

From: sluysb@aol.com <sluysb@aol.com>

Sent: Monday, January 6, 2025 1:31 PM

To: Park Commission <pacommission@cityofmadison.com>; All Alders <allalders@cityofmadison.com>; Myadze, Charles <district18@cityofmadison.com>; Latimer Burris, Amani <district12@cityofmadison.com>

Subject: Board of Park Commissioners - Agenda Items 14 and 15, Legistar files 86531 and 86530

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Dear Board of Park Commissioners,

On this Wednesday, you will be meeting with Big Top Sports & Entertainment regarding two agenda items. Agenda Item #14 (Legistar 86531) is an informational report by Madison Mallards (Big Top Sports & Entertainment) regarding the Community Impact Report, Neighborhood Impact Plan, and Responsible Alcohol Consumption.

Item #15 is the discussion regarding the **continuation of fireworks at Warner Park**. Agenda Item # 15 (Legistar 86530) is the approval of the request by Madison Mallards for Fireworks Displays and Other Promotions for the 2025 Mallards and Night Mares Season at Warner Park Stadium (District 12) (**Includes a NEW request for additional pre-approval of the shows for 2026, no public engagement** regarding the fireworks in that year).

Two public engagement meetings were held in 2024 largely at the request of Alder Latimer Burris of District 12. She specifically wanted to understand “how can we do this in a community-directed manner?” As a result of those meetings, the public (almost 100 people) shared their stories about the impact of fireworks on their lives. While there were some people who love fireworks in attendance, but our neighbors’ stories were mostly about the trauma caused by the explosions and flashes, the trauma causing mental and physical anxiety. For weeks on end, all Summer long. As a result of those stories, we heard the mental and physical trauma and harassment that **we** are causing to our neighbors.

In addition, there was a presentation provided by Dr. Trish O’Kane, regarding the environmental impact on the park, the wildlife and the birds. The chemicals, heavy metals and particulates are still being spread all over, but now they are moved over to the football field that local children play on and community soccer leagues utilize. They are now even closer to residences in the Brentwood Village neighborhood. The same contaminants that used to fall directly into and polluting the lagoon now fall all over the football field and then are eventually layered on the grass and soil or washed into the lagoon as storm water and runoff.

There is an active bald eagle nest that is protected by the US Fish & Wild Life agency that requires no disturbances occur to active breeding eagles within ½ mile of the nest site. The fireworks are being dispatched within ½ mile of the nest. The eaglets have historically left the nest, new to learning to fly, at the end of June. If we wait until July to have the fireworks begin, we then give the newly fledged eaglets a few days to use their wings and get familiar with their surroundings prior to the massive 23-minute show that has been shown to be as loud as 135 decibels. Big Top Sports & Entertainment want to use the initial fledge (first flight off the nest) as their marker for the fireworks show to be allowed. No fireworks should occur in June.

Members of Wild Warner reported that the purple martin house that was installed near the Warner Park bathhouse had many dead chicks directly attributable to the fireworks. After the fireworks show, the house was checked and chicks were found dead on the ground outside of their house, having leapt to their death. Inside the house, chicks were also found dead with the adults having fled the house during the explosions, and not returning, with the chicks starving to death.

Festival Foods (sponsors the 23-minute massive fireworks show) and the staff and owners of BigTop Sports & Entertainment, the Mallards, and the Nightmares, and the Northwoods league do not mean to cause trauma to our community. To make people endure the fireworks for weeks on end while covering in their basements reliving trauma. To cause the traumatic experiences of re-visiting war and gun violence or other traumatic flashbacks that are triggered by the explosions and flashes. These are the stories we heard. These are the neighbors that we need to tend to in our community.

In 1968, the Board of Park Commissioners voted to stop fireworks in Vilas Park because of the “mental and physical anxiety” that was impacting the zoo animals. Why now, in 2024, can we not see the same level of mental and physical anxiety and trauma that we are causing in our community to our neighbors? How is it we can ignore the trauma and pain that we are causing? The shared stories were visceral.

We can do better.

We need to stop the fireworks in public parks.

City meeting agendas always have these prompts at the top:

Consider: Who benefits? Big Top Sports & Entertainment

Who is burdened? The neighbors who endure mental and physical anxiety and trauma. The environment and wildlife and birds. We all are burdened.

Who does not have a voice at the table? If we allow pre-approval of fireworks in a multi-year format, we none of us will have a voice at the table.

How can policymakers mitigate unintended consequences? Consider no fireworks, drone shows only in public parks. An easy solution. We already understand the consequences, they are easily mitigated.

To require the continuation of **annual** community engagement. No pre-approval of firework requests for 2026. No fireworks in June to better protect the eaglets.

To stop all fireworks in city parks by 2027. Drone shows would be a great solution.

Thank you for your time on this matter.

Beth Sluys

District 18

From: Jan Tymorek <jantymorek@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, January 6, 2025 2:02 PM
To: Park Commission <pacommission@cityofmadison.com>
Subject: fireworks

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I want to add mine to the voices of those who are against continuing the displays of fireworks. I sympathize with those suffering from PTSD and those with terrified pets. On top of that, hearing that the birds abandon their nests and fledglings fall to the ground is very sad. I'm sure other wildlife is confused if not terrified as well. Lastly, why are we celebrating bombs? Is there another way we can celebrate democracy and independence??? We are a creative people, I'm sure we can find ways!

Jan Tymorek
Madison, WI

From: regina golding <reginagolding1@hotmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 4:35 PM
To: Park Commission <pacommission@cityofmadison.com>
Subject: Fireworks

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I know there is a meeting tonight discussing the fireworks after Mallards games at Warner Park.

Here is my input:

Let's start this year as a year of consideration for Vets suffering from PTSD, wildlife, and the people living in the neighborhoods nearby. If we don't start living, **now**, in concern for those people and animals harmed by the fireworks, when will we?

If we don't start teaching our children and young adults, **now**, how to set aside our own simple indulgent pleasures even though they create harm to the health and safety of other living beings, when will we?

If we don't start loving others, nature, and our environment, **now**, when will we?

When will become responsible adults and start considering the "whole" instead of our selfish desires?

I hope you will vote in favor of change.

Regina Golding

From: Patty Lennon <pattylonn@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, January 10, 2025 11:19 AM
To: Park Commission <pacommission@cityofmadison.com>
Subject: No to Warner fireworks

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Fireworks are harmful to all. Just stop
