

NEWS RELEASE

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Purdue, cities of Lafayette, West Lafayette notify half marathon organizer to halt promotions

WEST LAFAYETTE, Ind. - Purdue University and the cities of Lafayette and West Lafayette on Tuesday (Aug. 3) sent a joint letter to the organizer of a mini-marathon planned in October asking that he stop advertising a partnership with them and notifying him that the event cannot be conducted on public properties inside their boundaries.

Dean Reinke Sports Group last fall had scheduled the Home of Purdue Half Marathon for Oct. 24 as part of an 18-race series conducted in various places. The local event was originally planned in cooperation with the Greater Lafayette-West Lafayette Convention & Visitors Bureau.

However, citing concerns about cooperation, the convention and visitor's bureau later terminated its relationship with the organizer. Purdue and the cities also notified the organizer that they would not be associated with the event.

"We're all disappointed that it has reached this point," said Amanda Gordon, sports marketing and communications manager for the Lafayette-West Lafayette Convention and Visitors Bureau. "We were all looking forward with great expectation to this type of event, and we felt it would be a good fit for our community. It just became clear this was not going to work."

However, the organizer sent e-mails on Thursday (July 29) continuing to promote the half marathon.

"In speaking with the convention and visitor's bureau, we were just uncomfortable in any association we would have as a city in this event," said Lafayette Mayor Tony Roswarski. "In fact, it is not welcome on our streets."

West Lafayette Mayor John Dennis said, "We've been very up front in that we're not going to be associated, yet Mr. Reinke continues to advertise us as a partner. We want everyone to know that we will not support the event."

Teri Lucie Thompson, vice president for marketing and media at Purdue, said the university stands behind the cities' stances and is concerned about protecting its brand.

"Our reputation is extremely important to us, and we're very careful about lending the Purdue name to outside interests," Thompson said. "The organizer has been proceeding without cooperation

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from the cities and the convention and visitor's bureau, and we have a concern with the way he was approaching the event."

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