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Roswell mulls corporate partnership possibilities

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Exclusive concession agreements, building naming rights and presenting sponsorship deals for events like Youth Day were all considered at Monday's council work session at Roswell City Hall.

"We wanted to understand the philosophical view of the city on corporate marketing," said Roswell-based marketing matchmaker Water Tower Partners representative Kevin Bryant.

"Why are you going after corporate partners now, why are you looking at your different events and your approaching brands ... who's driving that strategy?"

Bryant said the city, in particular the recreation and parks and cultural arts departments, could be banking big on corporate partnerships.

He projects Roswell could earn \$150,000 for "presenting sponsorship" agreements for the city's marquee events, including the annual Fourth of July and End of Summer celebrations.

Additionally, he said naming rights for city buildings such as the Roswell Cultural Arts Center could be worth \$250,000.

"We have a lot of resources," Mayor Jere Wood joked. "I'd open that up for just about every city property, except perhaps for the jail or city hall."

Some of the targeted corporate partners for Roswell, Bryant said, include banks, insurance firms and wireless providers.

Although Bryant said the city had a large number of "mature 'sponsorable' assets," he also said Roswell without an "organized strategic corporate sponsorship acquisition plan."

"I think there are some great brands you are involved in and there are some great brands that are within the city or within earshot of the city that you're not involved in," he said, "that I think would love to be a part of the things you are doing as a city."

One such opportunity, Bryant said, would be city property exclusivity agreements.

He said a hypothetical "official beverage of Roswell" package, complete with Splash 'n Play Sprayground title sponsorship, was likely to garner bids in the half-million dollar range.

"We're very sensitive how we go to market and who we go to market with," Bryant said.

"But also, if you're going to do it, you've got to be aggressive — you've got to say let's give it a shot, let's see if we can get somebody to give us 'x' amount of dollars for our parks."

Wood said the city wasn't looking to "sell out" to the highest bidder, but rather, to strike a deal with partners who would provide the best "image" for Roswell.

While Bryant advised placing a municipal marketing program under Roswell, Inc., Wood said he preferred keeping corporate partnering packages "in-house" with the city government.

"We need to coordinate with Roswell, Inc.," Wood said, "but it still needs to be Roswell."

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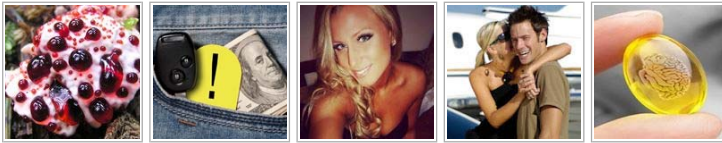
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