



To: David Sayler, Director of Athletics
David Creamer, Vice President for Finance and Business Services
Robin Parker, General Counsel
Jayne Brownell, Vice President for Student Affairs

From: David Hodge, President

Date: May 9, 2016

Re: Beer Sales at Yager Stadium Football Games

In February, 2015, the Associated Student Government passed Resolution SR21503 “calling for the investigation of alcohol sales at Miami University athletic events.” Later that spring I asked our new Alcohol Coordinating Committee, which was formed after a recommendation in the February, 2015, Final Report of the Alcohol Task Force, to provide an assessment of the advisability of offering beer sales at Yager Stadium for Fall, 2015. In the cover letter to their response, they noted the conflicting messages such a move would create:

“Sales to those of legal age and with the proper controls for responsible service would be consistent with the philosophical framework outlined in the 2015 Miami University Alcohol Task Force report. However, as noted in the attached report, a perception could exist that beer sales at athletic events is in opposition to the philosophical framework by making available more opportunities for students to consume alcohol. Ultimately, the report identifies pros and cons of this issue to better inform those that will make this decision. If the sale of alcohol at athletic events is adopted, the Alcohol Coordinating Committee strongly recommends that the Miami University Department of Intercollegiate Athletics develop a plan for responsible service in consultation with Housing, Dining, Recreation and Business Services.”

As a result of their assessment, and consultation with others, I concluded that it was premature to make the change. However, we did allow beer sales in the club level of Miami ice hockey games during the 2015-16 season as a first step in gaining experience and confidence in our ability to provide responsible service with responsible behavior. That option was well received and there were absolutely no issues regarding responsible consumption.

The underlying rationale for providing controlled beer sales at football games is to provide more options for the game day experience. The ASG resolution argues that this would provide an

appropriate alternative for students of legal age to the excessive drinking uptown, and, importantly, also model responsible consumption of alcohol. Alumni especially have indicated that expanding beverage options to include beer sales would be well received. Increasingly, the sale of beer – with restrictions – has become an accepted option at college venues. In the Mid-America Conference, the sale of beer has occurred at some stadiums since 2009 without any significant incidents. Currently 6 other MAC schools (Akron, Bowling Green, Eastern Michigan, Kent State, Northern Illinois, and Toledo) offer beer for sale at football games in general areas and all 12 MAC schools offer beer in premium locations.

Given our experience this year at hockey games, the ASG resolution, the potential for providing desired options for the game day experience for some of our fans, particularly alumni, and the goal to model the responsible consumption of alcohol, and after consulting with several stakeholders, including the University Senate Executive Committee, senior university leaders, the Board of Trustees, and the outgoing and incoming ASG presidents, I am authorizing the sale of beer at Yager Stadium beginning this fall, assuming the appropriate license can be obtained in a timely manner. Please note that this authorization applies only to sales inside the stadium gates and does not extend to tailgating areas where state open container laws apply.

While we anticipate no problems, it should be clearly understood that this permission may be cancelled at any time if this option results in unacceptable consumption or behavior. Thus it is important that we implement this new policy carefully and comprehensively. I have asked Robin Parker to obtain the appropriate license and assemble a working group to determine the logistics, policies and constraints that will work to ensure success. It is important to have all of the stakeholders at the table, and it is important to incorporate those best practices that we can identify from the experiences of other universities.

I am confident that we can install this new policy effectively with your support.

c: David Budig, Chair Miami University Board of Trustees
Mark Ridenour, Vice-Chair Miami University Board of Trustees
Margaret Reilly, Associated Student Government President
Yvette Harris, Chair University Senate Executive Committee