



Mayor Gavin Newsom
Philip A. Ginsburg, General Manager

To: San Francisco Recreation and Parks Commission
Operations Committee

From: Dana Ketcham
Manager Permits and Reservations

Re: Movie Nights in Parks Policy

Date: September 5, 2013

Agenda Item: Movie Nights in Parks Policy: Discussion and possible action to approve a policy authorizing staff to approve amplified sound for up to 2 movie nights per year at any park, subject to certain conditions. (ACTION).

Background:

In recent years, the Department has received a growing number of requests for community-organized movie nights in neighborhood parks. In accordance with long-standing practice, Department staff has brought to the Commission for approval all requests for amplified sound permits for movie nights at neighborhood parks such as Potrero Hill Park, Duboce Park and McCoppin Square. The process is quite time consuming for the event organizers, with it generally taking a minimum of 60 days to get approval, and this delay has discouraged some organizers from pursuing movie nights.

The Department believes that neighborhood movie nights help to develop community interest in parks and wants to streamline the permit application process for a limited number of movie nights per year in each park. The movie nights that have occurred thus far have been well received by the community.

Proposed New Policy:

Department staff is authorized to approve, without Commission approval, amplified sound permits for up to two (2) movie nights per calendar year at any given park, subject to the following conditions:

1. Ratings: Movies shall be rated G, PG or their equivalent.
2. Days: Movie nights shall be held on Friday or Saturday nights only (or Sunday nights if Monday is a national holiday).
3. Hours: Movies shall start promptly at sunset, and shall end no later than 11pm.
4. Community Outreach: At least two weeks in advance of the event, the permit applicant shall (a) post in the park and distribute to neighbors who reside immediately adjacent to the park flyers detailing the event, (b) notify the member of the Board of Supervisors in whose district the proposed event will take place, and (c) notify the police precinct where the event will take place and receive their approval of the event. On a case by case basis, staff may determine that more extensive neighborhood notification is required for a particular event depending on the configuration and location of the park, or complaints that have been received related to prior movie nights.
5. Permit Requirements: The permit applicant shall be required to comply with the Department's standard permit requirements, including ensuring adequate safety, payment of permit fees, and park clean up plans, as well as all applicable City laws.
6. Complaints: If the Department receives multiple, independent complaints from neighbors regarding a movie night that occurred in a particular park, the General Manager may, in his or her discretion, bring any future movie night permit requests for that particular park to the Commission for approval.



Exemption for Existing Authorizations: This policy shall not limit (a) any existing annual neighborhood park movie night(s) that already received approval prior to the Commission's adoption of this policy, and (b) movie nights in parks where amplified sound is already permitted in evening hours under the Commission's Permit and Reservation Policy, such as Union Square and Civic Center Plaza.

Discussion:

Rating Requirement: In order to ensure that a movie night is appropriate for viewing by all ages, movies must be rated G, PG or their equivalent in the case of movies with no ratings, such as older or foreign language movies.

Community Outreach: Community outreach is expected follow the typical outreach required for movie nights submitted to the Commission, including creating a flyer describing the movie night and distributing it to nearby neighbors and posting in the park. In addition, the permit applicant must notify the member of the Board of Supervisors in whose district the proposed event will take place, and obtain approval from the neighborhood police precinct.

Permits Policies: The permit applicant will be required to comply with all of the Department's permit policies and procedures including:

- **Safety:** The organizers will be required to meet with the local police station and receive their support for the event. In addition, the organizers will be required to reimburse the Department for the cost of one Park Ranger to monitor the event and the amplified sound.
- **Permit Fees:** Standard permit fees will apply. For a free community movie night organized by the neighborhood group and with no sales the only fee will be reimbursement of expenses.
- **Park Clean Up:** The event organizer will be required to clean the park after the event and provide a security deposit to ensure that it happens.

Exemption for Existing Authorizations: The Commission's Permit and Reservation Policy already authorizes amplified sound in the evenings at Citywide parks such as Union Square, Civic Center, Marina Green and Justin Hermann Plaza. In addition, certain neighborhood parks have pre-existing approvals for multiple movie nights (*i.e.*, Dolores Park). The new policy shall not be deemed to limit those pre-existing authorizations.

Park Impacts: There may be some parks where movie nights are not suitable due to the size or layout of the park. Staff will retain discretion to deny permit applications for movie nights in those parks.

Neighborhood Concerns: There may be some neighbors who have concerns about a movie night in a particular park. However, staff believes that by limiting the movie nights to no more than 2 per year in any given park, those concerns will be limited. If the Department receives multiple, independent complaints from neighbors following a movie night in a particular park, the General Manager may, in his or her discretion, bring any future movie night permit requests for that particular park to the Commission for approval.

Staff Recommendation: Adopt the Movie Night Policy attached hereto.

Attachments: Movie Night Policy (draft dated August 22, 2013).

SAN FRANCISCO RECREATION AND PARK COMMISSION

Permits and Reservations Movie Night Policy

Resolution No . , Adopted September , 2013

Recreation and Park Department staff is hereby authorized to approve, without Recreation and Park Commission approval, amplified sound permits for up to two (2) movie nights per calendar year at any given park, subject to the following conditions:

1. Ratings: Movies shall be rated G, PG or their equivalent.
2. Days: Movie nights shall be held on Friday or Saturday nights only (or Sunday nights if Monday is a national holiday).
3. Hours: Movies shall start promptly at sunset, and shall end no later than 11pm.
4. Community Outreach: At least two weeks in advance of the event, the permit applicant shall (a) post in the park and distribute to neighbors who reside immediately adjacent to the park flyers detailing the event, (b) notify the member of the Board of Supervisors in whose district the proposed event will take place, and (c) notify the police precinct where the event will take place and receive their approval of the event. On a case by case basis, staff may determine that more extensive neighborhood notification is required for a particular event depending on the configuration and location of the park, or complaints that have been received related to prior movie nights.
5. Permit Requirements: The permit applicant shall be required to comply with the Department's standard permit requirements, including ensuring adequate safety, payment of permit fees, and park clean up plans, as well as all applicable City laws.
6. Complaints: If the Department receives multiple, independent complaints from neighbors regarding a movie night that occurred in a particular park, the General Manager may, in his or her discretion, bring any future movie night permit requests for that particular park to the Commission for approval.

Exemption for Existing Authorizations:

1. This policy shall not limit any existing annual movie night(s) in neighborhood parks such as Dolores Park that already received approval prior to the date of the Commission's adoption of this policy.
2. This policy shall not limit movie nights at parks where amplified sound is already permitted in evening hours under the Commission's Permit and Reservation Policy (Res. No. 9705-073), such as Union Square and Civic Center Plaza.