

## **Policy prevents Council from sponsoring Chamber event**

**By Anthony Welch**

Manitou Springs City Council wrote the policies, and it has to stick to them, even if it's grudgingly.

For the Manitou Chamber, that means it'll have to fork over \$4,460 to pay for City staff and vehicles for the Oct. 29 Emma Crawford Coffin Races.

The Chamber's Leslie Lewis and Roger Miller presented their request for a sponsorship and waiver of fees at the Council's regular meeting Tuesday night. The initial request including waiving of the \$6,190 it would cost for city staff and vehicles the day of the races.

That amount was reduced to \$4,460 when Lewis said she wouldn't need city staff until 10 a.m. the day of the event, rather than 9 a.m. as originally listed in the request.

Just as a motion to approve the request was about to be made, Councilwoman Aimee Cox pointed out that the City's event sponsorship policy says sponsorship isn't available to recipients of any other financial or other type of assistance from Council within the same calendar year.

"I'm a little concerned we have policies that we've written, and we're not following them ourselves," Councilwoman Coreen Toll said. "As a new member I find that a little alarming."

Lewis mentioned similar fees have been waived for the last several years. The Chamber doesn't qualify for sponsorship because Council budgets approximately \$250,000 a year for it.

"Since Chamber is under city funding, they'd not qualify for sponsorship under policy," Mayor Marc Snyder said. "If you want to go by the letter of the law."

Snyder cited that Council didn't exactly stick to policy in approving previous agenda items Tuesday, including applications for a banner for the Manitou Chair Project and the high school's homecoming parade request. Neither application was turned in before the required deadline, but was approved.

The motion to approve the Chamber's request failed with a 3-3 vote, with Cox, Toll and Councilman Matt Carpenter opposing.

Miller said the event is not a revenue generator for the Chamber, and that not having the fees waived messes with its budget. He said the decision was ironic being that the City and the Chamber are in sort of a partnership. Many of the monies the City gives the Chamber goes toward such events.

## **Chair Project banner approved**

Council approved Sean O'Meallie's request to hang a banner for The Chair Project Saturday through Oct. 9.

Manitou Library Director Margaret Morris was on hand for another agenda item, but noticed the banner request conflicted with her wanting to hang a banner for AuthorFest, which also takes place Oct. 9. The library had not submitted an application for the banner, however Morris said she's never had to come before Council in the past to hang a banner. She wanted to know if the AuthorFest banner could still be hung as well.

City Administrator Jack Benson said that question couldn't be answered because the City had an application from O'Meallie and, despite the conflict, he'd get priority.

Councilman Rick Barry mentioned maybe O'Meallie would be willing to hang his banner side by side with the AuthorFest banner, if space allowed. Council suggested that maybe Benson could speak with O'Meallie and something could be worked out.

Otherwise, Snyder said the Chamber could promote AuthorFest on its marquee.

## **Redesigned intersection, roundabout approved**

Council approved the design for a new intersection at Park Avenue and Manitou Avenue as well as a proposed roundabout at Serpentine Road and Manitou Avenue. Public Works Director Bruno Pothier made the presentation.

The original designs from Nolte Associates called for a roundabout at Park Avenue and Manitou Avenue. The public works department felt the design would create a bottleneck affect for traffic in that area. The proposed roundabout would've been close in proximity to the current Ruxton roundabout.

Park Avenue would become a two-lane, one way street. It would include right turn lane and a dedicated left lane turn. Vehicles traveling west on Manitou Avenue would no longer be able to turnaround at Park Avenue and, instead, have to continue west.

Vehicles that want to turn around and return east on Manitou Avenue would be able to use the proposed roundabout at Serpentine Road. Pothier said signage would be placed on Park indicating that drivers could head back to Colorado Springs, Woodland Park or turnaround by heading west to Serpentine.

The redirecting of vehicles from downtown, passed Park Avenue and continuing toward the west end of town means the following benefits for the City, according to Pothier:

- The Smischny parking lot would be more accessible and on the traffic route.
- Existing businesses would get better traffic.
- New business opportunities would be created.
- Property values would increase.
- The end of town would not be at Tubby's Turnaround anymore but at the Serpentine roundabout, expanding the opportunity for commercial development.

"Many councils have hoped to stimulate some development on the Westside of town there," Snyder said. "I think this type of infrastructure furthers that."

## **In other business, Council...**

- Approved the Manitou Springs High School homecoming parade for 1:30 p.m. Sept. 30.
- Approved the appointments of Jan Johnson to the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board and Michael Massik to the Manitou Springs Library Board of Trustees.
- Approved an agreement with Colorado Springs Utilities regarding delivery/exchange of Manitou Fry-Ark Project water.
- Learned that City Finance Director Mike Leslie's last day will be Jan. 1, 2012. Benson recommended Council put together a committee start seeking out candidates to replace Leslie.
- Approved an ordinance amending the code establishing a watershed district for the protection of Manitou Springs' historic mineral springs. Definitions were added to deal with seismic activity which includes blasting and excavation.

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