel cancelling the Melon Festival is the appropriate and right thing to do, keeping in mind there is no good solution. History and other examples tell us that when you have emotions running high, large crowds of people, and alcoholic beverages the chance for an incident becomes likely. As the City Manager I cannot simply ignore the potential of a negative light being shed on this incredible community, and I have to weigh the risks versus the reward for allowing this event to continue under the shadow of such divisiveness and emotion. With that in mind, my recommendation is to rescind the prior approval for the 2021 Howell Melon Festival Civic Event application submitted by HAPRA and suspend the Howell Social District through the weekend of August 13 - 15, 2021. I will also be requesting that HAPRA leadership consider the same for their private event and do so in the name of Public Safety. Sometimes stepping back, cooling off and creating an atmosphere for discussion is necessary. This is something I am dedicated to.

The Mayor and City staff have drafted a press release that we would issue immediately, should Council agree with my recommendation. I will reach out to HAPRA and inform them of the decision after tonight's special meeting.

ACTION REQUESTED:

A motion to rescind approval of the 2021 Howell Melon Festival Civic Event application submitted by HAPRA and suspend the Social District from Friday, August 13th through Sunday, August 15th, 2021.

NOTES