**\*\*\*FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE\*\*\***

(August 4, 2021) – The City of Howell is excited to share that the 2021 Howell Melon Festival will move forward, thanks to proactive partnership with the Howell Area Parks and Recreation Authority (HAPRA) to ensure the event is held safely and successfully.

HAPRA has agreed to amend their Civic Event application to provide a quality mini-melon event planned with the safety of our patrons in mind. In separate action taken by the City Council, the Howell Social District will be suspended that same day, August 14, 2021. The decision to amend the Mini-Melon Festival and to suspend the Social District are proactive measures taken to ensure a safe and enjoyable event for all. The action taken was not clouded by an opinion, does not take a social side, was not motivated by politics, but rather a decision based purely on the concern over safety. As we have learned from examples displayed after various sporting events that involve high emotions, large crowds and alcohol, things can take a drastic turn quickly. We would ask that everyone put their political and social views aside and enjoy this wonderful Howell tradition.

In a combined effort with City staff and leadership, public safety officials and HAPRA, we believe we have found a solution that limits risk to the public’s safety and allows the 2021 Mini-Melon Festival to continue.

This 61-year tradition is an important part of our community and we are so glad that it will return this year with these safety modifications in place.