

August 15, 2016

Dear Mayor Martin and City Council Members:

We are a small group of citizens who volunteered to take over the planning and execution of the annual Havre de Grace Fourth of July festivities when the Havre de Grace Independence Celebration committee members announced their resignation. We had originally planned to take on roles in the old committee as follows:

Adam Hagelin, President
Christy Silverstein, Vice President
Nicky Fournier, Secretary
Jason Robertson, Treasurer
Diana Saulsbury, Member at Large

After this year's celebration, the old committee members informed us that while they will still support our efforts, they do not intend to elect new officers and would like us to form our own 501c3 organization. The process of forming a 501c3 takes 12 to 18 months, and planning activities for the next year's festivities begin almost immediately. Since not all standard fundraising activities were carried out over the last year, we are behind in fundraising. The old committee has offered to allow us to raise funds under their organization and use their account to make payments with our raised funds. They have also committed to donating the balance of their treasury to our new organization once we have established our own 501c3. While we appreciate the old committee's goodwill and commitment to seeing this long-standing Havre de Grace tradition continue, we feel that this arrangement presents too many logistical challenges for us to be able to be good stewards of monies, operate with transparency, and stay within a fixed budget.

We would like to formally request that the City of Havre de Grace establish a July 4th City Commission to plan and execute the annual Havre de Grace Fourth of July festivities, to include a parade, fireworks, carnival, and concert. This arrangement would enable us to control our own monies and begin planning and fundraising immediately. It would also make it easier to coordinate resources with the City. Most importantly, however, we believe that because the annual Fourth of July celebration is for the citizens of Havre de Grace, it makes the most sense for the planning and execution of this celebration to be managed by a City Commission. Though we are behind in both time and money, we firmly believe that we can continue this tradition for many years to come with the City's support.

Sincerely,

Nicky Fournier
Adam Hagelin
Jason Robertson
Diana Saulsbury
Christy Silverstein