

November 8, 2005

TO: The Honorable Mayor and City Council Members

FROM: John Szerlag, City Manager 

SUBJECT: 2005 Troy Daze

Attached are memoranda from the Police and Community Affairs Departments which provide a candid observation of Troy Daze. Unfortunately, the major theme indicates that Troy Daze is becoming more of a carnival and less of a community festival. Given this, I've asked staff members from the Police, Community Affairs, and Parks and Recreation Departments to work with the Troy Daze Committee for reason of developing options which will hopefully bring back a sense of community to this event. We'll then review these options with City Council for final disposition.

As always, please feel free to contact me should you have any questions.

JS/mr\AGENDA ITEMS\2005\11.14.05 – 2005 Troy Daze

- c: Carol Anderson, Parks and Recreation Director
- Charles Craft, Police Chief
- John M. Lamerato, Assistant City Manager/Finance & Administration
- Brian P. Murphy, Assistant City Manager/Services
- Cindy Stewart, Community Affairs Director
- Troy Daze Committee Members

November 3, 2005

TO: John Szerlag, City Manager

FROM: Charles T. Craft, Chief of Police



SUBJECT: 2005 Troy Daze Community Fair Summary

The following is a summary of 2005 Troy Daze police activity and the costs associated with providing police service to the festival. Lieutenant Scherlinck, who was one of the primary command officers assigned to the festival, compiled this information.

Police Incidents:

- Personal Injury Crash 1
- Altercations/Fights 3
- Property Damage Crashes 2
- Attempted Larcenies 2
- Parking Complaint 1
- Dog Bite (unfounded) 1
- Traffic Complaint 1

Overview of Significant Police Activity

In addition to the cited incidents, there were several occurrences that required police intervention but did not rise to the level that required formal documentation. Those matters involved the need for medical care resulting from non-serious medical issues, missing children that were quickly reunited with their parents, and a report of lewd conduct.

The most significant occurrences are as follows:

- A City Council appointed Troy Daze Committee member rushed, grabbed, and jostled a teenage musician, who had performed at the Teen Concert; the subsequent altercation involved the teen's father. Officers witnessed and documented the incident. The involved parties resolved the matter to each other's satisfaction that evening; however, the matter is still pending and prosecution for assault and/or fighting remains a possibility.
- While directing traffic at the fireworks event, a police sergeant was struck by an automobile. The injuries incurred required medical treatment, and the sergeant was off work for a short period of time. He has fully recovered.
- Two fights broke out in the "mid-way" between groups of teens. The matter was handled without making arrests or citing the involved parties.

- Several fights/near fights occurred that required police intervention. In each case the participants fled from the officers or were removed from the park.
- Police officers report that tomatoes and other objects were thrown at them from rides in the mid-way. Officers were unable to determine who was responsible.
- A teen began swinging a chain near a police officer in what appeared to be an attempt to come close to the officer without striking him. The teen, and his group, moved on when other officers intervened.
- Teens shot projectiles from a "spud gun" (which were being sold and provided as prizes) at civilians and officers. Although not physically harmful, their actions provoked conflict. Officers prohibited the vendor from selling/distributing the toy. A citizen complaint against a police officer resulted from an officer's efforts to maintain order and prevent the firing of the projectiles from escalating into a fight.
- "Snap pops" (a small cap that makes a small popping sound when thrown) were thrown from rides at passersby and specifically police officers. Again, a vendor at the festival was selling these items.
- During the evening hours on Friday and Saturday, officers encountered large groups of young people who were congregating, particularly in the mid-way area. The youths cursed and spit at officers who dispersed them based on the concern that a fight would erupt.
- Several vendors refused to close at the required time, which delayed the clearing of the park after the official closing time.

Supervisory officers stationed at the festival fielded several concerns about police activity or the perceived lack thereof. The concerns range from allegations from a Troy Daze Committee volunteer that the lack of police presence at the Teen Event contributed to the disturbance, that the officers actions in policing the disturbance were improper, that police officers were sleeping/sitting around (apparently, the volunteer was urging others to take photo's of the officers), and complaints from citizens relating to police interaction with their children. The allegations regarding the officer's lack of attentiveness was quickly resolved. The officers present worked diligently, the personnel the volunteer observed were volunteer Police Explorers. The citizen complaints, including one stemming from the altercation involving a City Council appointed Troy Daze Committee member, are under investigation.

Cost Summary:

Overtime Hours/Cost:	196 hours	\$12,750.00
Straight Time Hours/Cost:	390 hours	\$11,737.00
Total Police Department Hours/Cost:	586 hours	\$24,487.00

This represents a \$7,613, reduction in overtime time costs in comparison to the overtime costs for the 2004 Troy Daze Community fair. The total cost is

consistent with previous years; however, overtime costs have been significantly reduced.

General Observations

While the festival is by and large very safe and orderly, officers assigned to police this year's event were, and have been in recent years, subjected to poor treatment by some Troy Daze attendees. Supervisory officers assigned the event indicate they have been asked to police situations that appear to be poorly planned and managed. Specific areas of concerns/issues are as follows:

- **Teen Concert** – This event is poorly organized and managed. As result, it has resulted in conflicts and, on at least two occasions, fights.
- **Hours of Operation** – The nature and mood of the festival changes significantly after dark. The crowd becomes predominately teenage and the amount of disorder increases significantly.
- **Use of Police Explorers** – Due to the hostile, abusive tendencies of some people after dark, there is concern about the use of Police Explorers to staff the parking areas after dark. Additionally, Explorers and Explorer parents, who accompanied their children, report that adults, a Troy Daze Committee member, and especially young people, were confrontational in their approach to the Explorers.
- **Vendors** – Some of the vendors do not recognize the need to work within the established rules.
- **Dogs** – Many patrons brought dogs to the festival. Most were leashed and properly controlled; however, one citizen became confrontational when advised to clean up after her dog, and in another case a pit-bull got away from its owner (it was recovered and returned by a police officer).

Recommendations

It is not the intent of the police department to reduce the authority or involvement of the Troy Daze Committee volunteer staff. In spite of the isolated baseless complaint one volunteer voiced, the majority of those who staff the festival are dedicated, wonderful people who work very hard. However, it is my belief that in some instances the festival organizers should submit to the considered opinion of City Management.

Clearly, our area of expertise is security and safety and our recommendations will be limited to those issues. However, Community Affairs, Parks & Recreation, and the Department of Public Works, each have significant experience with specific issues the festival creates and, therefore, should have considerable input.

The police department offers the following suggestions:

- **Reduce the Hours of Operation** – As previously stated, the crowd changes after dark; it becomes very young and confrontational. Consideration should be given to closing the festival at 8:00 PM. Although not necessarily a safety concern it should be pointed out that the length of the festival and it's long hours fatigues the volunteer staff to the point their effectiveness is compromised.
- **Discontinue/Restructure the Teen Concert** – This event cannot depend upon police officers to act as chaperones unless staffing is greatly increased. The police department has offered our expertise (based on our Jam Fest experience) in organizing and staging the event. This offer has not been accepted. It is our belief that inadequate event planning and poor management were direct causes of the altercation that occurred at the venue. It is our recommendation that without significant restructuring that allows for police department direction, the event be discontinued.
- **Limit the Use of Police Explorers** – Although an excellent fundraiser, should the hours of operation not be reduced the department will consider eliminating the Police Explorers participation. The nature of the crowd, as well as the scrutiny they received from at least one Troy Daze Committee volunteer, is such that the funds they raise are not worth the risk. It must be noted that the Explorers are a volunteer Boy Scouting organization, made up of young boys and girls. I'm very proud of them. They are children and should not be subjected to such treatment.
- **Vendors** – The police department needs the opportunity to review what vendors are selling/giving away, as well as the authority to discontinue any such activity that may endanger the public or contribute to the unruliness of attendees. Contract language should specifically prohibit the sale and/or distribution of anything that shoots a projectile, and should indicate that the police department has the authority to shut down vendors operations that become a public nuisance/danger or hinder efforts to maintain order.
- **Prohibit Dogs** – Dogs should not be allowed in the park during the festival.
- **Establishment and Posting of General Rules** – Basic rules of conduct should be established and posted. I suggest the City Attorney's input be sought as to the need for City Council to adopt such rules, and the constitutionality of the rules adopted. Police department staff would be happy to work on the establishment of such rules.

Unless significant change occurs in the planning and management of the event, the police department will recommend adding a two-officer contingent each night. This will result in increased cost. This contingent will focus on issuing violations and taking enforcement action.

The police department has long assigned personnel to police the Troy Daze Festival. While this year's summary is more negative than past years, we feel obligated to provide a report documenting issues that we believe contributed to

the creation of several problems this year and that have the potential to develop into major problems if not addressed.

Certainly there are many positive aspects to the event. However, based on our long-term experience we are concerned that the nature of the festival is changing and that the community oriented focus will be lost if the issues causing this change are not addressed.

TO: John Szerlag, City Manager

FROM: Cindy Stewart, Community Affairs Director 

CC: John Lamerato, Asst. City Manager/Finance 

SUBJECT: Troy Daze Festival

DATE: November 3, 2005

As you are aware, there were a number of problems during the Troy Daze Festival this year and I would like to report my concerns from a public relations standpoint. The biggest concern dealt with the Saturday evening Teen Band event that seems to cause problems every year.

Both myself and the Police Administration who are liaisons to the Festival Committee agree that the four-day Troy Daze Festival is too long and the hours of operation run too late. Over the years we have had numerous problems at night with teens fighting and teens not being picked up by parents until hours after the Festival closes. Our Police Officers become babysitters. Families do not want to bring their smaller children in the evening due to the large crowds of teenagers.

On another related event at Troy Daze, although the annual parade was cancelled, we did not receive any complaints from residents. A number of people had questions, but when told the reasons for the cancellation (parade participants outnumbered viewers 5:1) they understood. We have heard from a number of families that the fireworks should be on Saturday evening. This way more people would attend and bring their children since it's not a school night and then Sunday we could close the festival earlier.

Even though there is a volunteer Troy Daze Advisory Committee appointed by City Council to oversee the Festival, ultimately, the citizens and all festivalgoers view the Troy Daze Festival as a component of the City of Troy. Anything that happens during this major City event reflects on our reputation and after the Festival ends, the complaint and concern calls are always directed to Community Affairs and the Troy Police Department.

There is a place in our City for a community festival, but perhaps now is the time to talk about revamping the event. Certain changes would also help with budgeting during these lean economic times.