

**ITEM NO. \_\_\_\_\_ TO THE CITY COUNCIL OF PEORIA, ILLINOIS, IN COUNCIL,  
ASSEMBLED YOUR COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE to Whom was  
Referred a POLICY SESSION Regarding Potential Changes to the  
RIVERFRONT ENTERTAINMENT DISTRICT Rules and Regulations,  
with a Request for Direction.**

A Policy Session was held on Tuesday, April 21, 2015, beginning at 6:06 P.M. at City Hall, Council Chambers (Room 400), 419 Fulton Street, Peoria, Illinois, with Mayor Jim Ardis presiding, and with proper notice having been given.

**ROLL CALL**

Roll Call showed the following Council Members present: Akeson, Grayeb, Jensen, Johnson, Montelongo, Moore, Riggerbach, Spain, Turner, Weaver, Mayor Ardis – 11; Absent – None.

Others present: City Manager Patrick Urich, Corporation Counsel Donald Leist, , Assistant City Manager Chris Setti, City Clerk Beth Ball, Deputy Clerk I Dan Sullivan, interested citizens, and members of the media.

**RIVERFRONT ENTERTAINMENT DISTRICT**

Assistant City Manager Chris Setti provided background information on the Riverfront Entertainment District, which was created in 2010. He explained that business owners along Water Street had discussed with the City an open carry policy of alcohol within the Riverfront Entertainment District. He stated the City would need cooperation with the Police Department regarding Noise Ordinance concerns and traffic related issues in order to pursue such an issue. Assistant Manager Setti continued to explain that he was seeking direction from the Council in order to move forward with a potential open carry of alcohol between establishments within the Riverfront Entertainment District.

Council Member Akeson requested more information to review the possible ramifications of the open carry policy along the Riverfront Entertainment District.

Assistant City Manager Setti explained that further discussion could occur at a later meeting and he reiterated that he was looking for direction from Council, regarding whether or not the matter should be pursued.

Mayor Ardis indicated that this meeting was not to seek Council approval or disapproval of pursuing an open carry of alcohol policy between establishments in the Riverfront Entertainment District, but to determine if City Staff should devote time to bring this back to Council with more information.

Council Member Turner expressed concern that the City discussed a 24/7 Riverfront operation years ago, but the City never acted on it. He expressed support for this issue and encouraged the Council to move forward.

Council Member Moore reflected on a Riverfront event that she attended last year and expressed support for this issue. She stated that she looked forward to continued conversation on the matter at future policy sessions.

Council Member Weaver encouraged the City to start small and grow over time with regards to the open carry of alcohol policy within the City of Peoria. He stated he would like to see three parameters put in place regarding general standards of thru traffic with access to parking lots, sound ordinances, standards of clean up for the area, and he requested that the City review other communities in regards to a standard requirement of Police Officer Enforcement for similar events. He also requested the City to review other communities in reference to noise ordinances.

Corporation Donald Leist remarked that the City may need to review the current Noise Ordinances pertaining to events within the Riverfront Entertainment District. He explained the current ordinance is difficult to enforce and was up to the officer's discretion.

Council Member Grayeb requested professional input from the Police Department on how this would affect them with the potential budget cuts. He stated that an open carry of alcohol policy should be reviewed for other areas within the City besides just the downtown area.

Council Member Riggenbach stated he was not ready to comment on this issue, but he looked forward to further discussion on this matter. He asked Assistant Manager Setti when the Council should expect this topic to return for further discussion.

Assistant City Manager Setti indicated that he would utilize the Downtown Advisory Commission and he would hope for further conversation at the Council level by the end of June.

Council Member Jensen requested public input from residents, business owners and patrons of the Riverfront Entertainment District on how this open carry policy would affect them. She said she supported moving forward with the idea of open carry of alcohol in the Riverfront Entertainment District. She stated an interest in closing off streets in other areas of the City, outside of the downtown area.

Assistant City Manager Setti indicated that this would be an amendment to the liquor code and closing other areas outside of downtown could cause concern regarding traffic problems.

Council Member Jensen requested additional feedback on pursuing, the closing of particular streets outside of the downtown area that would qualify for this policy.

Council Member Montelongo stated he attended several events downtown and asked for a report on generated revenue, expenses incurred for such events and how the quality of life was effected. He requested a Public Hearing for residents and business owners to voice concerns about an open carry policy in the Riverfront Entertainment District. He voiced support for the issue and indicated that some areas of the Fourth District would be ideal for this policy if allowed outside of the downtown area.

Council Member Akeson requested clarification between a street festival, which closes City streets and allowing of alcohol on City sidewalks.

Assistant City Manager Setti explained that the current street festivals doesn't allow open carry of alcohol on City streets, but instead consumption was limited to the site of the liquor license holder.

Council Member Akeson voiced concerns about the allowance of alcohol twenty four hours a day in the Riverfront Entertainment District. She indicated that more information needs to be provided in order to make a solid decision on this matter.

Assistant City Manager Setti explained that regulations on time requirements would still be in place for the Riverfront Entertainment District and this meeting was to discuss any potential changes to Riverfront Entertainment District, while also discussing a potential open carry policy for alcohol.

Council Member Spain discussed some potential challenges for downtown residents in regards to a potential open carry of alcohol policy. He stated that having a vibrant downtown is important to the community and spoke on how the attendance at the Riverfront Market had doubled from one year to the next.

Council Member Riggerbach asked if the open carry policy would only be for the Riverfront Entertainment District and how the City would differentiate from one establishment to another.


Assistant City Manager Setti stated that open carry would be in the Riverfront Entertainment District and the City would have to look at guidelines with regards to different establishments.

Mayor Ardis stated that he would look forward to further discussion on this matter.

Council Member Grayeb moved to adjourn the Policy Session; seconded by Council Member Johnson.

Approved by Viva Voce Vote.

The Policy Session adjourned at 6:47 P.M.

  
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Beth Ball, MMC  
City Clerk, Peoria, Illinois

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