



Item No. 20 Town of Atherton

CITY COUNCIL STAFF REPORT – REGULAR AGENDA

TO: HONORABLE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL

FROM: GEORGE RODERICKS, CITY MANAGER

DATE: AUGUST 21, 2013

SUBJECT: PRIVATE EVENT RESPONSE – COST REIMBURSEMENT

RECOMMENDATION

Receive and File.

BACKGROUND

In April 2013, two residents hosted a fundraising visit by the President of the United States. The private events involved a helicopter landing at the Menlo Circus Club and a motorcade to the two residences. The Town incurred a law enforcement and public works expense due to necessary security protocols for transport. In addition, outside agencies provided local assistance via mutual aid.

Chapter 17.56 of the Atherton Municipal Code requires that a permit be obtained for any special event held on private property, occurring on two or more consecutive days where members of the general public are invited. The purpose and intent of the ordinance is to ensure the comfort, safety, and general welfare of the Town citizens (excessive noise, traffic, and other intrusions upon their privacy). Further, the Town has a policy which requires reimbursement of any extraordinary public costs associated with a private event. Lastly, Chapter 12.28 of the Atherton Municipal Code requires that a permit be obtained prior to the landing of any helicopter on any property in Town, except under emergency situations.

After the events concluded, the Town invoiced the involved parties seeking reimbursement of the expense. As of the conclusion of FY 12/13, the Town had not received reimbursement from any of the parties invoiced.

FINDINGS

The Ordinances require that the hosts for the planned events obtain a permit in advance of their occurrence. The Town was involved with the events through contact with the Secret Service but

Private Event Response – Cost Reimbursement

August 21, 2013

Page 2 of 2

did not advise the private property owners at that time that the Town could or would seek reimbursement of costs connected thereto from the hosts.

For all similar events in assisting a State or Federal agency, the Town seeks reimbursement of costs connected to our involvement. In most cases, request for such reimbursement are denied. In this case, while the event involved assisting a federal agency, when the federal agency denied reimbursement, the Town also sought reimbursement from the private property hosts under the policy and ordinance guidelines.

As mentioned, neither the federal agencies nor the property owner hosts provided the Town with reimbursement of its expenses.

Because the Town was involved in the event from its origination and the Town did not formally request a Special Event Permit or advise the property owner hosts that they could be liable for the costs involved, it is staff's recommendation that the Town not seek further reimbursement from the property owners.

However, it is also staff's recommendation that the Town step up public education regarding private events on private property that trigger the need for extraordinary public resources and the fact that such events will require reimbursement of any extraordinary costs incurred.

Staff plans to step up the education by tightening the applicable language of both the ordinance and the policies involved and educating the community via new release and the Town's website.

FISCAL IMPACT

The costs incurred (just over \$8,000) for the event in FY 12/13 will be incorporated into the Town's FY 12/13 Budget and not listed as a receivable.

There are sufficient funds within the FY 12/13 budget to accommodate the costs.