

CITY OF CLARKSTON

CLARKSTON CITY COUNCIL MEETING

ITEM NO: F1

HEARING TYPE:  
Council Meeting

BUSINESS AGENDA / MINUTES

ACTION TYPE:  
Resolution

MEETING DATE: June 2, 2015

**SUBJECT:** Approve Ethiopian Orthodox Church Request to Utilize Milam Park for Religious Ceremony

DEPARTMENT: Administration

PUBLIC HEARING:  YES  NO

ATTACHMENT:  YES  NO  
Pages: 1

INFORMATION CONTACT: Keith Barker  
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PURPOSE:

To approve the attached request from several Ethiopian Orthodox Churches to utilize Milam Park for a religious ceremony.

NEED/ IMPACT:

The City of Clarkston has received a request from representatives of three Ethiopian Orthodox Churches in and around the Clarkston area. The request involves utilization of Milam Park on the evening of September 27, 2015 for the purpose of celebrating the "Demera" holiday.

There are about six Ethiopian Churches serving the community in Clarkston. Beginning last year, a union of those churches; St. Michael, Holy Savior, Holy Trinity and St. Mary's Ethiopian Orthodox Churches, started celebrating this holiday together.

The Ethiopian Orthodox Church celebrates the "Demera" holiday outdoors by burning one big bon-fire at "Meskel Square" in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, and several small bon-fires in every community of Orthodox Christians. The holiday is celebrated in memory of what St. Elena, the mother of Emperor Constantine, did to find the original Cross on which Jesus Christ was crucified, from where it was buried in the fourth century. This holiday has been celebrated in several states of the Nation, including Georgia, California, Texas, Colorado and Washington, DC.

Notwithstanding the Georgia fire ban between May 1<sup>st</sup> and September 30<sup>th</sup> each year, the churches have secured a fire permit for the small bone fire that will be a part of the celebration.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

No staff recommendation.