



November 12, 2014

Alderman Robert Bauman, Chairman  
Alderman James Bohl  
Alderman Joe Davis, Sr.  
Alderman Robert Donovan  
Alderman Willie Wade, Vice Chairman

RE: Milwaukee Marathon #141123

Dear Public Works Committee Members:

As you know, I was before this committee in June and have had numerous conversations and meetings with committee members since. Several have been concerns raised, all valid, and all of which have forced us to do things that, in my opinion, have made this a better event.

These are the concerns that I have heard:

- 1) How do we plan to finance the event and how can we assure the city that they will get paid for the services they provide?
- 2) Summerfest spoke against our proposed date due to a conflict with their own race. How can we work with them to come up with an event that is mutually beneficial?
- 3) To make this truly a city-wide event, we need to have more diversity in our organizing committee and on the route. How do we plan to do that?
- 4) How can we assure the city that our event will be organized in a professional manner? Who will be on the staff?
- 5) Will our event conflict with the Lakefront Marathon?

Here are my responses to each issue of concern:

- 1) Finances: our estimates show that we would be able to break even at 10,000 participants (which is our capacity) just from the revenue generated from registration fees alone. We have done very detailed budgeting. Our other primary source of revenue will be from sponsors. We have done very little work to find sponsors yet we have already gotten a title sponsor and commitments for three other sponsors for a total of \$110,000. We are in the process of negotiating a 3-year agreement with our title sponsor, which is a major financial institution. We feel reasonably certain that we can bring in another \$100,000 in sponsorship money once we start actively looking. There are also a number of other revenue streams such as merchandise sales, hotel kickbacks and expo booth sales. The Lakefront Marathon turned profits of over \$60,000 in the years 2010, 2011 and 2012 (which are the only three years I have records for) without a sponsor, and this is a much smaller event. These types of events are generally

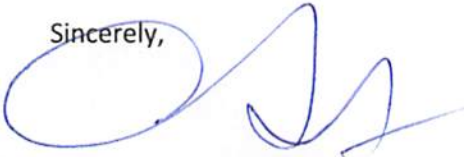
profitable. Our estimates show that we could still be profitable if we reached only 50% of our projected field size.

- 2) **Summerfest:** I have had several conversations with Don Smiley and other Summerfest officials. They have agreed to work with us if we moved our date to the fall, which we have. We would like to stage our event out of the Summerfest Grounds and in return would help promote their Rock n Sole Half Marathon, which is in June each year. I think we will work well together. I am attaching a letter from Mr. Smiley to back up what I have just said.
- 3) **Diversity:** I have met with Alderman Wade twice since the last committee meeting, and both have been great meetings. I honestly think his concerns have made this a better event. We have added some areas to the proposed route that are more diverse, including Sherman Boulevard and King Drive, and added two African Americans to our board: Melissa Goins and Dannette Justus. Both were invited to attend this morning, but had conflicts. We would also like to include some predominantly Hispanic areas on our course such as a portion of Ceasar Chavez Drive. We want to make this event a reflection of the entire city, but within the constraints of the course.
- 4) **Professional Management:** We are working with Vision Event Management to handle the management of the event. Vision is the company that produces the Rock n Sole and the Brewers Mini Marathon, as well as a number of other major running events throughout the country. They are very experienced in dealing with the folks in the DPW and Police Department here in Milwaukee, and know the route well. We couldn't have found a better partner in this. They have the skills and expertise to handle all aspects of race operations management including start/finish, course set-up and tear-down, setting up aid stations, signage, equipment sourcing and crisis management (see enclosed proposal for more details). We also have some local people working with us who have a significant experience in producing running events. This includes Kris Hinrichs, who was the longtime director of the Lakefront Marathon. I also have extensive experience in this area.
- 5) **Lakefront Marathon:** this is a medium-sized event that takes place the first Sunday of October. It usually has around 2,000 finishers, most who are from the area. It is a much different event than what we are planning. Its course does not enter the City of Milwaukee until the final few miles. It has a 1-day expo. It is management by a group of volunteers from a local running club. Many people think it is a major event, but it's not. It will continue to thrive even with our event taking place a month later. The president of the running club has indicated that they are going to pursue legal action against us if we call our event the Milwaukee Marathon because it may cause confusion with their event. I think there is some merit to this, and I would also like to avoid a lawsuit before we've even had a chance to hold our first race. And it's also in our best interest to not be confused with them. To that end, I engaged the creative minds at our ad agency – Hanson Dodge – to come up with a name that will keep us from being confused with the Lakefront Marathon, and also a name which will be reflective of what we are trying to accomplish. We have decided on the Milwaukee Running Festival. We believe it encompasses both the enormity of the event and the city's festival heritage. The marathon may possibly be referred to by people in the running community as the Milwaukee Marathon, much like the Milwaukee Lakefront Marathon is referred to by most as the Lakefront Marathon. But the official name of our event will be the Milwaukee Running Festival. We have received very

positive feedback from those who have heard the name, and expect it to be very well-received when we make this public.

In conclusion, we have widespread support for this event; the response from the local running community has been incredible. We have the backing from Visit Milwaukee, business leaders and neighborhood organizations. We have been working for nearly two years on planning this event and are ready to get it launched and open registration. We ask that you allow us to move forward with our plans by approving this resolution. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'Chris Ponteri', written over the word 'Sincerely,'.

Chris Ponteri, Executive Director  
Milwaukee Marathon, Inc.



November 10, 2014

Mr. Chris Ponteri  
Milwaukee Marathon, Inc.  
27351 Foxhaven Drive  
Wind Lake, WI 53185

Re: 2015 Milwaukee Running Festival

Dear Chris,

Thank you for your invitation to attend the Common Council meeting on Wednesday, November 12, in which you hope to secure approval to stage a Milwaukee Running Festival, October 30 – November 1, 2015. Unfortunately, we are unable to attend due to prior commitments.

We support your efforts and look forward to meeting with you in the next few weeks to determine what portion of the grounds, if any, may be utilized for staging your event. Please be advised that continuing WisDOT construction on the Hoan Bridge, coupled with our potential grounds construction /maintenance projects, may limit our options, but we are hopeful that we can identify areas which may meet your needs.

Please contact our Director of New Business Development, Gaye Littell, to set up a meeting at your earliest convenience. She may be reached at [glittell@summerfest.com](mailto:glittell@summerfest.com) or 414-287-4416.

Warm regards,

Don Smiley  
President and Chief Executive Officer

Cc: Gaye Littell and Frank Nicotera (MWF)

# Proposal

## ***Milwaukee Marathon, 2015***

Submitted by

**Vision Event Management, LLC**

16851 Southpark Drive, Suite 100

Westfield, IN 46074

(317) 294-3622

Jeff Graves

March 16, 2014

**VISION**  
EVENT MANAGEMENT

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## **Services**

Vision Event Management (VEM) was founded in 2006 to not only assist organizations in their event management, but to produce and manage first-class fitness events. VEM looks to go above and beyond what other event producers are doing and has set the standard for great events. With over 143,000 participants taking part in VEM events, VEM prides itself on focusing on the participant, ensuring they have a safe and enjoyable experience. VEM also feels the coordination with the public safety sector is key to the overall success of any event. VEM currently produces events such as:

- Publix Georgia Marathon & Half Marathon
- The Chicago Half Marathon
- BMO Harris Bank Madison Mini-Marathon (Madison, WI)
- Summerfest's Rock 'n Sole Run
- Milwaukee Brewer's Mini-Marathon & 10K
- Rite Aid Cleveland Marathon
- Little Rock Marathon
- 13.1 Marathon Chicago
- 13.1 Marathon Atlanta

VEM is regarded as one of the best race management companies in the United States, producing some of the most recognizable and successful events in the country. VEM has a track record of handling crisis situations in an organized and professional manner.

### **Services**

1. **Start and finish of the race and all elements that go with same, i.e., first aid, hydration stations, timing mats, signage, etc:**

VEM will take into account many factors in determining the key elements of the start and finish areas. Clear direction, marking, layout and operation of these key elements are a priority, making the experience easy for participants.

- a. **The Start Line**

- i. Providing participants with an aid station at the start line is a key element, especially with a summer event and heat being a potential issue. VEM wants to provide participants with plenty of options to stay hydrated during the event.
- ii. The look and feel of the start line is also an important factor VEM will develop. VEM would use the structure used at all VEM events with a uniquely designed look and feel of the signage for the start and cross banner. Flags would be incorporated to give the start a grander, more festive feel, such as American Flags, feather flags or race specific flags.

- b. **The Finish Line**

- i. The finish chute is an area VEM believes should have a festive and energetic feel. Leading into the finish line, it can provide participants with an emotional high of accomplishing their goal.

1. The finish chute should be completely fenced in, preventing spectators from entering the area and becoming obstacles.
  2. As with the start line, flags can add a festive element to the finish line. American Flags, race specific flags all can be incorporated to the finish chute.
  3. Like the start line, the finish line would utilize VEM's structure and cross piece, wrapped in a race specific look and feel.
- ii. The Runner Services Area, immediately following the finish line is another focal point of a VEM event. This area entails bottled water and food distribution, race photos along with any other race day elements that are provided only to participants
1. This area would also be completely fenced, allowing only participants to be in the area.
  2. The Runner Services Area is carefully laid out, allowing proper spacing between items and distributing items in a specific order.
    - a. Bottled Water should be the first item that participants receive, especially with the potential for warmer weather.
    - b. Food Distribution should begin with a banana. A sampling of items distributed at other VEM events include, granola bars, pretzels, chips, chocolate milk, etc. VEM has developed formulas for the different items to prevent over or under ordering.
  3. Volunteers are a key ingredient to the runner services area. VEM strives to have plenty of volunteers in this area, handing the items to participants. It's a small touch, but participants appreciate the volunteers taking the time to hand them the items. It also helps with inventory control and prevents participants from taking more than one item.
- 2. Course set-up and tear down plan, including aid stations**
- Course operations is an area VEM excels at and has a great team in place to help with execution. VEM prides itself on the prior planning, including detailed setup maps, which assist in the race day execution of the setup. VEM has been presented with many challenges over the years in regards to the timely setup and teardown of courses. VEM's goal is the course will be as clean or cleaner after we have finished than it was before the event. The VEM team utilized the Indianapolis Motor Speedway as part of the OneAmerica 500 Festival Mini-Marathon, which needed to be setup and torn down to allow the track to be open for practice later in the day. Currently, VEM closes Lake Shore Drive in Chicago. We need to have the route setup and torn down in a very quick manner, not only for the regular high use of road, but the Chicago Bear's home opener has occurred on the same date as the Chicago Half Marathon. Key elements to properly execute the course operations include:
- a. VEM will staff the course with staff leadership to oversee sections of the course. The section leaders will oversee the setup and operation of their part of the course and be there to troubleshoot any issues that arise.
  - b. VEM will work with all pertinent police agencies in determining officer locations and course marshal locations along the route. Each intersection will be evaluated in conjunction with the police to determine if an officer is needed or a course

marshal can staff the location. VEM will create a Temporary Duty Order for each location that will include the intersection, mile location, participant direction, vehicular direction and timing of first and last participants. The course marshals will be dropped by VEM staff on race morning and each marshal will be given a sheet with specific instructions on their intersection.

- c. VEM will also work with the police on determining what intersections need to be barricaded along with the type of barricade. VEM will then develop a barricade plan to be used by VEM staff, traffic engineering or a traffic management company. Implementation plan will depend on quantities and costs.
- d. VEM will develop detailed coning plans. These plans will be dependent on the route, but will include details of spacing, style of cones, and distribution and pickup. Cone pickup will occur immediately following the last participant.
- e. Setup and removal of mile markers along the route, including clock placement and removal will also be developed by VEM. As mentioned earlier, VEM's mile markers also display the flags for the Flag Warning System, which alerts participants to the status of the race.
- f. Misting stations are also a key element, especially with a summer race. VEM will develop a plan for placement of the misting stations, including their setup, operation and tear down. (weather permitting)

**3. Setting up hydration stations for the entire field (start to finish), and best practices for staffing these stations:**

Hydration is key to any event. VEM believes participants should have many options to hydrate themselves on the course during the event. VEM wants to go above and beyond what other event producers are doing in this category. Not only is having plenty of aid stations a key element, but ensuring each of these stations has an adequate number of supplies and staff is also a key element. VEM has been through some events with hot weather and has NEVER come close to running out of water.

VEM has developed a spacing plan of mileage points where aid stations should be placed on the route. Some adjustments need to be made due to the course, but this spacing provides participants with more frequent hydration options at the end of the race.

- a. VEM has signage that is utilized at each aid station. First is a large flag placed before the station to alert participants the station is approaching, allowing them the opportunity to maneuver into position to get water. The second signage element are large signs for water or Gatorade, which are positioned over the tables for each product. This allows participants the chance to know what they are getting.
- b. VEM's year's of experience has allowed us to develop a supply matrix and supply formulas. The supply matrix includes the following elements: water cups, water jugs (if necessary), energy drink cups, energy drink mix, trash boxes, stacking sheets, rakes, hoses, pitchers. Exact supplies would be determined after working with city officials on access to public water. Formulas have been developed based on the number of participants, size of serving, number of servings per participant to ensure not only are more than enough cups available, but enough water is available. Formulas are all based on registered participants.
- c. The supply delivery and pickup for aid station materials is broken down by location on course. Once locations are determined, aid stations will be broken down and supply trucks will be assigned to those stations. No more than four stations are assigned to a truck, allowing them to have the flexibility to get to an aid station and



address any issues. These trucks will drop supplies at each aid station, check on each station prior to race start and then position themselves at their first aid station so they can begin pickup immediately following the last participant. They will only be responsible for supply drop-off and pickup.

- d. Each station will have a detailed map created by VEM showing all the elements involved in the station; table placement, port-o-let placement, medical personnel placement, parking options, clean-up responsibilities, etc. Along with detailed map, each station will be provided an Aid Station Manual describing the basic operation of the aid station.
- e. Volunteer training is a key to the operation of the Aid Station. VEM staff and races volunteer coordinator will meet with the Aid Station Captain for a site visit at their assigned location. They will review the map, review the manual and answer any questions. Volunteer training and staffing is key to the successful operation of an aid station. VEM also trains its volunteers to fully maximize the space for the cups and teaches them it is better to dump water at the end of the day than to run out.

**4. Signage Plan (start, finish, on course):**

VEM feels a good signage plan and use of signage can help direct them and provide an easy and positive experience. There are many elements that need to be considered when developing the signage plan and they vary for the different elements of the event.

- a. Start Line Signage
  - i. Start structure
  - ii. Sponsor signage
  - iii. Directional signage
- b. Route Signage
  - i. Mile Markers
  - ii. Course Directional
- c. Finish Line Signage
  - i. Sponsor signage
  - ii. Finish structure
  - iii. Directional Signage
- d. Post-Race Area Signage
  - i. Gear Check
  - ii. Tent signage, such as:
    - 1. Info
    - 2. Medical
    - 3. Results
  - iii. Directional Signage

**5. Equipment sourcing and securing**

VEM owns much of the core race equipment it utilizes for each event, but we also have a great group of partners that we utilize at events for other race equipment.

- a. Sample of VEM-owned equipment
  - i. Start/Finish Structures
  - ii. Mile Markers
  - iii. Cones
  - iv. clocks
  - v. Tent Markers
  - vi. Coolers

- vii. Sign holders
    - viii. Along with many other smaller, but key elements
  - b. Sample of VEM Vendors and Partners
    - i. Ryder Truck Rental
    - ii. Service Sanitation

**6. Post-race Party (best practice for sharing results, awards ceremony, medals distribution, etc)**

The post-race experience is one of the final opportunities to interact with participants on race day. A great post-race party and layout can take an event to another level. A race can go from just being a race to being an event if you can properly develop the post-race party experience. VEM strives to develop a post-race party experience where participants and spectators can enjoy the event after they have finished. Some of the key elements to the post-race experience include:

- a. The Results Tent is a great way for participants to get the immediate satisfaction of seeing their time. The timers VEM works with have options for participants to get their times immediately following the event. Volunteers operating computers with receipt printers offer a quick, efficient way for participants to get their times.
- b. VEM would conduct an awards ceremony where the top three male and female winners in the two events would be recognized.
- c. Gear Check, which we have touched on earlier
- d. Information tent for both participants and spectators, providing general information about the event and providing direction.

**7. Crisis Management Experience**

VEM's years of experience have provided it the opportunity to not only develop but refine its emergency plan, which is an ever-evolving document. VEM staff assisted in the development of the Flag Warning System over a decade ago that is incorporated into all VEM events. Our prior experiences have given us the opportunity have a solid PR plan in place, along with prepared statements and responses to the public and participants. Along with the PR plan, we have developed the plan to include the steps that need to be taken if a red flag or black flag situation has been called. The communication, implementation of the plan and ensuring all the little things are covered are all key elements involved. Unfortunately, VEM has been involved in this process on more than one occasion. As a result of these past experiences, VEM has invested in a service to monitor the weather (lightning, heat index, wind, etc.) to help make educated decisions on what should be done in regards to changing flags. Here are some instances where we have successfully handled Crisis Management situations in the past

- a. 2000 Indy Mini 20,000 participants– Black Flag
- b. 2004 Indy Mini 30,000 participants –Red Flag
- c. 2011 13.1 Chicago 3,500 participants – Black Flag
- d. 2011 Madison Mini 4,500 participants– 90 minute lightning delay
- e. 2012 Milwaukee Brewer's Mini-Marathon 5,000 participants-25 minute lightning delay