



"Caring for Our Community"

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Linda Collins-Shaw, 314-954-8385

lceshaw@sbcglobal.net

KIDS DON'T COUNT IN U CITY!
City pulls support for annual community carnival

UNIVERSITY CITY, MO-- The Board of Directors of the University City Community Foundation (UCCF) and the planning committee of Fair U City announced today the cancellation of this year's Fair U City event slated for June 7-9 in Heman Park. UCCF Interim President Linda Collins- Shaw said the organization voted to cancel this year's event due to the City's lack of support and continued uncertainty about the special events process.

"It is regrettable that the City has opted not to support Fair U City with in-kind services as it has since the fair's inception," Shaw said. "What is more regrettable is the City has stonewalled the Fair U City planning committee for months and provided no clear answer regarding their intent despite our working diligently to provide requested information and meet their ever-changing requirements."

Fair U City, featuring the U City Jazz Fest, has become a family favorite attracting thousands of residents and visitors from surrounding communities. Proceeds from the fair help fund the community grants awarded by the University City Community Foundation. UCCF awarded more than \$13,000 in community grants last year. Among the recipients were:

1. Crown Center for Senior Living (Senior Arts Program)
2. Women in Charge (Adult Literacy)
3. University City Swim Club (Diversity, Scholarships)
4. University City Education Foundation (Teacher Projects)
5. Midwest Association of Farmers Markets (Student Employment)
6. Sutter-Meyer Society (Facility Improvements)
7. University City Parks Foundation (Swimming Pool/Recreation Equipment)
8. Real Talk, Inc. (Event support)

In addition, UCCF provided funds annually to the University City Jazz Festival to help cover the cost of musicians, and provided the stage and all facilities for the jazz festival.

City Manager Gregory Rose, who had previously indicated his support for the fair, is now demanding UCCF/Fair U City reimburse the city for costs previously regarded as in-kind. The estimated costs were projected to be near \$28,000.



"The excessive financial burden you have chosen to place on the non-profit foundation makes our staging of the fair fiscally unviable," Shaw said in a letter to Rose. "In February of this year, our Treasurer, Robert Parker visited City Hall to have you sign the contract for the carnival rides, as you did in 2018. He was advised a new procedure was being developed, but details were not finalized. I met with you on March 7th. You indicated because we gained profit from the Fair, and although we use the profits to provide community grants to University City, we would be held accountable for paying the City for all services. Since then Mr. Parker and I have been directed from one staff person to another; and have had our phone calls and e-mails ignored or had much-delayed responses. Finally, on April 25th, you advised of us your new conditions, after contracts have been signed and commitments have been made to vendors and musicians. Your staff has advised us that UCCF would be charged almost \$28,000, and that the City Council would still have to vote on this later this month. With these actions you are creating a timeline in which the fair would come up for a vote mere weeks before the scheduled opening date."

Fair U City has been received quite positively by residents, business owners and visitors alike. Not having the event will be a blow to the city's reputation, to the children and families who depend on this budget-friendly entertainment activity and the organizations who would benefit from the community grant awards from fair proceeds.

"We are pleased that, in the seven years of Fair U City, we had had no negative incidents, and no complaints from the City as to how we staged the fair, and how we left the park at the conclusion of the fair weekends. And, tens of thousands of people had a good time in a great community," Shaw said.

The fair organizers will be working diligently on an alternative event however UCCF will likely incur significant financial losses as a result of the city's actions.

"In losing Fair U City and the University City Jazz Festival, you are losing a community event that draws thousands of people from University City and beyond. You are losing the only event that is designed for the children and youth of our community specifically. We have created an event, organized and staged by volunteers, that has created only goodwill in our community," Shaw said.

Those wanting to donate to the University City Community Foundation to help make up for the funds that it hoped to make at this year's fair are encouraged to do so at: www.ucitycares.org.
net