

COUNCIL ACTION FORM

SUBJECT: CONSUMPTION OF ALCOHOL ON WATER PLANT
PREMISES DURING AFTER-HOURS FOR A
AMERICAN WATER WORKS ASSOCIATION,
IOWA SECTION CONFERENCE EVENT

BACKGROUND:

The Ames Water Treatment Plant is a member of the American Water Works Association-Iowa Section (AWWA-IA). Every fall, AWWA-IA conducts a two-and-a-half day conference and exposition. The location for the conference rotates each year, allowing different communities to host the event. Their next conference will be held in Ames on October 22-24, 2019. The Wednesday and Thursday technical sessions and banquet will be held at the Gateway Hotel and Conference Center.

AWWA-IA has asked if the City would be interested in hosting a Tuesday evening reception at the new Ames Water Treatment Plant. The event would run after normal business hours; likely from 6:00 – 8:00 PM. Typically, these evening receptions provide light refreshments, including beer and wine. The event is only open to registered attendees of the conference, and each attendee is provided a limited number of drink tickets.

The authority to approve licenses for alcoholic beverage service in Ames lies solely with the City Council. **Due to the advanced planning required for this type of event, City staff is seeking a decision from the City Council in advance of the submission of an alcoholic beverage control license by AWWA-IA. If the City Council feels that it is not interested in approving a temporary liquor license that would allow consumption of beer and wine at the Water Plant, knowing that now would allow AWWA-IA time to develop an alternative reception plan.**

In the past, the City Council has approved alcohol consumption for events at the Ames Public Library. In 2014, a request was granted for a gala event held in conjunction with the grand re-opening of the Library. A second approval was granted in 2016 as a part of a Friends Foundation fundraising event. Just as with the proposed AWWA-IA request, the events at the Library were held after regular business hours when only invited guests were present.

It should be noted that the arrangements for the alcoholic beverage service, including paying for the beer and wine, will be handled by AWWA-IA, who does carry insurance for these types of events. The City will not be the entity purchasing the alcohol.

The Water Plant would limit possession of alcoholic beverages to the first floor conference room and administrative portions of the facility, so no alcohol would be allowed in the treatment portions of the facility. Multiple City staff will be present throughout the event to provide tours of the facility, and will be able to assist in ensuring that alcohol remains in the designated locations.

ALTERNATIVES:

1. The City Council can express support for the American Water Works Association-Iowa Section's intent to seek a temporary license to serve beer and wine on Water Plant property at an after-hours reception.

If this alternative is supported, the issue will be brought back to the City Council in the future for approval of a temporary liquor license at this City site.

2. The City Council can indicate that it is not supportive of allowing alcohol being consumed at the Water Plant for this conference event.

MANAGER'S RECOMMENDED ACTION:

The City is a member of the American Water Works Association-Iowa Section (AWWA-IA), a drinking water trade association comprised of drinking water professionals and water quality advocates dedicated to the promotion of quality drinking water for the citizens of Iowa. Each year, AWWA-IA holds an annual conference at a location that rotates through different communities. Ames will be the location for the October 2019 conference. AWWA-IA has requested the opportunity to hold an after-hours reception at the Water Plant which will include the service of beer and wine. Due to the planning deadlines for the event, the AWWA-IA is seeking approval from the City Council before applying for a temporary liquor license.

Because the event will be held after public hours, the alcohol will not be served in the treatment area, only attendees of the conference will be at this reception, and attendees will be given a limited number of drink tickets; it is the recommendation of the City Manager that the City Council adopt Alternative No. 1 as described above.