



CITY of POOLER
— GEORGIA —

STATE OF GEORGIA }
 }
COUNTY OF CHATHAM }

ORDINANCE O2026-08.A
Special Events

AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND THE CITY OF POOLER CODE OF ORDINANCES CHAPTER 74 - STREETS, SIDEWALKS, AND OTHER PUBLIC PLACES, ARTICLE IV – PARADES AND DEMONSTRATIONS; SECTIONS 74-108. PERMIT APPLICATION AND FEE, 74-109. EVALUATION AND ISSUANCE OF PERMIT, AND 74-110. STANDARDS FOR DENIAL; WITH AMENDED PROVISIONS RELATED TO SPECIAL EVENTS; TO REPEAL ALL ORDINANCES IN CONFLICT HERewith; TO PROVIDE FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED by the Mayor and Council of the City of Pooler that the Code of Ordinances of the City of Pooler, Georgia are hereby amended as follows:

I

That CHAPTER 74, STREETS, SIDEWALKS, AND OTHER PUBLIC PLACES, ARTICLE IV–SPECIAL EVENTS be amended by deleting the strikethrough language and adding the underlined text as follows:

Article IV. SPECIAL EVENTS

Sec. 74-106. Purpose and Definitions

(a) Purpose

To establish a structured and predictable Special Event permitting process that protects public health, safety, and welfare, while respecting constitutional rights. This ordinance regulates the time, place, and manner of Special Events, not the content of speech or expressive conduct.

(b) Definitions

For purposes of this article, the following terms shall have the meanings ascribed to them:

City: The City of Pooler, Georgia, and any area within its corporate limits.

City-Owned Property: Any property owned or controlled by the City, including without limitation parks, buildings, playgrounds, rights-of-way, easements, parking lots, or facilities.

Parade: Any organized procession or motorcade of persons or vehicles on a public street that cannot comply with standard traffic laws.

Public Assembly: Any gathering of fifty (50) or more people with potential to interfere

with normal pedestrian or vehicle traffic, or that occupies public space or facilities.

Sidewalk: Any area or path set aside or open to the general public for pedestrian use, regardless of surface material.

Special Event: A temporary, planned event on city-owned, public, private, or commercial property that impacts public safety, traffic, city services, or public areas, including but not limited to parades, fairs, runs, festivals, markets, sales, and large gatherings exceeding fifty (50) attendees.

Special Event Application: A document submitted to the City for review, containing event details required by the City.

Special Event Permit: Official authorization issued by the City allowing a Special Event under specified conditions.

Street: Any roadway or area open to vehicular traffic including medians, berms, or rights-of-way under the jurisdiction of the City.

Sec. 74-107. Permit Required

(a) General Requirement

No person or organization shall conduct or knowingly participate in a Special Event within the City without first obtaining a Special Event Permit. This requirement applies to events on public or city-owned property, or on private property that directly impacts public safety, traffic, or city services. Private property events that do not affect public spaces or require city services may be exempt from the permit requirement, unless otherwise specified in this ordinance.

(b) Applicability

A permit is required if your event includes any of the following:

- (1) Fifty (50) or more attendees anticipated that may affect public safety, access to public property, traffic, or city services
- (2) Sale of merchandise, food, or beverage (alcoholic and/or non-alcoholic)
- (3) Animals
- (4) Athletic or moving events (e.g., runs, walks, rides, parades, processions)
- (5) Rental of city properties or facilities
- (6) Drones
- (7) Event signage or advertising that affects public visibility, safety, or access, or is erected on private property where otherwise prohibited by ordinance
- (8) Film or video production that may affect public safety, access to public property, traffic, or city services
- (9) Use of amplified sound or loud noise
- (10) Parking impacts on public streets
- (11) Road and/or sidewalk closures affecting public rights-of-way
- (12) Special effects (e.g., fireworks, drones, fog machines)
- (13) Temporary structures, including tents, stages, or canopies

- (14) Temporary utility hookups (e.g., water, electric)
- (15) Traffic control or road redirection
- (16) Waste management, portable toilet, or recycling needs

(c) Advertising Prior to Permit Issuance Prohibited

No person or organization shall advertise, promote, publish, or otherwise publicly announce a Special Event subject to this Article prior to obtaining an approved Special Event Permit from the City. Any advertisement or promotional material for a proposed event prior to permit approval must clearly state that the event is "pending City approval."

Sec. 74-108. Permit Application and Fee

(a) Filing Deadline

Applications along with a non-refundable application fee as listed in the City's Schedule of Fees must be submitted no later than thirty (30) days before the proposed event ~~and no later than one (1) week prior to a regularly scheduled City Council meeting.~~

At the discretion of the City Manager, an application for a Special Event Permit filed after the minimum filing deadline may be accepted and considered if (1) there is sufficient time to process and investigate the application and obtain necessary police and other services, and (2) the applicant makes a reasonable showing, and the City Manager determines, that the circumstances giving rise to the event did not reasonably allow the application to be filed within the prescribed time limit. This discretion also applies to private events that could impact public safety, traffic, or city services.

(b) Required Information

Applications shall include:

- (1) Name or title of event
- (2) Contact information of the organizer and designated representative
- (3) Date, time, location, and event schedule
- (4) Estimated attendance, number of staff/volunteers, number of vendor spaces
- (5) Amplified sound details
- (6) Signage and lighting plans
- (7) Description of static structures (e.g., tents)
- (8) Vehicle usage description
- (9) Security and safety plan (if applicable)
- (10) Medical response plan (if applicable)
- (11) Waste and recycling plan (if applicable)
- (12) Site plan or route map (if applicable)
- (13) Any other pertinent information requested by the City
- (14) Sanitation plan, including the provision and placement of portable hand sanitation stations near food vendors or food stalls, restrooms, and portable toilets (porta-potties), in sufficient number and locations to reasonably serve event attendees (if applicable)

The Chief of Police will determine if paid off-duty police officers are needed for public safety. The Fire Chief will determine if emergency medical or fire personnel are needed. The event organizer shall be responsible for costs related to off-duty public safety staffing.

(c) Permit Application Fee Structure

The non-refundable application fee, as outlined in the City's Schedule of Fees, covers the entire Special Event, regardless of its duration or number of days. No additional fees will be required for multiple days of the same event, unless specified otherwise by the City in special cases.

Sec. 74-109. Evaluation and Issuance of Permit

Each application shall be reviewed administratively and considered by City Council during a regular meeting by the Finance, Recreation, Public Safety, and Planning & Development departments. Upon final approval by the City Manager or their designee ~~City Council~~ and payment of applicable fees, the City will issue the Special Event Permit.

A permit shall be valid only for the specific date(s) and time(s) approved by the City. In the event the event must be postponed due to inclement weather or other unforeseen circumstances beyond the organizer's control, the permit may be honored on a rescheduled date occurring within thirty (30) calendar days of the originally approved event date, subject to prior written approval by the City Manager. The rescheduled event must remain substantially similar in scope, location, and impact as initially permitted.

Issuance of a permit does not constitute a waiver of sovereign immunity or impose any liability on the City or its officials for damages or injuries related to the event.

An appeal of a decision related to Special Event Permits shall follow the process outlined for appeals in Chapter 10, Article I, Section 10-12- Appeal Process.

Sec. 74-110. Standards for Denial

~~The City Council~~ should consider all relevant factors when reviewing a Special Event Permit Application, including whether:

- (1) The event would unreasonably disrupt pedestrian or vehicular city traffic
- (2) The event would interfere with emergency access
- (3) The event would cause hardship to nearby residents or businesses
- (4) The event would require excessive City staffing or resources
- (5) The event conflicts with another scheduled event such that the two could not be safely held
- (6) The applicant provides false or incomplete information or refuses to accept permit conditions
- (7) The event would pose a risk or danger to public health, safety, or welfare

Sec. 74-111. Event Conduct and Compliance

No person shall:

- (1) Participate in a Special Event in violation of the permit; or
- (2) Participate without the consent of the permit holder; or
- (3) Interfere with the orderly conduct of a permitted event; or

- (4) Engage in conduct that disrupts public safety or violates the conditions of the permit.

Sec. 74-112. Distribution from Vehicles

It shall be unlawful to distribute items, free or for sale, from any moving vehicle participating in a Special Event, parade, or procession on public streets.

Sec. 74-113. Release and Indemnity

As a required part of the application process, any applicant for a special event permit must execute a release, indemnity, and hold harmless agreement waiving any and all claims against the City and its' agents or representatives, arising out of, or in any way connected to the special event. The release, indemnity, and hold harmless agreement shall apply to any and all types of claims arising out of, or in any way connected to, the special event unless such claim is the result of negligence solely attributable to the City, or is caused by the willful or wanton conduct by the City or its' agents or representatives.

Sec. 74-114. Penalty

Any person violating this article shall be punished as provided in Sec. 1-12 of the Code of Ordinances. Each day a violation continues shall constitute a separate offense.

Sec. 74-115. Exemptions

No permit is required for the following:

- (1) Events organized or sponsored by the City
- (2) Governmental functions
- (3) Funeral and wedding processions
- (4) Supervised school-related activities (K-12) limited to students, staff, and faculty, whether during or outside of school hours
- (5) Informal gatherings of forty-nine (49) or fewer people on private property, provided the event does not impact public rights-of-way, public facilities, or require city services.
- (6) Temporary retail promotions (e.g., grand openings)
- (7) Residential garage/rummage sales
- (8) Noncommercial residential events not blocking public sidewalks
- (9) City maintenance or utility work
- (10) Subdivision events on non-through streets, with written City Manager approval if the event impacts public safety, traffic, or requires city services.
- (11) City-recognized recreational activities and tournaments (unless special conditions apply)

Sec. 74-116-74-120. Reserved

II.

All ordinances or parts of ordinances in conflict with the ordinance are hereby repealed.

III.

If any section, clause, or phrase of this ordinance is held to be invalid or unconstitutional by any court of competent jurisdiction, the said holding shall in no way affect the validity of the remaining portions of this ordinance.

IV.

This ordinance shall be effective immediately upon its adoption by the Mayor and City Council of Pooler, Georgia.

FIRST READING: _____ day of _____, _____

SECOND READING: _____ day of _____, _____

ADOPTED: _____ day of _____, _____

CITY OF POOLER, GEORGIA

Karen L. Williams, Mayor

ATTEST:

Kiley Fusco, City Clerk