

CITY OF BATAVIA

DATE: July 16, 2010
TO: City Services Committee
FROM: Bill McGrath, City Administrator
SUBJECT: Discussion: Event Street Closures

Summary: This memo describes:

1. FYI: Issues staff are having with Chase the Moon event, so that the Committee & Council can be aware that staff may be recommending the event be moved elsewhere after it occurs on July 31st, and
2. Present a request from the organizers of the Fox & Turkey Trot, a 4-mile (and 1-mile youth) running race which occurs on Thanksgiving morning, for aclosure of Hosutone near City Hall and an approximately 90 minute closure of Rt. 31.

Background:

- Chase the Moon: This family bike ride began in 2004, and earned \$15,000 for Girl Scouts. The event was initiated by 2 Batavia residents, but after the third year was handed over to the Conservation Foundation. The race is based at Marmion, proceeds north on Raddant Road, East on Pine across Kirk, through Fermilab and back. See <http://www.chasethemoon.com/map.php> for an actual map. Because of the increase in attendance, and in light of a review of the organization of the event by our new Deputy Police Chiefs, the issue of safety has arisen. A midnight ride on 2 arterial roads on a Saturday night at midnight is a cause for concern, and staff is concerned with the organization regarding security and volunteer strength within and outside of Batavia's boundaries. We have strongly suggested that they contact Fermi and /or look for another route, but it was too late for this year by the time the City was contacted. The purpose for this discussion is to give an FYI, and staff will return after the event to describe how it went and to perhaps make a formal request for the event to move.
- Turkey Trot: Simply stated, this fundraising event for the Batavia Interfaith Food Pantry has been occurring in Batavia for 13 years, but has suddenly grown in popularity, from 250 adult and youth runners in 2008 to over 1,000 in 2009. Use of the bike trail has become unrealistic, and the organizers have met with staff to chart out a new route. The route that has been suggested would require closure of Houston from Island to Rt. 31, and Rt. 31 at Houston for various periods of time from 8 am until 10:30 am, as well as some restricted parking on Houston west of Jefferson to VanNortwick. Rt. 31 would be close for about 5 minutes at the start and again, from when the first runner returns until all finish. It is a fairly short race, all running, no casual jogging or walking as we understand it. A representative will be at the meeting to describe it more fully. The race pays for all costs of police and barricades as required by the City. A detour route has been set up to avoid this intersection and has the approval of the Police Department, primarily because of the time and day of the event when traffic is very light.

Alternatives: These are only for the Fox & Turkey Trot.

1. Allow the new racecourse for 2010.

a. Pros-

- i. Allows observation of how it actually works.
- ii. Allows a popular, family-oriented, charitable fundraiser to expand while still taking advantage of downtown Batavia.
- iii. Depending on determination, keeps the event in Batavia.
- iv. Police feel traffic is so light, and that there are no church services of which we are aware, that the likelihood of severe inconvenience or injury is minimized.
- v. If the experiment failed, organizers would have an entire year to plan.

b. Cons-

- i. Would cause some inconvenience for those using Rt. 31.
- ii. Always a potential for injury whenever any City streets are used.
- iii. If this route makes the event even more popular, will the inconveniences or chance of injury become too great? In other words will a cap on the number of runners be necessary to use this route?

c. Budget Impact- None- The event pays for all costs.

d. Staffing Impact- Costs are paid. Holiday is unusual but getting extra personnel to work should not be a problem because of time of day.

2. Disallow the new course

a. Pros-

- i. No inconveniences to motorists, including citizens, or chance for injury for participants
- ii. Allows use of Bike Trail Path as intended to relieve streets.
- iii. No City staff required.

b. Cons-

- i. Could lead to potential loss of a long-time popular event that contributes to a Batavia charity.

c. Budget Impact- None

d. Staffing Impact- None

Staff recommendation: Allow street closure for 2010; report back to Committee within 60 days of event with recommendation for future years.

Timeline for major actions: 7-20-10 City Services Approval, 8-3-10 Council Approval, January 2011, City Services review

C: Mayor & City Council
Department Heads
Deputy Police Chief Dan Eul