



CAMBRIDGE LICENSE COMMISSION

CITY OF CAMBRIDGE

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Fire Department
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CAPTAIN HENRY W. BREEN
Police Department
Commission Member

RICHARD V. SCALI
Commission Executive Officer

TO: Robert W. Healy, City Manager

FROM: Benjamin C. Barnes, License Commission Chairman

RE: Vendor Fees: Council Order 47, December 7, 1998

DATE: January 5, 1999

In response to Council Order 47, dated December 7, 1998, please be advised that this department contacted Boston, Watertown and Somerville to determine how those municipalities handle one-day vendors who contract with non-profit agencies to sell goods at events held by these non-profits.

Watertown has not recently issued any vendor licenses, reportedly due to lack of need for such licenses. However, its policy does provide for both a \$15.00, one-day license as well as an annual license for \$100.00. It also requires a \$10.00 filing fee. Their policy does not provide for a reduced fee for non-profits.

Somerville does not issue one-day vendor licenses.

Boston issues annual vendor licenses only. Their fee is graduated, based on the square footage of the selling area.

In Cambridge, a special one-day vendor license is available for \$10.00 per vendor; we do not distinguish whether or not the vendor is contracting with a non-profit. Rather, we make this special license available to all applicants who present proof of identification and a letter of permission from either the event's sponsor or the person who owns the location of the event. The one-day, \$10.00 fee, is available to allow these vendors the opportunity to sell their wares in different locations, without the requirement of applying for an annual license. An annual license is available for \$39.00 per vendor, but requires a one-time hearing and advertising fee of \$110.00 as well as a state vendor's license. There is no hearing and advertising fee for one-day vendors and we do not require proof of a state vendor's license. The license is issued over the counter.

Robert W. Healy
January 6, 1999
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There are two issues that are involved with requiring this license and fee. The first is regulatory, for both consumer protection and public safety. As many of these vendors are not Cambridge-based, it is important to have background information, including their name, address, and type of goods being sold, on file should a consumer complaint be received after the actual event. We also have the responsibility of regulating these vendors, so that public safety problems do not occur during the actual event. The city's propane policy, developed in 1997 and revised in June of 1998, was borne, in part, from on-site regulation. The nominal cost of the vendor licenses covers both the issuance and regulation of the vendor sales. This one-day fee has remained the same since the mid-1980s, although the cost of regulation has increased significantly. It is only when there are multiple vendors at an event that the cost of regulation is reconciled with the fee.

Finally, a waiver of vendor fees for non-profits could open a Pandora's box of legal issues, i.e., the anti-aid amendment of 1995; also, which non-profits are chosen, why not waive fees for colleges and university groups and for-profit groups. The list is endless.

If you need additional information on this matter, please advise.



EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT
ROBERT W. HEALY
City Manager

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Deputy City Manager

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28.

January 11, 1999

To The Honorable, The City Council:

Please find attached a response to Awaiting Report Item No. 31, regarding a report on a comparison of vendor fees, received from License Commission Chairman Benjamin C. Barnes.

Very truly yours,

Robert W. Healy
City Manager

RWH/mec
Attachment

Consent Agenda #28

S-13

Relative to AR 31 regarding a report on
a comparison of vendor fees.

In City Council January 11, 1999

PLACED ON FILE