

REQUEST FOR BOARD ACTION

HENDERSON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

MEETING DATE: February 5, 2007

SUBJECT: Foothills Highland Games

ATTACHMENTS: Yes

SUMMARY OF REQUEST:

The County has been contacted by representatives of the Scottish Clans of the South (SCOTS) Games Committee requesting that they be permitted to again hold the Foothills Highland Games at Jackson Park. The 2006 Foothills Highland Games were held at Jackson Park in November 2006 after outgrowing the Blue Ridge Community College facilities. Interim Recreation Director, Carey McLelland, has been in communication with the group regarding holding the 2007 Games at Jackson Park and will be available to discuss this issue with the Board of Commissioners. Representatives of the Games Committee will also be available for discussion at this evening's meeting.

BOARD ACTION REQUESTED:

Staff is generally supportive of permitting the SCOTS to utilize Jackson Park for its Foothills Highlands Games. However, staff has a significant concern regarding the closure of the Park for the event primarily because Jackson Park is the County's most widely used park and its closure would inconvenience other park visitors. In addition, County staff will need to address park ordinance issues regarding open fires, weapons used during the Games, and overnight camping during the event prior to approval.

The Assistant County Manager recommends that the SCOTS be permitted to utilize Jackson Park for the Foothills Highland Games, without closing the Park, but authorizing the Interim Recreation Director, County Attorney, and representatives of the Games to attempt resolution of the others issues and the resolution be placed on the consent agenda at the Board of Commissioners' February 21, 2007 meeting.

Suggested Motion:

I move that the SCOTS be permitted to use Jackson Park for the Foothills Highland Games, pending resolution of the park ordinance issues by County staff and representatives of the Games. I further move that Jackson Park not be closed for the Games, but that staff be directed to develop a formal policy regarding closure of the County's parks.



SCOTS INC.

SCOTTISH CLANS OF THE SOUTH

A 501(C) (3) AND 170© (2) TAX-EXEMPT ORGANIZATION

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E-MAIL: FOOTHILLSHG@BELLSOUTH.NET

November 27, 2006

Board of Commissioners
Attn. Bill Moyer, Chairman
County Administration Building
100 North King Street
Hendersonville, NC 28792

Re: Foothills Highland Games 2007

Dear Sir,

I am writing to you in my functions as President of S.C.O.T.S. (Scottish Clans of the South) and the Chairman of the Games Committee of the Foothills Highland Games.

S.C.O.T.S. has held its 6th Annual Foothills Highland Games at the Jackson Park Facility on November 3-4, 2006 after outgrowing the grounds at the Blue Ridge Community College where the games had been held during the previous years. We are aware that this year's planning phase had not been conducted in the proper way due to incorrect information by the meanwhile dismissed director of the facility. Let me assure you that we'll do everything in our power to follow the correct procedures especially in regard to obtaining necessary permits.

At this point I like to express my deepest appreciations towards the very supportive actions of the park's administration. The last minute negotiations led by Carey McLelland brought the results to save our event. Unfortunately we had to endure some financial hardship due to the fact that we were unable to close the facility as we had been promised by the previous director. I understand that this would have had required a three months public notice. In order to prevent this problem for 2007 I therefore respectfully request that S.C.O.T.S. will receive permission to close the Jackson Park facility for Saturday, November 3, 2007 between 8:00 am – 5:00 pm for public use. The alternative would require the setup of a portable fence system in a designated area which can only be effective by employing a major security force. This would add a major financial expense

CHECKLIST

1. Closing of Jackson Park for the public on Saturday, November 3, 2007 between 8:00 am – 5:00 pm
2. Overnight campers/guests in the park
3. Fire in designated fire pits
4. Weapons possession/sale (historic weapons related to the event)
5. Usage of the parks trash cans and disposal containers
6. Usage and movement of the parks bleachers
7. Usage and movement of the parks picnic tables

to our budget which we try to keep as limited as possible considering the fact that the Foothills Highland Games are still in the phase of becoming a financial stable event.

Three other issues would have to be addressed by your office:

- 1) Overnight campers/guests in the park
- 2) Fire in designated fire pits
- 3) Weapons possession/sale (historic weapons related to the event)

This is crucial because we'll not be able to obtain a large number of vendors if they cannot sell historical weapons like swords and dirks, etc. which would lead to a significant loss in revenue for the games.

At least half of the historical re-enactors would also not return.

I have included copies of the papers in conjunction with this year's games in order to show you how things have been handled at this past event.

Please let me express that S.C.O.T.S. is dedicated to make the Foothills Highland Games a permanent and successful event for the Hendersonville community. The Hendersonville Travel and Tourism Office has supported us the past years with grants towards advertisement and placing an ad in their Visitors Guide because it has recognized the importance of the games for the development of the tourism in our beautiful region. We are hopeful that you'll find positive solutions for our needs and therefore join this support.

In order to start our advertisement and sponsorship campaign as planned by January 2007 we'd appreciate if you would consider placing our inquiries under some priority.

Should your certainly tight time schedule allow for a personal meeting we'd be delighted to explain our needs in person.

I have also attached a separate checklist with the items to be addressed for your convenience.

Yours truly,



Udo Wilms
President S.C.O.T.S

Copies: Charlie Messer, Vice Chairman
Larry Young, Commissioner
Chuck McGrady, Commissioner
Mark Williams, Commissioner
Steve Wyatt, County Manager
Russell Burrell, County Attorney
J. Carey McLelland, Interim Recreation Dept. Manager/Finance Director