

City hopes to attract younger crowd for SenecaFest

Gaming truck, laser-pyrotechnics to be featured, along with Tams

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SENECA — City officials are moving forward with changes to SenecaFest, including the return of The Tams, a “mobile gaming theater” and other activities for children, teens and young adults, and a laser and pyrotechnic show at the end of the two-day Memorial Day weekend event.

“It’s going to be, I think, the biggest downtown SenecaFest we’ve ever had,” city events coordinator Riley Johnson said.

After several years with a one-day festival on Gignilliat Field, centered mostly around a concert that included artists such as Charlie Daniels, city officials decided to move the festival back downtown last year and expand the festival to three days, beginning with Jazz on the Alley on the Thursday before Memorial Day, with concerts going at two locations on different sides of Main Street.

At a meeting last month about

SENECAFEST '20

City council's events committee approved the plans for SenecaFest at its meeting Wednesday. The plans will now go to city council. SenecaFest is scheduled for May 22-23 on Main Street from Townville to Walnut streets. The city has budgeted \$50,000 for the event, down from \$80,000 last year.



FILE

The Tams perform at Gignilliat Field on July 4, 2013. The group will be in downtown Seneca on May 22 for SenecaFest.

SENECAFEST: ‘The gaming trailer is going to be huge’

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ways to improve the event, local business leaders asked for changes, including cutting the event to two days, centering the festival at Norton Thompson Park and adding activities that would attract more children, teens and young adults.

“We listened to the public,” Johnson said. “We were noticing a lot of the kids leave and go to other things in other cities, so why not bring that here?”

The mobile gaming theater — a 32-foot trailer with video games, televisions and couches — is expected to be the featured attraction for children, teens and young adults. There will also be a rock climbing wall, bouncy house, cornhole and other games and activities.

“It is a dream come true for any teenagers, young adults, millennials,” Johnson said. “I think that the gaming trailer is going to be huge.”

Officials said Main Street will be blocked from Townville to Walnut streets in the early morning of May 22, with vendors and crafters coming in to set up around noon.

The first day of the event is scheduled to kick off at 5 p.m. with The Bad Creek Band on the stage at Norton Thompson Park, followed by a performance by The Tams, which will include a shagging

contest with cash prizes. The Tams have not been in Seneca since 2014, when they performed during the July 4 celebration at Gignilliat Field, the last year of a three-year contract the group had with the city.

“I’m excited to have The Tams back in town,” Johnson said.

Saturday activities are scheduled to begin in the morning with craft booths and vendors and music by Brandi Colt and Andrew Crawford from 10 a.m.-noon.

The music from noon-4 p.m. will be focused on younger audiences, with two bands — Silver Tongue Devils and Seven Year Witch — performing.

“They’re young rock bands that have a tremendous following in the 18-34 age group,” Johnson said.

Corey Stevenson is set to perform from 5-7 p.m., with a concert by an Eagles tribute band, Eaglewing, scheduled from 7:30-9:30 p.m.

SenecaFest is scheduled to end May 23 with a laser and pyrotechnic show at Norton Thompson Park.

There will be a variety of food items. Businesses located inside the city of Seneca will be serving beer and other alcoholic drinks. SenecaFest is a free event.