



City of Racine, Wisconsin
Agenda Briefing Memorandum
Ordinance 0025-25 - Parades, Processions, and Open-Air Meetings Permits

AGENDA DATE:

According to 2026 Budget Consideration Calendar

PREPARED BY: Scott R. Letteney, City Attorney
REVIEWED BY:

SUBJECT: Communication sponsored by Mayor Mason requesting an ordinance recreating the City's Parades, Processions, and Open-Air Meetings Permits Ordinance

BACKGROUND & ANALYSIS:

Currently, the City's Parades, Processions, and Open-Air Meetings Permits ordinance, section 82-39, reads as follows:

Sec. 82-39. - Parades, processions or open-air meetings.

- (a) No parade or procession shall be allowed upon any street or public way in the city, nor shall any open-air meeting be held upon any street or public way in the city, until a permit in writing therefor shall first be obtained. Application to conduct a parade or procession or open-air meeting upon any street or public way shall be made in writing by the person in charge or control thereof, or responsible therefor, to the common council and shall be referred to the public works and services committee. Such application shall set forth the route along which such parade or procession is to proceed, the time of starting, and the name of the person or corporation or society in control thereof or responsible therefor, and the purpose of such parade or procession. If the application is approved by the committee it shall be referred to the chief of police who shall approve the application and establish the necessary conditions for the health, safety and general welfare of the city. If the application is denied by the public works and services committee, the denied application shall be presented to the common council in the committee report. If the applicant is aggrieved by the conditions established by the chief of police, the applicant may appeal such decision to the public works and services committee within 15 days of the chief of police's decision.
- (b) In the case of an open-air meeting, the application therefor shall specify the place at which it is desired to hold such meeting, the purpose thereof, and the name of the person, corporation or society in control thereof or responsible therefor, the time at which such public meeting is to be held, and the probable duration thereof.

The proposed ordinance provides greater formality in the application for and approval of permits for Parades,

Processions, and Open-Air Meetings, with primary modifications related to parades. It provides several definitions in order to provide clarity.

The proposed ordinance would require a person or entity seeking to organize a parade, procession, or open-air meeting to apply for a permit through the Department of Customer Service not more than 150 days and not less than 60 days prior to the proposed event. Upon receipt of an application, the matter would be forwarded to the department of public works, the police department, the fire department, and the public health department and any other affected city departments for review and written comment within 15 days. The department of public works would refer the application to the chair of the Public Works and Services Committee for consideration as a communication pursuant to Racine Ordinance section 2-117.

The proposed ordinance provides specific standards for permit issuance. It provides for a fee to be established by the Common Council, including a base fee for a parade, plus a per-block fee for parades in excess of ten blocks, with the fee structure intended to assist in offsetting public safety costs, including overtime for the Racine Police Department.

The proposed ordinance provides for a number of permit conditions for all parade organizers, plus additional conduction for parades where the City is not a co-sponsor of the parade. Parade organizers must be non-profit or not-for-profit entity.

The proposed ordinance provides for a process for revocation of a permit if the organizer does not comply with the conditions set by the Common Council. Further, a person holding a parade, procession, or open-air meeting without a permit having been granted may be subject to prosecution in Racine Municipal Court.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: To approve.

FISCAL NOTE & BUDGETARY IMPACT: the fiscal effect will be dependent upon the number of parade, procession, and open-air meeting permits issued and the character of the event.