



January 18, 2024

**VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL**

Kick Lee, Cincinnati Parks Commissioner (kickleecincyparks@gmail.com)  
Jason Barron, Cincinnati Parks Director (jason.barron@cincinnati-oh.gov)  
Lou Sand, Cincinnati Parks East Region Manager (lou.sand@cincinnati-oh.gov)

Dear Kick, Jason & Lou:

Ault Park Advisory Council (APAC), Hyde Park Neighborhood Council (HPNC), and Mt. Lookout Community Council (MLCC) are writing to inform Cincinnati Parks that, unfortunately, our organizations can no longer independently organize, fund and administer the 4<sup>th</sup> of July fireworks event in Ault Park.

Historically, the event has been organized by various groups of volunteers who have not always been associated with APAC, HPNC or MLCC. When the prior organizers slowed down, APAC assumed full responsibility for the event (with additional support from HPNC and MLCC) in an ambitious effort to save it. However, based on our experience in the past several years, we have made the decision that we can no longer “own” this event.

There are several compelling reasons for our position, including, but not limited to: (1) the safety of the attendees (we have experienced issues with attendees hopping over fences and getting too close to the explosives); (2) the efficiency of traffic into and out of Ault Park (and lack of police presence to control it); (3) the time required for sufficient community fundraising; and (4) the financial liability for any fundraising shortage. APAC, HPNC and MLCC are boards of volunteers who work full time and already dedicate a significant amount of their limited free time and energy to our respective operations. Unfortunately, we do not have the collective capacity to “own” an event of this scale, which continues to grow by the year.

The 4<sup>th</sup> of July fireworks event has been a cherished tradition in Ault Park for over 50 years, and we would love to find a way for it to continue. We have thoroughly discussed this matter and explored every option. Even with the collective support of APAC, HPNC and MLCC, we do not believe that we have the capacity to “own” this event.

We fully expect for the members of the Mt. Lookout, Hyde Park and other surrounding communities to express confusion, disappointment and frustration if, for the first time in 50+ years, there is no 4<sup>th</sup> of July fireworks event in Ault Park. Therefore, I am reaching out to each of you, as our key supporters and collaborators in Parks, in order to: (1) inform you of our decision; and (2) **collaborate on a strategy to communicate this news to the general public and to the past sponsors of the event.** This second item is important and time-sensitive, and we believe that it



would be helpful if we could schedule a time to discuss this issue together and coordinate a cohesive messaging strategy.

Please share your thoughts and availability when you can. As always, your time and attention is much appreciated. Thanks for everything you do.

Sincerely,

*/s/ Jeffrey A. Levine*  
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*/s/ Tommy McEvoy*  
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