

Sun Valley Youth Commission Proposal

February 6, 2013

A. The purpose of the Sun Valley Youth Commission (SVYC) is to advise the Mayor and City Council (SVCC) on issues which effect youth.

B. The SVYC members have identified issues which effect youth in our community and the SVYC would like to address these issues and provide input and offer proposed action steps to address these concerns.

AREAS OF CONCERN:

1. Drug and alcohol use among our peers.
2. The lack of activities and venues (which are of interest to high school students) available in evening hours, on weekends, and holidays.
3. The financial request from the City of Ketchum Parks & Recreation Department for the amount of \$30,000 (to provide a portion of the recreation programming to area citizens), was only funded by the City of Sun Valley in the amount of \$20,000. (This shortage may affect youth recreation programming as well as the number of youths who have the opportunity to participate)

RESEARCH:

1. Drug and alcohol use among high students continues to be a national, state, and local concern. The statistics regarding the number of students who use alcohol and drugs on our state level and the consequences of consumption are attached in greater detail to this proposal. A small sample of those statistics are as follows:

Alcohol Consumption by Youth in Idaho

(Source: Pacific Institute for Research and Evaluation)

Underage drinking is widespread in Idaho. Approximately 59,000 underage customers in Idaho drink each year. In 2011, Idaho students in grades 9-12 reported:

- 62.5% had at least one drink of alcohol on one or more days during their life.
- 19.2% had their first drink of alcohol, other than a few sips, before age 13.
- *34.2% had at least one drink of alcohol on one or more occasion in the past 30 days.
- 2.3% had five or more drinks of alcohol in a row (binge drinking) in the past 30 days.
- 3.5% had at least one drink of alcohol on school property in the past 30 days

While we can assume that our local communities are at least representative of our neighboring cities, our local statistics are more difficult to obtain. I contacted the Blaine County Sheriff's Department in November requesting data on the number of underage consumption citations, DUI's, and possession citations issued in the last year, and I have not received any response to

my request. We are able, however, to provide first hand information on the more important data, which is not how many students were cited, but how many students are using in our area. This is the data that is most important, along with the reasons that students are using. First, as students representing three of the area high schools, the SVYC members can report our own observations regarding the number of students who use alcohol and drugs and how prevalent the usage is. Our assessment varies by school, but the general observation is that alcohol usage is extremely prevalent and student drug use highly prevalent among our peers.

The reasons that students report using drugs and alcohol vary, but there is one constant reason which is inevitably cited: “A lack of anything else fun to do”. This is one component of this issue that we as a community can easily address. While none of us is claiming that by providing “fun activities” all teens will cease alcohol and drug use, we are claiming that by providing positive alternatives to “boredom” alcohol and drug use, it is possible to make a difference in the number of teens who use, the frequency in which they use, and the age in which they begin to use. Toward that end, we would like to propose that SVYC be empowered by the SV Mayor and City Council to investigate and implement a series of youth activities aimed at providing fun and positive activities which will provide an alternative to drug and alcohol use. Specifically, the SVYC would like to plan and sponsor 4 community wide activities, (one each quarter) that all area high school students may attend. The SVYC will coordinate the locations, logistics, advertising, security, and provide a method of funding for each event. An initial slate of possible activities follows:

Season	Month	Activity	Location
Spring	April	All area dance	Sun Valley Resort
Summer	August	Outdoor Movie	Sun Valley Lawn
Fall	September	Pool Party	YMCA
Winter	December	New Year’s Eve	Sun Valley Resort

In order to accomplish the above, the following tasks will be addressed:

- The SVYC will develop relationships with Sun Valley Resort administrators in an effort to negotiate free or reduced venue fees. (In an effort to garner support for this proposal, perhaps the Sun Valley City Council could remind the Sun Valley Company and other businesses operating in Sun Valley that the City Of Sun Valley is one of the few cities in the US that does not require businesses to be licensed (and charge an annual fee). The cities of Ketchum, Hailey and Bellevue all charge businesses annual fees to be licensed in their cities.
- The SVYC will set admission fees for each event which will be used to cover expenses associated with events. Any surplus funds will be designated

in an account to be used for future activities or for community youth recreation allocations.

The SVYC will take responsibility for the promotion of the activities by producing flyers, emails, school announcements, local newspapers and posts to social media outlets.

The SVYC will be responsible to ensure the order and safety at events by coordinating security through either city, county, or private providers and by obtaining an event insurance policy for each event.

The SVYC will evaluate the success of each event through attendance, comment cards from attendees, and revenue generated from each event.

2. While all the cities in our surrounding area provide a plethora of organized youth recreational activities, and while our geographical location provides numerous additional opportunities for enjoyment in the outdoors, there is still a significant lack of activities and venues for high school age teens in evening hours, weekends, and holidays. Many teens have indicated that they resort to attending “house parties” where alcohol and drugs are available “because there was nothing better to do.” By providing activities and venues that are “teen friendly” and “fun”, we can reduce the number of teens who attend house parties or who resort to consuming alcohol and drugs just to be in any social settings with their peers. In order to have a meaningful and sustained impact on the reduction of teen drug and alcohol use, the SVYC’s plan to implement (4) large scale teen activities would need to be expanded to provide more frequent events and activities.

3. The Sun Valley City Council was unable to meet the \$30,000 request from the City of Ketchum for the provision of youth recreation for this current fiscal year. The City of Sun Valley did contribute \$20,000. While we understand that city budgets have been impacted by the decline in the economy, and while we understand that cuts had to be made to almost every area of the City budget, we believe that we as SVYC members can take the initiative to help address this problem. There are more than 1,000 high school age teens in our area. Many of these teens have jobs and are willing to spend their disposable income on entertainment. Many other area teens enjoy ample financial support from their families. The admission fees envisioned for the above described activities, have the potential to create a new revenue for the SV City budget. These funds could be used to offset the cuts to the youth recreation budget. It is a win win win solution. A win for high school students because they now have fun activities and events to attend while being proactive in raising money that can be used to sustain additional recreational activities. A win for the Sun Valley City Council because it can restore funding that needed to be cut, and a win for all youth and community members because additional youth and adult recreational opportunities benefits everyone. A projected budget for one of the described activities above follows:

Proposed Activity: Teen Dance with DJ

Projected attendance: 300 *(based on a conservative estimate of less than 1/3 of the area high school population attending including students grades: 9-12 from: Community School, Wood River, Sage, Silver Creek, and Carey)*

Admission fees per person: \$12

Cash revenue generated from admissions: \$3,600

Expenses:

Venue: Sun Valley Resort Ballroom—In kind donation

Music: D.J., equipment--\$700

Security: Resource officers, city police officers, private security—In kind-\$300

Promotion/advertising: \$100

Insurance/Venue clean-up fees: \$300

Revenue Total: \$3,600

Expenses Total: \$1,400

Revenue Total: \$2,200

There is also the potential to have businesses sponsor the events, which would eliminate the expenses and generate even more revenue. If we use \$2,200 as a minimum surplus for each event X 4 events per year, we have the potential to raise nearly \$9,000. With sponsors, we could raise \$3,600 per event X 4 = \$14,400. Either of these amounts would essentially restore the cuts that were made to youth recreation budget. If the surplus was greater, the activities could be enhanced for an even greater appeal. Additional activities/events could be sponsored in the other surrounding communities as well.

In conclusion, the SVYC members are advising the SVCC as follows:

- (1) There are concerns regarding the number of youths who engage in underage drinking and substance use in our communities.
- (2) There is a need to provide activities and venues for high school age students in order for them to gather and socialize in fun and safe environments during evenings, weekends and holidays.

- (3) The youths, parents and other citizens in our communities will be negatively impacted by the shortages to the recreation budgets and programs.

Therefore: The SVYC proposes that in addition to advising the SVCC on these issues, the SVYC would like to be proactive in addressing these issues, and seeks the support and endorsement of the SVCC to pursue the possible implementation of these activities. The SVYC and all young people from the community can mobilize to address these concerns by providing innovative and collaborative ideas, and viable options for resolution. We anticipate that we could gather all pertinent information regarding the feasibility and level of cooperation and collaboration outlined above, and have firm commitments and/or information from all of the potential partners within 30 days for the SVCC's assessment. Since time is of the essence, we would like immediate approval to begin the feasibility investigation.

Respectfully submitted by:

Sun Valley Youth Commission

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Mary Petzke—Secretary

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