



For Immediate Release
October 13, 2017

State Law Forces Lantern Fest Goldsboro to Cancel Event

Goldsboro, NC— The popular spectacle event, The Lantern Fest, was expected to come to downtown Goldsboro, North Carolina on November 11th, but an unexpected NC Fire Code adopted this year forced the cancellation of this event.

NC Fire Code 308.1.6.3 from 2012 states, “A person shall not release or cause to be released an untethered sky lantern.” This year, the state made an amendment to the 2012 fire code adding a general definition of a sky lantern “SKY LANTERN. An unmanned device with a fuel source that incorporates an open flame in order to make the device airborne.”

Awareness of this amendment spread when nearby city, Fayetteville, NC, made public its news to cancel Lantern Fest just two weeks before its originally scheduled date of October 7th of this year. It was to be Fayetteville’s third consecutive year hosting the event.

Gary Whaley, the Fire Chief for the City of Goldsboro, stated “Sky Lanterns, which are the lanterns to be used during the Lantern Fest event scheduled on November 11, 2017, were not addressed in the 2012 Fire Code. I was advised by my fire inspectors that a change was coming in the new 2017 Fire Code. However, the 2017 Code had not been adopted by the State at the time of my approval of the Lantern Fest.” Chief Whaley affirmed his decision to approve the event in Goldsboro was based on the 2012 Fire Code and further explained “after Fayetteville canceled their Lantern Fest event, I asked my Inspections Department to obtain clarification from the State regarding the code. In doing so, we found out that the Building Code Board had gone back and amended the 2012 Code to be effective in 2017 which prohibits the use of sky lanterns. After receiving this information, I immediately contacted city officials and advised we would have to cancel the event based on State Code.”

Home to Seymour Johnson AFB, Goldsboro intentionally chose Veteran’s Day to host Lantern Fest as a way to honor the country’s brave service members and families. The city donated 400 free tickets to the base to be distributed among military families stationed in Goldsboro.

“We are disappointed to learn that we could not host this event, but understand why the restriction exists” said Scott Stevens, City Manager of Goldsboro.

Ticket holders seeking a refund must directly contact The Lantern Fest.

###

For more information, contact Ashlin Glatthar, Tourism Director for City of Goldsboro, (919) 734-2213 or aglatthar@goldsboronc.gov.