

Municipal Concert Venues - Research

This memo, prepared at the request of the Village Board, explains the research that was done in regards to various communities' concert series and the associated planning and impacts of having large concerts with headlining acts. The following communities were contacted:

- Hinsdale –Local/tribute bands
- Downers Grove – Local/tribute bands
- Aurora – Local/tribute bands
- Schaumburg – Local/tribute bands
- Arlington Heights – Local/tribute bands
- Elmhurst – Local/tribute bands
- New Lenox - Headliner
- Elk Grove - Headliner
- Naperville - Headliner
- Joliet - Headliner

The four communities that have large concerts with well-known artists include: New Lenox, Elk Grove Village, Naperville, and Joliet. Staff reached out to all of these; however, only two communities were willing to share information and answer detailed questions (New Lenox and Elk Grove). The Deputy Director at Joliet Park District was contacted but he did not respond back. The City of Naperville Jaycees and the Exchange Club of Naperville coordinates the Rib Fest but staff was informed they cannot “contractually” speak of or give information pertaining to the Rib Fest’s internal business. Below is the information that was shared by New Lenox and Elk Grove Village:

1. When did the concerts start? Why did it start?

Both communities started their concert series 10 years ago as an event to give back to the community. Neither community created their concert series with the intention of revenue.

2. When are the concerts? What were some of the artists/bands?

Elk Grove Village’s concerts begin on the 4th of July and then are every Tuesday. The concerts are held in front of Village Hall. Concerts are usually a mix of cover bands and headliners. Some headliners that were booked were Kool and the Gang and Rodney Atkins. For 2018, Big N’ Rich, Bret Michaels, and the Village People are booked. New Lenox has the Triple Play concert series, one in June, July and August. New Lenox books headliners for this series, and the village discovered that rock music has been the most popular. New Lenox has booked Living Colour, REO, Styx, Kansas, Cheap Trick, and Heart.

3. Who runs the series? Who books the stage, equipment, band, etc.?

Both events are booked and planned by the villages. Elk Grove Village hires EMG as their booking agency. The village purchases an inclusive package with EMG, which includes the stage, equipment, technology, lighting, and booking and completing contracts with the performers. I was told that purchasing a package makes the process easy and convenient. In New Lenox, the mayor decides on the

performers. The village hires agent Jim Lenz to contact performers' agents to check availability and will create a contract once dates are agreed upon. Once the contract is written and turned in, usually in March, the Special Events Coordinator reviews the contracts. After review, the contract is sent to the village attorney. Once everything is agreed, the contract is put into action. The village purchases the "hospitality" needs for the concerts, including restroom facilities, food vendors, and beer tents. For the technological side of the concerts, New Lenox hires Scott Flaws from 3SL Productions to work with the performers' production managers. As for staging, New Lenox has a permanent stage/pavilion. However, they rent mobile rooms for the performers.

4. How much are tickets? Who can buy tickets? What is the limit per person?

Elk Grove Village does not sell tickets. Their concerts are free events for the local community. The concerts are also open to non-residents. At one time in the past, Elk Grove Village only allowed residents, but this became a hassle at Village Hall. People begin to come to the space outside Village Hall around 3PM with their blankets and lawn chairs. Entertainment begins at 7PM. New Lenox sells tickets for \$75 (the fee includes tickets for all three concerts). The tickets are sold at Village Hall and people are only able to buy the tickets at the hall starting in April. The tickets are sold to only residents, with a maximum of 8 tickets per resident (the resident can bring whoever they want, including non-residents). If there are leftover tickets, then tickets are sold at the event at a ticket booth.

5. What is the estimated number of attendees?

The estimated number of attendees at Elk Grove Village is 5,000-7,000. The maximum for New Lenox is 5,000 due to capacity limits. In 2017, there was a decrease in attendees to 4500.

6. Cost?

Elk Grove Village budget is approximately \$400,000 for 2018, which includes 5 concerts, set up and break down, lighting, stage, equipment (all through EMG). This amount does not account for staff time. New Lenox budgeted about \$500,000 in 2017. They did provide a breakdown budget (see attachment) for 2018.

7. Revenue?

Elk Grove Village's concert series is free, so they do not generate revenue. They also do not offer food and drinks. People are allowed to bring their own. The village stressed the fact that this event was meant to be fun and a way to bring people together, not as a revenue generator. New Lenox indicated they do not make a lot of revenue. They are lucky to either break even or make a little money from the concerts. For instance, in 2017, only 4500 tickets sold, which resulted in \$337,500 in ticket sales for New Lenox, losing \$37,500 in ticket sales.

8. Do you purchase rain insurance?

Elk Grove Village purchases rain insurance. New Lenox also purchases rain insurance from the time frame of 4-9PM. The cost of the insurances does not cover the bands.