

GREENFIELD

City's holiday fireworks are back

By **MARY BYRNE**
Staff Writer

GREENFIELD — After a year's hiatus a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, the annual Independence Day celebration is returning to Beacon Field.

"I'm super excited to be able to have this for our community," said Recreation Director Christy Moore. "One of the focal points of our community is the Fourth of July celebration, and seeing the fireworks launch off the iconic Poet's Seat Tower is just breathtaking."

The 2021 fireworks are slated for Friday, July 2, at 9:35 p.m. Leading up to the fireworks, mixed music and entertainment will be followed by live band performances beginning at 6 p.m. Vendors will begin setting up at around 4 p.m.

"With all the COVID guidelines recently being lifted, that fully changes how we're doing things," Moore explained. "I can actually have live bands as we have had in the past. That's what I'm trying to pull together."

As of May 29, mask mandates lifted in Massachusetts and gathering limits were rescinded. Beginning June 15, the state of emergency is expected to be lifted.

The schedule of events is still be worked out, Moore said — a logistic that was complicated by the ever-changing guidelines and restrictions posed by the state. As well as organizing the lineup, the Recreation Department is also securing vendors, many of which were interested in participating even before restrictions were lifted.

"We're connecting again with our vendors," she said.

As is always the case, Moore noted, the event is made possible "solely by donations and sponsorships."

"Getting a later start to get the word out means that we have less time to raise our \$18,000 to put this

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event on," she said.

Businesses who were previous sponsors of the event have already been contacted, Moore said, and any other business owners who would like to become a sponsor should contact the Recreation Department at 413-772-1553.

Additionally, residents are encouraged to send donations to the Recreation Department's office at 20 Sanderson St. Donations should be labeled "Greenfield Fireworks Fund."

"I graciously ask anybody who is able and willing to send in donations to do so as soon as possible," she said.

Moore added that the department will be collecting donations during its "boot drive" the week of June 21 (Monday to Friday), as well as June 28 to June 30, from noon to 1 p.m. and 5 to 6 p.m.

She said Mayor Roxann Wedegartner's office will help the Recreation Department kick off its drive.

"The mayor has been a big ad-

vocate to bring this event back for the city to enjoy," Moore said. "This is going to be one of the largest events the city is going to put on since the restrictions have been lifted."

Wedegartner said she wanted to thank everyone involved in making the celebration happen this year, "especially after having to cancel last year's event."

"I am absolutely thrilled we will be having fireworks in Greenfield this year and making it happen was incredibly important to me, personally," she said.

Though Moore hopes people will come out and support the event this year, she added that she wants everyone to "be mindful of what they're comfortable with."

"We all need an opportunity to enjoy these events again. It's a rewarding time — a lot to pull together," she said. "But I certainly think the benefits outweigh the challenges of putting this together."

A rain date is scheduled for Monday, July 5.

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