



City of Culver City

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Staff Report

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PRCSC - Receive and File the Report Regarding the 2019 Holiday Tower Lighting Event at Veterans Memorial Park and a Proposed Plan to Combine the Holiday Tower Lighting with the Downtown Business Association's Holiday Tree Lighting Event.

Meeting Date: October 1, 2019

Contact Person/Dept: Corey Lakin/PRCS Department
Phone Number: (310) 253-6682

Fiscal Impact: Yes ☐ No ☒

General Fund: Yes ☐ No ☐

Public Hearing: ☐

Action Item: ☒

Attachments: Yes ☐

Public Notification: (Email) Meetings and Agendas - Parks, Recreation and Community Services Commission (09/26/19); (Email) Parks, Recreation & Community Services Department Updates (09/26/19)

Department Approval: Corey Lakin, PRCS Director (09/26/19)

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Parks, Recreation and Community Services (PRCS) Commission receive and file the report regarding the 2019 Holiday Tower Lighting event at Veterans Memorial Park and a proposed plan to combine the Holiday Tower Lighting with the Downtown Business Association's Holiday Tree Lighting event.

BACKGROUND

Last year, the Holiday Tower Lighting at Veterans Memorial Park took place on Friday, December 7, 2018. More than 2,000 people attended the annual event which much to the delight of the community had been significantly expanded and improved for the first time in many years. The event included sledding on 25 tons of snow, three inflatables, four food trucks, games, vendor booths, photos with Santa, and live entertainment on the stage. The entire event was outdoors in front of the Veterans Memorial Building (VMB; 4117 Overland Avenue, Culver City, CA 90230) and in the parking lot adjacent to the VMB Auditorium on Culver Boulevard.

The Downtown Business Association planned its annual Holiday Tree Lighting for Thursday, December 6, 2018. However, due to rain, it had to be postponed for a week. Their annual event typically includes a ceremonial tree lighting, live entertainment for approximately 30 minutes, photos with Santa, and cookie/snack bag giveaway. Last year, as in previous years, Parks, Recreation and Community Services (PRCS) staff assisted with the event by helping to set up the area for Santa and manage the lines throughout the night.

DISCUSSION

Hosting two holiday events in Culver City provides a great opportunity for the community to celebrate together

during a very festive time of year. And while these two events do not directly compete with one another, the fact that they happen annually one day apart (weather permitting), may not be conducive to optimal community participation in both events. Additionally, both events feature performances from Culver City Unified School District (CCUSD) students and other local entertainers, which may force the entities to choose one event over another or performance at back to back events.

In late August 2019, PRCS staff met with the Executive Director and President of the Downtown Business Association (DBA) to discuss the concept of combining events at the newly created Culver Steps and Town Plaza. The Town Plaza, which is adjacent to the Culver Steps, has traditionally been the home of the DBA's Holiday Tree Lighting event. The opening of the new Culver Steps, located at 9300 Culver Boulevard, Culver City, CA 90232, provides an exciting opportunity to hold new and more varied activities to celebrate the holiday season.

PRCS staff is scheduled to meet with Community Development Department (CDD) staff to survey the Culver Steps and Town Plaza areas to determine where highly sought after components like snow, inflatables, games, etc. could take place to allow for this year's combined holiday event. The combined event is preliminarily scheduled to take place on the first Thursday of the December (December 5), which is the annual date of the Holiday Tree Lighting and only one day before when the Holiday Tower Lighting at Veterans Memorial Park has traditionally been held.

Regarding the Tower Lighting, staff is exploring options for illuminating the Tower for the holidays in order to still have the iconic structure visible throughout Culver City and allow for that tradition to continue. If the proposed plan for combining the two holiday events moves forward, the Tower Lighting will no longer be the focus of a separate ceremony at Veterans Memorial Park. Instead, the Tower Lighting will occur after the Tree Lighting event and the Tower will be illuminated throughout the holidays.

FISCAL ANALYSIS

There is no fiscal impact associated with the discussion of this Agenda Item.

MOTION

That the Parks, Recreation and Community Services Commission:

Receive and file the report.