
Genoans reject offer they say guts Candy Dance deal

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Genoans rejected a counteroffer from independent festival hosts, saying the revision guts the agreement they worked out for Candy Dance.

"This is not an agreement at all," town board member Brian Williams said. "We should go back to the prior agreement or all bets are off."

The town has been negotiating with Martha Williams, Phil Stoll and Gilles La Gourgue to host the businesses' three festivals under the same permit as the annual Candy Dance fundraiser since February.

An agreement was drafted and approved by the town board in October. A response by the independent festival coordinators' attorney J.D. Sullivan altered several clauses.

Town officials agreed to a payment of \$26.72 per booth for the other fairs, but wanted the money on Jan. 15 in order to defray the town's upfront costs. Sullivan proposed the festival organizers pay no later than 30 days after the event.

The other big sticking point was the private festivals' rejection of joint jurying of the fair. For the town's craft fair, participants must show they make what they sell.

Peddler's Fair operator Martha Williams has said she does her own jurying.

Resident Ron Funk who'd met with the three businesses who host independent festivals, said they'd agreed to participate in the town's jurying process.

"They agreed to pay the fee and to a much more lax jurying process," he said. "If there were not a Candy Dance, two of the three wouldn't have a festival."

Resident Sue Knight said she wasn't surprised the businesses rejected the agreement as written.

"I'm disappointed, but not surprised," she said. "I don't think there's anything that benefits the town in this agreement. We should throw out the agreement and move Candy Dance to another weekend."

Board member Bill Donohoe proposed that the town reject the counterproposal, and go forward.

"The county clearly said they're not going to stop any of these festivals from getting permits," he said. "Let them come to us or go it alone. We've gone the extra mile."

Candy Dance is the main fundraiser for Nevada's oldest town. This year the event raised more than \$150,000 to support its functions.

But as the size of the event has increased, several town businesses started renting spots to crafters, saying they were unable to conduct normal business.

Williams' Peddler's Fair is the largest of the three independent festivals. She conducts it on her property south of town.

Both Stoll and La Gourgue, who owns the Pink House, hold their festivals in the center of town.

Last year all three festivals and the town shared the costs of law enforcement for the larger event, held on the last full weekend of September.

Genoa Town Manager Cheryl Gonzales said she anticipates that a change to the county's festival ordinance and fees will come before commissioners soon.

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