

## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** The Honorable Chair and City Council Members

**FROM:** Rick Baker, Mayor

**DATE:** February 4, 2009

**RE:** Recommendation for Letter RFP No. 6802 962-34, Half Marathon Running Event

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Attached is a Comparison of Submissions Chart prepared by the evaluation committee for Letter RFP No. 6802 962-34, Half Marathon Running Event which outlines the proposals submitted by three entities requesting to stage a half marathon running event in downtown St. Petersburg. The Comparison of Submissions Chart includes strengths and weaknesses identified by the evaluation committee for each proposal. Based on my review of these proposals I recommend the following:

### **Beach Charities, Inc.:**

I do not recommend accepting Beach Charities, Inc. proposal because it is asking the City to cover all costs for City services associated with staging a half marathon running event in downtown St. Petersburg. Should Beach Charities, Inc., at a later date, alter its proposal to include the payment of city costs, then we would administratively consider same, but would likely not consider the proposed event dates of November 7-8. These proposed dates, in staff's view, would occur during a month when there is a high demand for city services, and a disruption of traffic due to other scheduled events and the Women's Running event described below.

### **Iron Girl:**

Iron Girl conducting a women's running event (Half Marathon and 15K) in downtown St. Petersburg would be a unique opportunity for the City. Iron Girl has experience, a recognized brand name, sponsorship from Aflac, guaranteed national TV coverage on NBC and is not requesting funding from the City to stage its event. Generally, I believe that Iron Girl is the strongest of the three applicants.

Iron Girl is requesting a thirty- six (36) month exclusivity period (beginning October 1, 2009 and ending September 30, 2012) during which time Iron Girl would have the exclusive right to stage a women's 15 K or longer running event. Granting an exclusivity request of this duration would be unprecedented for an endurance event (e.g., triathlon events and running events) in the City. The only exclusivity period granted by the City for an endurance event is St. Anthony's Triathlon, a significant Olympic qualifying event. St. Anthony's contract with the City provides for a five (5) month exclusivity

period (sixty (60) day exclusivity before its triathlon event and ninety (90) day exclusivity after its triathlon event).

Based upon the above, I recommend a contract with Iron Girl with an exclusivity period similar to that included in the St. Anthony's contract, (i.e., sixty (60) days before the running event and ninety (90) days after the running event) for a women's 15 K or longer running event. Iron Girl proposed two dates to stage its women's running event; February 7, 2010, and March 14, 2010. Staff has advised that the March date along the proposed route would not be acceptable due to set up for the Grand Prix.

City Council has the decision on whether to grant Iron Girl its requested thirty- six (36) month exclusivity period beginning October 1, 2009, and ending September 30, 2012; or to offer them the five month exclusivity provision similar to the St. Anthony's Triathlon, as I have recommended above. Obviously, should the City Council elect to give any exclusivity period less than the period proposed by Iron Girl, there is a risk that Iron Girl could choose to not hold their event in our city.

### **Women's Running:**

Women's Running is a local employer and a national magazine based in St. Petersburg. Women's Running is not requesting funding from the City to stage its women's running event in downtown St. Petersburg, nor is it seeking exclusivity for its women's running event. Women's Running has requested November 21, 2009, for its event.

I recommend a contract with Women's Running. However, if City Council opts to grant Iron Girl its requested thirty-six (36) month exclusivity period (beginning October 1, 2009 and ending September 30, 2012) for a women's 15K or longer running event, Women's Running could not stage its women's running event on its requested date of November 21, 2009 because this date would fall within Iron Girl's thirty-six (36) month exclusivity period for a women's 15 K or longer running event and thus no contract could be signed with Women's Running.

Women's Running has indicated that time is of the essence for a decision to be made regarding their proposed race. Women's Running has also indicated that they have incurred significant expenses in reliance upon what they assert to be a reservation of the November 21<sup>st</sup> date. The City disagrees that such a reservation was ever promised to Women's Running. Women's Running's legal counsel has advised our legal counsel that it is likely that Women's Running would file a lawsuit against the City to recover damages if they are not permitted to stage its proposed event on November 21, 2009. Obviously, if that should occur, the City would dispute both their assertions of a promised date and damages. Any questions regarding the potential lawsuit from Women's Running should be directed to the Legal Department.

**Summary Recommendation:**

I do not recommend accepting Beach Charities, Inc. proposal because it is asking the City to cover all costs for City services associated with staging a half marathon running event in downtown St. Petersburg. My recommendation is to offer a contract with Iron Girl with an exclusivity period similar to that included in the St. Anthony's contract (i.e., sixty (60) days before the running event and ninety (90) days after the running event) for a women's 15 K or longer running event; and to offer a contract to Women's Running for the November 21, 2009 race. This allows both Iron Girl and Women's Running to stage their running events in downtown St. Petersburg. It would then be Iron Girl's decision as to whether or not to hold its event with the shorter exclusivity period.

**Recommended Contractual Requirements:**

The City should use its standard agreement used for similar events and include a provision that all costs for City services will be paid by the entity staging the running event and further, that such entity shall be required to deposit the estimated costs for City services (as determined by the City) to stage its running event not later than sixty (60) days prior to the event date. Although staging and routes are described in the RFP responses, logistics may require changes to same; therefore the contract should provide that all staging and routes are subject to prior approval by the City in its sole and absolute discretion.

**RPF 6802 Event Staging Half Marathon  
Comparison of Submissions**

Profile	Iron Girl	Women's Running	Beach Charities
Financial Resources	None provided	None provided	None provided
Years of Experience	20+ years	5 years	6 years
Event Components	½ Marathon, expo	½ Marathon, 10K running event, health and fitness expo, two VIP dinners, and a post race celebration / awards ceremony	½ Marathon, health & fitness expo, free concert, 5K, 1 mile, Kids run
Proposed Dates	Feb 7 or Mar 14, 2010	Nov 21, 2009	Nov 7-8, Oct 31-Nov 1, or Dec 12-13, 2009
Proposed Location	Downtown	Downtown	Downtown
Est. Participants	2,500	3,000	3,000
Est. Hotel Rooms	1,250	6,000	800
Advertising/Marketing	\$200,000	\$250,000	\$117,886
TV Coverage	Confirmed	In negotiations	In negotiations
Economic Impact	\$500,000	\$3M	None provided
Sponsors/Partners	AFLAC	Leukemia & Lymphoma Society's Team in Training (TNT) & Polar	BrightHouse, St. Pete Times Turkey Trot, Publix Gasparilla Distance Classic, Sirata Beach Resort
Charitable Partners	All Children's	Pinellas Hope & Leukemia & Lymphoma	Beach Charities
Special Provisions	Exclusivity to Iron Girl/Exclusive to women	½ Marathon exclusive to women	None listed
<b>Strengths</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 20-year history in staging similar and larger scale events</li> <li>• Pinellas County based</li> <li>• Qualified and experienced race director</li> <li>• Brand recognition</li> <li>• Large pool of staffing resources</li> <li>• National TV coverage from NBC and re-airing on ESPN to over 60 countries</li> <li>• All Children's Hospital charitable contribution (\$25,000) plus proceeds from fundraising campaign</li> <li>• Robust marketing/advertising plan (radio and TV commercials, email, magazines, internet site ads)</li> <li>• Proposes to cover all costs for the event</li> <li>• Will conduct the race rain or shine</li> <li>• Excellent references</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Qualified race director (Boston Marathon)</li> <li>• Half marathon and 10K will be conducted on the same day</li> <li>• Proposed event date in November (slow tourism time)</li> <li>• Negotiating national TV coverage of the event</li> <li>• Pinellas Hope will receive 2% of the event profits</li> <li>• One confirmed and one verbal sponsorship commitments</li> <li>• Proposes to cover all costs for the event</li> <li>• Strong marketing/advertising plan (TV, radio, magazine, newsletter, email, publicity at similar events)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Experienced team organizing competitive events</li> <li>• Conducted events in St. Pete area</li> <li>• Excellent references</li> <li>• Signed reference letter from agencies including Alden Beach Resort, St. Petersburg Bowl, Brighthouse Networks, and Publix Gasparilla Distance Classic</li> <li>• Flexible race dates</li> <li>• City to be named as co-sponsor</li> <li>• Geared to local runners</li> <li>• Co-ed event</li> <li>• Multiple events for general public</li> </ul>

**Profile**

**Weaknesses**

**Iron Girl**

- Limited experience in half-marathon events
- Significant volunteer resources
- Large outlay of police resources
- Exclusive for women athletes
- Event exclusivity - running events greater than 15K
- Three-year commitment
- Utilizes Albert Whitted Park for staging of event (limited capacity)
- One ancillary event, a women's wellness expo
- Second choice race dates near peak season for confirmed events (Week of Crawfish festival)
- Race route through business district and residential sections of downtown
- March date conflicts with Grand Prix

**Women's Running**

- Race date is November 21, 2009 (Week after Ribfest, Weekend of Chilloungue, Pirate Fest)
- Limited staffing resources
- Staffing experience in event planning and staging
- Exclusive for women athletes
- Currently locked into one date
- Undocumented guarantee
- minimum of 1,000 TNT runners
- Has not previously staged a running event in St. Pete
- No reference feedback received
- Utilizes Albert Whitted Park for staging of event (limited capacity)
- Large outlay of police resources
- Race route through business district and residential sections of downtown
- Estimates costs at \$10K, City estimates higher costs

**Beach Charities**

- City to cover all city costs
- Unconfirmed sponsorship
- Experience limited to small race events
- 5K is on different day from half-marathon
- Added costs for ancillary events
- Limited marketing/advertising budget
- Proposes using the Albert Whitted Park for staging of the event (limited capacity)
- Added costs to use Mahaffey Theater
- Use of Mahaffey grounds/Dali site (under construction)
- Limited to local TV coverage
- Race route primarily through residential sections of downtown