



CITY OF WHEATLAND

CITY COUNCIL MEETING STAFF REPORT

April 26, 2022

SUBJECT: Bishop's Pumpkin Farm 2021 Season Report

PREPARED BY: Jim Goodwin – City Manager

Recommendation

Information only. No action required.

Background

Bishop's Pumpkin Farm (BPF) has been operating continuously in Wheatland for 49 years. BPF was annexed into the City of Wheatland in 2011.

According to BPF, attendance in 2021 was flat or slightly down from 2020, probably as a result of the storm that came on what normally would have been a big weekend. They report that there was some increased attendance on weekends this year. Operations were hindered by the storm with the loss of attendance on a peak weekend, the destruction of the Corn Maze by the storm, and the new rides becoming operational late in the season.

BPF reports total attendance for the 2021 season at approximately 275,000 guests and the vehicle count at approximately 70,000 during the 59-day season.

This remainder of this report details the fiscal impact and city services offered during the Bishop's Pumpkin Farm 2021 Season.

Finance

At the time of annexation, BPF entered into a Development Agreement (DA), that among other provisions, established an Admission Fee to be paid to the City annually. The fee is equal to five percent of any Admission Charge collected by BPF. Initially, 50 percent of the fee was deposited

in the General Fund and 50 percent in a special joint-use fund. A later amendment to the DA increased the amount deposited into the General Fund to 60%. The joint-use fund is designed as a funding source to mitigate impacts, to be directed jointly by The BPF and City. The General Fund portion is designed to mitigate impacts at the sole discretion of the City.

A summary of fees collected, and expenses paid in 2021 is as follows:

	60% of Fees Collected General Fund	40% of Fees Collected Joint Admission Fund
Revenue:		
Fees	69,033.12	46,022.08
Interest	-	66.62
Total Revenue	69,033.12	46,088.70
Expenses:		
Police	20,727.25	-
Public Works	4,138.67	-
Engineering	7,177.50	-
Administration	-	1,882.00
Supplies	-	2,472.46
Total Expenses	32,043.42	4,354.46
Net Revenue	36,989.70	41,734.24

Following the 2021 season, the balance in the Joint Admission Fund is \$95,498.

It is important for the City Council to recognize this summary does not include net receipts of sales tax or transaction tax. The City's receipts of the state Bradley Burns sales tax is shared with Yuba County (the county receives 12.5 percent) pursuant to the Tax Sharing Agreement. All of the local transaction tax collected from BPF stays with the City. Bishop's Pumpkin Farm is one of the City's top sales tax generating businesses.

In addition, this summary does not account for the impact of local wages. Wayne Bishop shared with staff that 102 Wheatland residents were employed by BPF during the 2021 season receiving

\$709,284 in wages. The overall gross payroll for 2021, including health and retirement plans for eligible employees, was \$2.8 million.

According to Doug Svensson of Applied Development Economics (ADE), applying a multiplier of 1.5 times the wages paid to the Wheatland residents is an appropriate, estimated measure of local impact. Using that multiplier, the estimated local impact of the local wages increases to \$1,063,926 for 2021.

Public Safety

Police

During the 2021 Bishop Pumpkin Farm (BPF) season, the police department devoted 299 hours to traffic enforcement around the entrance to BPF and security within the event.

The police department responded to 48 calls for service within the park resulting in three arrests for alcohol related crimes. There was a total of 19 traffic related complaints received from residents near BPF, 14 from one caller on Main Street, one from a caller on E Street and four from anonymous callers.

The police department conducted 104 traffic stops for various traffic related violations near the entrance to BPF, which resulted in 52 citations being issued.

Fire

Wheatland Fire Authority (WFA) responded to a total of 10 incidents during the season. 7 were medical aids and 3 were public assist. There were no delays in WFA response due to traffic, temporary traffic control measures or any other situation.

Public Works and Engineering

Since 2016, Wheatland has been implementing a temporary traffic control plan during the season. The signs and traffic controls are placed prior to the beginning of the season, monitored throughout the season, and removed at the end of the season. This same plan used in prior years was implemented at the beginning of the 2021 season.

However, this year staff experienced a significant problem related to unauthorized moving of the temporary traffic controls (cones and barricades) used in prior years. The use of these tools for traffic control for special events by cities is common and have been used by the city for prior BPF seasons. However, once placed, the city is liable for what may happen. Unauthorized modification of temporary controls can pose significant liability as the city's "design immunity" for the traffic control plan is no longer valid.

In response to the frequent movement of the cones, the cones were removed early in the season. The City Engineer also then developed a substitute plan utilizing striping, traffic barrels, and the possibility of temporary speed humps (a response to frequent speeding complaints early in the season). Main Street residents were invited to a very short-noticed Zoom meeting to assess their response to these concepts. It was clear in the meeting the plan was too ambitious to implement mid-season and required more public outreach. To ensure safe lane delineation and heightened awareness on Main Street, a less ambitious plan was implemented that replaced barricades and cones with highly visible traffic barrels and lane striping from Highway 65 west to the entry to

Bishop's Pumpkin Farm. The heavier barrels are not as easily moved. Even with those changes, a resident on Main Street continued to place cones in the traffic lanes. Staff removed and confiscated the cones each time they appeared on the street.

A final change implemented near the end of the season was the full closure of Fourth Street where it connects to Pumpkin Lane. Traditionally this has been a "soft" closure designed to discourage BPF patrons from using Fourth Street but not close it off entirely so residents beyond the closure could still access their properties. Due to an ongoing issue of BPF visitors ignoring the signs and using Fourth Street anyway, a full closure was put into effect near the end of the season. The barricades used were light, easily moveable and not a hindrance to public safety. Pending ongoing approval from property owners using Pumpkin Lane to access their properties (their permission was obtained this year), staff recommends the full closure continue to be implemented in coming years.

The use of the secondary access was a problem this year due to the heavy fall rains. The secondary access is used on peak weekends which are usually the three or four weekends prior to Halloween. Without the secondary access, more pressure was placed on Main Street as the sole entry/exit to BPF.

Finally, staff looked at traffic accident data on Highway 65 to determine if there were trends that might be attributed to BPF operations. Staff accessed the state-wide traffic database which is current to December 2020 (publication of this data can lag between 8 and 16 months). In 2018 through 2020 there were 63 accidents reported on Highway 65 through Wheatland from just north of Riosa Road in Placer County to just north of Oakley Lane in Yuba County. Of the 63 accidents, 15 (24%) occurred between the hours of 8am and 5pm in the months of October when the BPF is in full operation.

The number of vehicle accidents in the months of October in this period are higher than in other months of the year, however no direct correlations can be made to event generated traffic other than the increase in vehicles on the highway will translate to an increased number of accidents at the same rate that they would occur in other months of the year.

Moving Ahead

As we prepare for the 2022 Season, staff intends to do public outreach on the following dates. All meetings will be at 6 p.m. in the Community Center:

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| May 5, 2022 | Conduct a Public Meeting allowing for Bishop Pumpkin Farm neighbors to provide feedback and make suggestions regarding the upcoming 2022 season. |
| June 16, 2022 | Conduct a follow-up Public Meeting for staff to present ideas for consideration for the 2022 season. |
| July 7, 2022 | Conduct a final Public Meeting for staff to share the plan to be implemented during the 2022 season. |