



Salt Lake City Council
451 South State Street, Room 304
Salt Lake City UT
Attn: Salt Lake City Council Representatives

4/7/2014

Dear Salt Lake City Council,

For more than 25 years, Sugar House Park has hosted one of the largest fireworks shows in the Salt Lake City for the benefit of its residents and many businesses. It's the last free 4th of July Fireworks event that remains in Salt Lake City. As you are aware, in 2009, Sugar House Park cancelled all future 4th of July events with budget concerns due to services by Salt Lake City, that had once given free of charge, were now going to be charged to the park. In 2010, I stepped up and made a commitment to try to preserve this long-standing, patriotic tradition for this community. With the help of business sponsors, Salt Lake City, Salt Lake County and a handful of friends, the 2010, 2011, 2012 and 2013 Sugar House Fireworks 4th of July events were kept alive.

Sugar House Park is open to the public, and for many, the 4th of July has become an all day event to enjoy with their families. Beginning at noon, event goers can enjoy food, fun, music and more culminating at 10:00 pm with a 25-30 minute fabulous fireworks exhibition.

The Sugar House Fireworks 4th of July event draws many people into Salt Lake City. We estimate that between 30,000 to 40,000 people come through Sugar House and into the park the day of the event. It is estimated that an additional 100,000 people frequent the areas surrounding the festivities and businesses in Salt Lake City. But the most important draw on this day is to watch the fireworks show that evening.

This event helps make it possible to generate revenue for our vendors through vendor sales. It brings revenue to the businesses in Salt Lake City, and Sugar House. It also generates a lot of revenue from sales tax for Salt Lake City. It provides extra income via a work opportunity for City employees such as Policemen, Firemen and EMT's. It helps sponsors in branding their name and helps them gain customers and patronage through the pre-event promotional benefits arranged through media sponsor coverage. The media coverage also brings great recognition to Salt Lake City, Salt Lake County and Sugar House.

You need to be made aware of the monetary impact to Salt Lake City and to businesses in Sugar House if this event were cancelled. I am also wondering if there may be backlash from a disappointed community.

This event is the sole reason for so much traffic into Salt Lake City on the 4th of July. If the fireworks were cancelled people would go to surrounding cities and Salt Lake City would lose that revenue. Salt Lake City is the biggest city in the state and this event brings people into this wonderful city. It will be huge loss to Salt Lake City to have its residents go elsewhere for fun, festivities, and this tradition.

The event will be canceled by week's end if the Salt Lake City Council will not step in and fund the city's need for a "free to the public" fireworks show. I have been working on this year's event since last August and have put in nearly 300 hours of my own time since then. We had verbal commitments then from all of our sponsors for this year. But, unfortunately, two large sponsors have decided to cancel their verbal commitment and one large sponsor has cut their commitment in half. The net effect is we are \$25,000 short of our goal. Since receiving this news from our sponsors about 8 weeks ago, I have been non-stop trying to get more sponsors to fill this shortage. I have been turned down by dozens of sponsors mostly citing "its way too late and our sponsorship budgets were allocated last fall" as their reason. I've met with and talked to Sugar House Park Authority board members with two non-sponsorship ideas of raising the money but was turned down on both. I presented a money saving idea to them and was also turned down. I went on the news to appeal to the public to pay an honorary entrance fee through our website, but had very little response.

Here's another problem. If we cancel this year's event, we'll lose all of our business sponsors. They won't be back, because if we cancel this year's event, they won't have faith in us to follow through for next year and will allocate the use of their sponsor dollars with other avenues perceived as being more valuable and stable.

This letter is an appeal to you, Salt Lake City, to save the event. You are my last appeal and last resort. This event will not happen without the infusion of \$25,000 to save it. This will be my last effort in this regard, now and in the future. I've reached the end of my rope, so to speak, in trying to save this event. It's becoming too difficult to fund this mostly through business sponsorships. I do appreciate the funds we have received from Salt Lake City in the past and the budget allocated (\$15,000) for this year, but unfortunately, it's not enough (we need \$15,000 already allocated + an additional \$25,000 = Total \$ 40,000) to save the event.

We have a huge disadvantage over other venues. Other venues are able to charge an entrance fee. This, in itself, could pay for the event. Other venues incorporate attractive entertainment that entices people to pay for the concert and come to their event. This could, in itself, pay for the event. Other venues are able to charge for parking. This, in itself, could pay for our current short fall. The Sugar House Park Authority will not allow us to do any of these advantages.

It's much more than a Fireworks Show

Even more important – Why we really must continue to save and keep this celebration alive.

During the American Revolution, the legal separation of the Thirteen Colonies from Great Britain occurred on July 2, 1776, when the Second Continental Congress voted to approve a resolution of independence that had been proposed in June by Richard Henry Lee of Virginia declaring the United States independent from Great Britain. After voting for independence, Congress turned its attention to the Declaration of Independence, a statement explaining this decision, which had been prepared by a Committee of Five, with Thomas Jefferson as its principal author. Congress debated and revised the Declaration, finally approving it on July 4.

Independence Day is a national holiday marked by patriotic displays. Independence Day is not just another federal holiday, but it is an event that stirs us on this day. Time will be spent reflecting upon its relevance to our way of life. It is, as it should be, a celebration of the founding of this Republic, and its independence as a nation. Many Americans will talk with one another or with their children about the impossible dream made true by a handful of remarkable men. Many of our fellow Americans will reflect about the new concept of government they created for us, one based upon the adoption of a Constitution, which established the principles of self-government and the limitations on the powers granted to that government.

What we are celebrating is not just the meaning of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness embodied in the Declaration. Equally as important is the form of government that was established and then enshrined in the Constitution adopted in 1787 as the foundation and source of legal authority for the United States. What was provided to us by the Founders is captured by an exchange between a bystander and Benjamin Franklin. At the end of the Constitutional Convention in Philadelphia a woman awaiting some announcement of the results that had been produced asked Franklin: "What have we got, a republic or a monarchy" to which he responded, "a republic, if you can keep it."

My friends, not just for the monetary and lesser important reasons stated mostly in the first page of this letter, but for the more important reasons listed on this second page let us keep this tradition alive so that we may pass on the importance to each generation of our wonderful United States of America, the greatest country in the world, a shining beacon to which many have strived for, sacrificed for, and have given their lives to defend, honor and sustain.

Will you, Salt Lake City, save the Sugar House Fireworks event, not only this year, but perhaps into perpetuity? I ask you to discuss this request at your upcoming Council meeting. If the answer is no, we will cancel the Fireworks event on Friday April 11, 2014 out of respect for our business sponsors and our vendors who are waiting for an answer whether to stay with us or to shift their focus to other venues etc. and out of respect to the Salt Lake City community to be made aware of the cancellation, why it was cancelled and so they can make other arrangements to attend other city's fireworks events.

Please call or email me with any questions that you may have.

Sincerely,

Scott Workman

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