



The "New River" City

06 May 2004

Virginia Citizens Defense League, Inc.
Attention: Philip Van Cleave, President
Box 513,
Newington VA. 22122

Reference: Letter Dated: 21 April 2004 to Ken Goodyear,
Director of Parks and Recreation, Radford, VA

Dear Mr. Van Cleave:

The Radford City Manager has asked me to respond to your referenced letter regarding firearms in Wildwood Park in Radford VA.

Noted in your communication are references to several Virginia Code Sections which provide for control of firearms. Your specific complaint refers to permitting firearms in Wildwood Park. For the purposes of clarification we believe that city parks include children's play grounds, areas for city school activities and events, university activities, church activities, walkways, roadways, bikeways, shelters, and events at which large numbers of people gather for recreation, social, and business purposes. We do not want firearms flagrantly displayed or brandished in those areas and will exercise whatever legal means are available to us to prevent it. Reaction after an incident occurs is unacceptable.

Section 70 of the Radford City Code provides for certain controls on firearms within the City. It places no restriction on ownership. However it does prohibit (and regulates) the discharge of firearms within the City. The City also exercises its authority under Section 15.2-915, Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, to regulate work place rules relating to terms and conditions of employment. Additionally, Section 18.2-308 et.al. regulate firearms on school property and at school activities.

Our perception of the "no firearms" notification on the Wildwood Park sign is that it causes no person any damage or danger, restricts no commerce, withdraws no benefits otherwise provided to citizens who are, in effect, the collective owners of such public property, and effectively imposes no constraints on the transport of appropriately secured firearms in vehicles. As a practical matter, Police Department personnel do not routinely

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search vehicles for firearms, archery equipment, gravel shooters, BB guns etc. Regardless of how one may interpret the laws, "no firearms" makes people feel safer in an environment which already imposes on them far too many of society's improprieties. Your solution rallies no relief from that fact.

Firearms are prohibited in churches, schools, public buildings, and at other public places under certain circumstances. Certainly, parks are public places, and park buildings are non-the-less public buildings. Their character, however, changes significantly with the advent of a school or a church event on the park premises, in which case, the law is clear. When alcohol is permitted, whether served or sold, fire arms are not permitted.

Your letter is a rather strongly worded epistle which amounts to a belittling lecture directed at the City on the subject of state and federal law. (Your statement to the Recreation Department Director that the city is in violation of a new law, which is yet to become effective, is not subject to debate. When a new law is enacted, we will assess its impact on the City and make adjustments we deem necessary.) The letter presumes that Radford is a rogue community which ignores the law and imposes illegal rules on its citizens. It invites a confrontation which is neither justified nor needed. Further, in the absence of any citizen complaint made to the City questioning signage in Wildwood Park, one could conclude that your claim is founded on a complaint which did not occur and arises without merit. The same can be said about the picture you claim to have in your possession.

For your information: I am an endowment member of the NRA and I support the Constitution and the Second Amendment wholly and completely. I am greatly offended by liberal views on gun control because for the most part they are unconstitutional and self-serving if not blatantly subversive. Make no mistake, the right to bear arms is mine as well as yours. The difference is that I do not lecture a community on the law nor invite legal consultation with an attorney under the guise of representing Virginia's citizens on an issue punctuated by so many legal, ethical, and moral issues.

Believe me when I say that the Virginia Citizens Defense League, INC. stands to lose much more in a court of law than it will ever gain regardless of the outcome. With this in mind, I encourage you to withdraw from debate over this issue. Radford is doing nothing wrong and will defend its position if it must. Our mutual obligation should be to support reasonableness, and fair-

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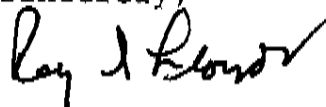
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ness, and to recognize the sensitivities and safety of the very citizens from whom we seek support. There is no place in this issue for a "stick-it-in-your-ear" ultimatum based on the erroneous presumption that your view of the law is absolutely correct and the City of Radford has no alternative but to comply with your interpretation.

Finally, Wildwood Park is strategically located in the City next to a bank, a high school, a middle school, a recreation center with recreation fields adjacent to a grade school, next to a Virginia National Guard armory, and in a major storm and regional sanitary drainage corridor within the City. The properties are contiguous. The park is located in close proximity to major electrical power sources and transformer substations for the City. We are obligated under the federal Homeland Security Act to provide security for those facilities. "No Firearms" is one of the security measures we employ.

For these reasons, we have no intention or inclination to remove the signs in the park.

Sincerely;



Roy I. Lloyd, Jr.
Assistant City Manager