Daredevils must also consider the risks not only to themselves, but to the local state, city, and town laws set forth to protect the people.

Twin Falls Says No Jump for a Year

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Gallery: Twin Falls City Council Votes No to Jump

TWIN FALLS, Idaho - No jump for at least a year.

After extensive public comment and debate, the Twin Falls City Council voted 4-3 to not allow any special event on the Evel Knievel Snake River Canyon jump site for one year. It did not rule out a jump in 2015 and will reconsider the idea next February. Council members Chris Talkington, Rebecca Mills Sojka and Shawn Barigar voted against the measure. Councilman Jim Munn made the motion, saying it would give the city’s understaffed police force more time to work with a jumper to ensure the city’s safety from a horde of attendees and no reprise of the Knievel fiasco. “It just gives us the chance to step back from this a little bit and give the department and some of our law enforcement officials some time to really think about this,” said Munn, the city's former police chief. “Given what I heard tonight from law enforcement, I feel this is the best course of action. “Vice Mayor Suzanne Hawkins said the council was “getting too far ahead” of itself. “I think we have all learned what the jump entails now,” Hawkins said. “We were learning. When I stood out on the jump site and looked, it just gives you a whole new perception of what is happening. We need to take the time to educate ourselves before we make a decision. “It makes me sad – I think it could have been really fun, but I think we have to do it the right way. “The council once buzzed with excitement about the chance to put Twin Falls on television sets around the nation and to right Knievel’s 40-year-old wrong -- an event that brought a swarm of people, outbursts of violence and left a stack of unpaid bills. The “cool” idea turned into “jump fatigue,” Mayor Don Hall said. Last week, the council was at the altar with Texas daredevil “Big Ed” Beckley. For months the two hammered out a lease that would have let the motorcyclist use Knievel’s dirt ramp, now city property. In exchange, Beckley would have improved the land so it could be made into a city park, reimbursed the city for its staff and police time and deposited $10,000 into city coffers. With cold feet, council members voted Beckley’s lease down, 5-2. Beckley’s plan to keep the city safe from the 40,000 to 70,000 people his event would bring wasn’t good enough, council members said In September, Beckley paid nearly $1 million to lease state land on the north canyon rim. In early December, he appeared closest to executing the stunt, having been the only jumper to work so closely with all needed permitting agencies .In two months, the tables turned.
Now it seems the Twin Falls team of Scott Record and Scott Truax are the leaders of the jump effort. With a rocket under construction, a jumper at the ready, land secured and the necessary permits, Record and Truax await a broadcast contract to tie their event together. They plan to launch a replica of the steam rocket Truax’s father built for Knievel and jump from private land near the Hansen Bridge. On Monday, many council members questioned whether any team could safely pull off a jump, even local BASE jumper Miles Daisher, the council’s second choice. Police Chief Brian Pike said a safe jump inside city limits is possible, but police would need more time, a multi-jurisdictional approach and partners outside of the area to provide more staffing for the event. He said a realistic time frame to put a feasible safety plan together would be 12 to 18 months. Pike said he is working with Record and Truax on their safety plan and would do the same for any other jumper who sought an event outside city limits. “I’m not saying we can’t do an event like this ... but this is like the Super Bowl for us,” the chief said. “I have always felt that the land auction that we had no control over really started driving a timeline for us, and because of that we have started a timeline that we all feel pressured by.” Hall said the motion “puts folks on notice” to work on a public safety plan for consideration next year. “They know our concerns now,” he said. “In a year, when we re-address this, I would think that might be a hint to folks about what we are looking for if we decide to move on in a year. In a year, however, it won’t be the 40th anniversary of Knievel’s jump – one of the many reasons jumpers pushed the city so hard this year. That date, however, “isn’t as sacred as my obligation for public safety and public trust,” Hall said. Beckley, in an interview last week, said he was shocked when the council scrapped his lease. But he said he is still pursuing a jump on private land in Twin Falls County where he would not need a city permit. The land due east of the city’s jump site is private land and would fall under county authority. Hall said he won’t apologize for inconveniencing any jumpers. Asked if he was prepared to possibly watch Beckley jump from private land a stone’s throw away, guaranteeing the city wouldn’t get a say, Hall said the council can only control “what we can control.” “What I want to do is our due diligence for our community, and however long that takes for us to make the right decision is what we are going to do,” he said. A motion made Monday to renegotiate with Beckley and allow him until March 1 to submit a complete safety plan failed on a 5-2 vote. Barigar urged the council to negotiate with Daisher but did not make such a motion. Daisher, who attended the meeting, said he agreed with the City Council’s decision. Even if the council went to him, he wouldn’t be ready to make the jump in September, he said. “It is unrealistic to have it done that fast,” he said. “Maybe the Scotts can do it, but they are the only ones. I know our team would need more time. It was a good decision tonight. I’m all for it. I still support our City Council.”

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