

Regulation

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Beach St. Revival

## Rules Threaten to Stall Car Show and Festival

SCREAMING mad over the conditions the city has placed on this year's Beach Street Revival classic car show and parade, founder Rick Petersen is threatening to screech his immensely popular event out of Santa Cruz beginning next year.

The "King of Beach Street" promoter has had a few fender-benders with city officials before, but this year Petersen claims his festival has been knocked out of alignment. Citing a litany of what he considers unfair terms attached to the Sept. 19-20 program, Petersen claims he has been forced to look for an alternate venue somewhere else in Santa Cruz County, but outside city limits.

"The city has made it virtually impossible for us to keep the event in Santa Cruz, and it's a shame since Beach Street and San Lorenzo Park are the perfect places to hold it," said Petersen, who founded the revival in 1977 and has watched it grow into one of the largest and most prestigious shows of its type on the west coast. (Petersen estimates that crowds in excess of 10,000 spent \$250,000 during last year's event, mostly in the city.)

"But there's just no way we can afford to keep it here anymore. The city has added so many costs and attached so many provisions that it would no longer be worthwhile to put it on from a financial standpoint. We've been looking at other sites in the county but so far we're not sure where we might end up."

Although Petersen's list of complaints is longer than a '62 El Dorado, four are at the top:

- The police department requirement that he shell out \$3,500 for four city police officers, on top of the private security force he already employs;

- Payment of \$2,025 to rent San Lorenzo Park, based on 10 percent of projected revenues generated from booth and car display fees, which Petersen says is 10 times higher than last year's charge;

- The alcohol ban at San Lorenzo Park, which drove the Spring Fair to private land near Harvey West Park this year;

- The admissions tax, totaling over \$1,000, which in Petersen's case is not based on admission, but on the \$45 registration fee for cars on display.

Petersen's bill adds up to more than \$7,000, which the promoter says is 700 percent higher than last year's bill. Petersen further complains that the city dumped this year's requirements on him without warning in early July, only 48 days before the event is scheduled, and that he is expected to come up with the full amount by Aug. 28.

Neither the city council nor the police department — both of which have heard Petersen's protests in

years past — has any publicly expressed sympathy for the promoter, and have flatly refused to negotiate any of the terms. Relations between the city and Petersen have deteriorated rapidly over the past few weeks as Petersen has made his concerns known in a less than polite manner.

Deputy police chief Mike Dunbaugh welcomed the opportunity to respond to Petersen's charges one by one.

Park rental fee: "Petersen will pay what he should have been paying all along. The information he has provided to us and to the media has been confusing and contradictory, but we are using his estimates of the booth and display fees and applying a flat 10 percent rate, which is the standard cost to any commercial user of the park."

Admissions tax: "The city attorney has advised that the admissions tax applies to this case, and we have no control over that."

Alcohol ban and requirement to hire four police officers: "Last year



Four police officers will be on the lookout for alcohol in San Lorenzo Park at this year's Beach Street Revival car show.

several off-duty police officers attending the show observed a number of alcohol possession and consumption violations, some by participants, some by spectators. We are seriously concerned about preventing alcohol abuse from occurring again, especially with the large financial investment we have in San Lorenzo Park.

"We have no faith in the ability of the event's sponsors to control the situation. It's very similar to the situation with the Jaycees and the Spring Fair, and they were a pleasure to deal with. We have not been able to establish the same level of communication with Mr. Petersen."

Petersen, a Santa Cruz native clearly enamored with the nostalgia event he created, also faces a rather tough challenge to have a "Beach Street Revival" in some as-yet unknown town that has no Beach Street.

"This hasn't been the best week of my life," groaned Petersen. "Up until this year we worked out problems in a spirit of cooperation with the city, even though we didn't always like what we had to do. But I am really having trouble believing what's happening now. I have no choice but to say adios." •

— Kevin Hanson