



NATCHITOCHE CHRISTMAS “FESTIVAL OF LIGHTS” PARADE

The ultimate goal of the Natchitoches Christmas “Festival of Lights” Parade *Standards of Excellence* is to create a positive atmosphere for presenting, promoting, and displaying Christmas Spirit!

Defining Christmas Spirit

Our Vision for the Natchitoches Christmas “Festival of Lights” Parade states:

The Natchitoches Christmas “Festival of Lights” Parade is the preeminent Holiday parade recognized for its tradition of excellence which is embodied in its unique blend of young, old, and historic parade units who, annually, delight Festival of Lights audiences.

As the preeminent Christmas Holiday parade, it is essential that every Partner (unit), every individual participant, and every parade official recognize and understand the special emphasis the Committee places on the demonstration of “Christmas Spirit” throughout the conduct of the Parade. The Committee requires that all Partners and individuals embrace and exhibit the following definition of “Christmas Spirit.”

Partners are expected to Decorate, Dress, March, Act, Select Music, and Perform in a manner consistent with the Christmas Holidays (Kid and Family Friendly):

Decorate: Minimum standards for the decoration of all unit types are contained in the following Standards, including vehicles.

Dress: Where possible, Partners are encouraged to “dress up” their uniforms/costumes by adding one or more Christmas colors (Red, Green, Gold, and White) to their existing uniforms/costumes and/or add Christmas related accessories (Santa hats, Christmassy Stocking Caps, scarves, etc.) as appropriate.

Bands are encouraged to utilize Christmas related accessories (Santa hats, Christmassy Stocking Caps, etc.) as appropriate, to meet this Spirit of Christmas criteria.

March/Dance: Every marching/dancing unit displays its Christmas Spirit by marching/dancing with precision.

Act: The essence of the Christmas Spirit is “Joy to the World!” We encourage all participants to demonstrate their “joy” by smiling and waving to the audience, as appropriate for their type of unit.

Music Selection: Partners are encouraged to perform/play Holiday/Child-Friendly music, played to please the “child” in all of us!

Perform: Partner units perform their routines precisely, crisply, and joyfully – demonstrating their Christmas Spirit!

Think of the excellence you, our Parade Partners, can create and demonstrate, which will rival the MACY’S THANKSGIVING DAY PARADE!

STANDARDS OF EXCELLENCE for the NATCHITOCHEs CHRISTMAS “FESTIVAL OF LIGHTS” PARADE

Foreword

In striving to reach the goal of presenting, promoting and displaying the Christmas Spirit, the Christmas Festival of Lights Parade Committee (‘Committee’) offers these Standards of Excellence to our **Parade Partners (accepted entries)** to challenge, encourage and guide all involved so as to deliver the highest quality Christmas Parade that includes:

- Displaying Christmas spirit
- Marching precision
- Excellence in performance
- Excellence in entertainment
- Visual and musical excellence

Accepted Parade entries are **our Partners**. The key principle of this partnership is that by working together as Partners we create a parade atmosphere which encourages, standardizes and rewards excellence. Ultimately, it is the goal of the Committee to promote a partnership that results in the core value: **Parade unit (Partner) quality equals Parade quality!**

Disclaimer

The Committee reserves the right to limit or exclude any accepted entry from participation in the Parade for non-compliance to these standards, or for any other reason not covered in these standards. The acceptance of any entry for participation in the Parade shall not constitute the Committee’s endorsement of that entry’s organization, commercial enterprise or political position.

The Committee reserves the right to provide an entry an exemption from any Standard herein at the Committee’s sole discretion.

Liability

It is a requirement for acceptance to participate in the parade that all entry organizations indemnify the Natchitoches Christmas Festival Parade Committee, HDBA (Historic District Business Association), and the City of Natchitoches against any and all loss, damage or injury. The on-line Parade application provides the necessary indemnification and hold harmless statement to which the Entrant agrees to by checking the Indemnification Box in the application.

It is recommended that each Parade unit secure an insurance policy covering its Parade participants.

Use of photographs, audiovisual reproductions by the Parade Committee

Parade Partners may be recorded for broadcast and for use in other audio and/or audiovisual reproductions and photographs may also be taken of the Festival Parade and its participants (“**Images**”). Parade Partners acknowledge and agree that the Festival shall not be responsible for the use and/or reproduction of any such images by third parties. Each Partner irrevocably agrees that the Festival Committee may use such images free of charge throughout the world and without any restriction as to manner, frequency and duration of use in any and all media for any present and future promotional purposes.

The Natchitoches Christmas Festival Committee retains all legal rights and title to use, throughout the world of any photograph, DVD or film in connection with the Christmas Festival and Parade for use on print, website, TV, pay TV, theatrical or non-theatrical release, DVD or any other type of exhibition or exploitation.

1 General

1.1 Purpose

It is the purpose of this standard to establish minimum requirements to provide a well-organized, visually appealing and safe parade for our Parade Partners and observers; to enhance the warm feelings that the Christmas season brings; to provide quality entertainment for all members of the observing public, particularly families and their children; and to communicate to the Parade entries that the Festival Parade Committee welcomes them as **PARTNERS** and urges them to join in developing, communicating and promoting these Standards of Excellence for fostering the highest quality Parade units to ultimately achieve the highest tradition of excellence for the NATCHITOCHEs CHRISTMAS "FESTIVAL OF LIGHTS" PARADE.

1.2 Scope

The Parade admission and participation requirements are to insure that the quality of the Parade matches the quality of the other key elements of the Festival, specifically the light displays and the fireworks. To that effect, the Festival Committee has established these standards to secure the most qualified and highest quality parade entries for the pleasure and enjoyment of all involved.

2 Entry selection process (on-line only)

2.1 On-line application

The Committee will use, exclusively, an on-line application process. Paper applications (i.e., paper copies of the on-line form) will not be accepted. Applicants must apply on-line at the URL specified in the invitation email. In cases where the applicant does not have email access, see section 2.2 below.

2.2 Invitations and notification of acceptance

All entries will be considered for participation in the Parade. Prior participation does not guarantee participation in current parade. The final decision on invited participation will rest with the Parade Committee. Review of the previous years' video recording, the applicant's past performance (if applicable), and adherence to Parade requirements constitute key parameters for invited participation. The Committee will notify the applicant of acceptance or rejection by email or phone on or prior to the Notification Date specified in the on-line email application form.

For prospective applicants who do not have email access, the official representative of the applicant must contact the Committee prior to the application deadline. The Committee will provide public notices (newspaper, promotion bulletins, fliers and other public announcements) with contact information well in advance of the application deadline for those entries/applicants who are interested in applying and who do not have email access. If contacted prior to the entry deadline, the Committee will provide alternative means for receiving their application form.

2.3 General acceptance criteria

2.3.1 The Partner's (unit's) application shall contain a detailed description, drawing, picture, or legible sketch (with colors) of the general theme of the proposed entry (for example – float, decorated vehicle, marching band, activity club, etc.). The

Parade Committee encourages organizations to build and enter floats in the parade. The Committee will provide information about float-making resources.

If possible, the accompanying description, drawing, or pictures of the entry's proposed unit can be electronically attached to the emailed application form. If this is not possible, the Committee will provide alternative means to receive the applicant's descriptive information (see section 2.3.1 above).

2.3.2 Commercial entry - Fee payment: Commercial entries are required to pay an entry fee. Their payment must be submitted via check, cashier check or money order made payable to: **Natchitoches Christmas**, no later than the application deadline. If the commercial applicant is not accepted for participation in the Parade, their fee payment will be refunded. If the commercial applicant has been accepted as a Parade Partner and has agreed to participate in the Parade in accordance with these standards, and for any reason does not follow through to participate in the Parade as required, their fee payment will not be refunded.

3 Entry and application specifications

3.1 Selection criteria

Based on the information provided in the application, the selection and acceptance of entrants to the Parade will be based on the following:

- Adherence to and compliance with the Christmas Parade Standards of Excellence
- Total number of applicants
- Promotion of the Christmas spirit and theme
- Appeal to the family atmosphere of the Festival
- Overall quality of the entry
- Prior performance and evaluation in the Parade (if applicable)
- Compliance with the other rules and requirements as determined by the Committee (submittal of an on-line application and fee payment, if applicable, does not guarantee acceptance and participation in the Parade)

3.2 Exclusions and exceptions

The following will not be allowed and will not be accepted for participation in the Parade:

- Political candidates campaigning for election to office.
- No single Politician unit will be allowed in the parade, may ride as a unified group on a float with no political signage. Exceptions are made by the committee for State elected Officer or National Officers.
- Very young children – No child under the age of four will be allowed to walk, or ride on any Parade float, or in any open vehicle.
- Undecorated vehicles, regardless of the passenger(s). EXCEPTION: Vehicles secured and approved by the Committee to pull Festival-supplied floats or to carry Festival dignitaries, and Shriners' miniature vehicles. NOTE: All towing vehicles, riding vehicles and other specialty vehicles (see below) are required to have, at a minimum, some decoration that portrays and embodies the Spirit of the Christmas Parade, i.e., colorful bows, lights, Christmas wreaths, etc.
- No individual vehicles – These will not be allowed other than vehicles for specific Festival-invited guests and fee-paid commercial vehicles. EXCEPTION: See 'Special Vehicles' below.
- Commercialism and Advertising- The Committee will not allow entries having any sign, banner, flag, float, vehicle, personal adornment or other visible object that is deemed by the Committee, during the application process or during the day of the parade, to be or contain overt commercialism or advertising that distracts from the Christmas Spirit and Theme of the Parade. Companies that donate a vehicle for towing may display a sign on the vehicle door(s) acknowledging their contribution (see 4.5 Towing vehicles).
- The display or show of any flags other than the American Flag, Louisiana State Flag or City of Natchitoches official flag must be approved by the Parade Committee. Any flag, symbol or gesture that could represent or insight division or

discord within the viewing public will not be allowed. All exceptions will be at the sole discretion of the Parade Committee.

- Groups with exclusive representation are discouraged. Exceptions to this will be approved by the Parade Committee.
- **IMPORTANT: No entries shall be allowed to have an individual representing the image of Santa Claus or Mrs. Claus. The Parade Committee reserves the right to have and present the only entry displaying the image of Santa Claus and/or Mrs. Claus in an “Official Santa Claus Float” and “Official Mrs. Claus Float”.**

4 Float guidelines and requirements

4.1 Float making information

The Committee encourages organizations to build and enter floats in the Parade and will provide float-making information and resources.

4.2 Float decoration and colors

All floats shall be decorated with Christmas-themed colors at least on both sides covering the majority of the trailer or vehicle. An organization’s specific colors may be used and/or worn and displayed as long as they meet all other requirements and are approved by the Parade Committee.

4.3 Float size limitations

4.3.1 No float shall be higher than 12 feet (3.66 meters) at its highest point, inclusive of passengers.

4.3.2 Trailer size: Entries shall not be wider than a standard flat-bed (truck) trailer or longer than a standard flatbed (truck) trailer and tractor combination (approximately 55 feet (16.8 meters)). The length of the float should allow for an acceptable turning radius along streets taken by the Parade route and within the lineup/assembly area.

4.4 Structural integrity

If, in the opinion of the Committee during its final inspection, the Committee deems the float not to be structurally sound, appears to be unsafe or the towing means is deemed not acceptable, it will not be permitted to participate in the Parade.

4.5 Towing vehicles

Vehicles pulling floats shall not display any advertisement for a business. EXCEPTIONS: 1) An accepted and paid commercial float entry may display the commercial entity as long as the display meets all other Parade signage and Christmas decorative requirements; 2) Towing vehicles may display signage showing the name of the sponsoring organization or the name of the company donating the towing vehicle.

4.6 Commercial floats and other commercial entries (vehicles)

4.6.1 Commercial entries may be accepted by the Committee if the requirements in 3.2 and 4.5 and all other applicable requirements are met. The definition of a Commercial entry is ‘a business advertising the business with logo or slogans’.

4.6.2 The entry fee for a commercial float or other commercial entry will be determined by the Parade Committee on an annual basis. The entry fee will be made known to commercial entries in the invitation email (see Section 2).

4.7 Non-profit organizations

4.7.1 Non-profit organizations are encouraged to have a float and to participate in the Parade. They will be exempt from paying an entry fee as long as they show proof of their non-profit status with the on-line application.

4.7.2 Non-profit float entries may display identifying information for the non-profit entity as long as the display meets all other Parade signage and Christmas decoration requirements.

5 Other entries

5.1 Specialty vehicles

5.1.1 Certified antique vehicles (25 years and older) in good/restored condition will be allowed, and these must be decorated in a Christmas theme (see 3.2, third bullet), and meet the operational requirements in 5.1.4.

5.1.2 Shriners' vehicles – Specialty Shriner vehicles, such as miniature cars, miniature motorcycles, etc., operated by a Shriners' group are allowed as long as they meet the requirements of 5.1.4.

5.1.3 Other specialty vehicles may be allowed at the discretion of the Parade Committee.

5.1.4 Operation: Owners and operators of antique vehicles and other specialty vehicles will assure the Committee in a statement in the application that the vehicle is safe and capable of keeping up with the Parade movement requirements of starting, stopping, and at times stopping and idling for several minutes at a time, if there is a delay in the Parade.

5.2 Marching groups

5.2.1 Precision: All marching groups are expected to march in precise step, straight lines or otherwise in an orderly arrangement and to display strict marching discipline. Due to safety precautions, individuals marching in groups (including chaperons) are not allowed to part from their group or board a moving float or towing vehicle during the Parade. EXCEPTION: A person who is deemed by a Parade Marshall or other official to have a physical infirmity or injury, or who is in obvious distress may board a towing vehicle or float as long as it is not moving and can be done safely.

5.2.2 Identification: Marching groups are encouraged to display at the front of the unit a leading introductory banner or flag to let observers know their identity and home location. Units are not allowed to carry a national or historic flag larger than the American Flag carried in the lead color guard: 3 ft. x 5 ft.

5.2.3 Marching Bands: Bands shall consist of at least 35 members (excluding chaperons). Appropriate and like uniforms are required for all marching units. Bands must march in cadence and strict precision for the entirety of the parade and must not stop to perform a street drill or a dance block. All performances shall be conducted 'on the move' (see Performances and EXCEPTIONS – 5.2.6 below).

5.2.4 Cheer, dancing, clubs and/or gymnastic groups, etc.: These units shall consist of at least 15 members (excluding chaperons) and have no more than 100. Appropriate and like uniforms or costumes are required for all marching units (For Performances and EXCEPTIONS see 5.2.6 below).

5.2.5 Dress code: Any uniform and/or costume deemed to be inappropriate or too revealing by the Committee will be strictly forbidden. Violation of this dress code, as determined by the Committee during final inspection, may result in the unit's removal from the Parade (see section 6.2)

5.2.6 Chaperones are required to march with their group on either side and/or behind their group and are strongly encouraged to keep their group moving and maintaining the required maximum 50 foot (15 meters) interval (approximately 3 car-lengths) between each Parade group. The number of chaperons shall not exceed 10 members. For larger groups, a ratio of about 1 chaperone per 10 unit members is recommended. The chaperons are encouraged to dress alike but wear different apparel (vests, shirts, etc.) to differentiate them from their marching group. Chaperones are required to be at least 18 years of age.

5.2.7 Performances: A Parade unit shall not stop specifically for a performance. It is an important goal of the Committee to maintain an approximate 50 foot (15 meters) distance between each Parade unit over the entire Parade route. EXCEPTION: If for some reason the Parade stops, the group may perform at this time. It is required that performance routines last no longer than 30 seconds. Performances may be repeated over the Parade route as stoppage and time allows. Chaperons are expected to monitor performance timing and unit progression to help maintain the 50 ft. interval requirement. Otherwise, performances are expected to be conducted 'on the move'.

5.2.8 Parade Marshals: Official Parade personnel (Parade Marshals) will be located along the Parade route to direct the Parade units and ensure continuity. They are responsible for establishing and maintaining the approximate 50 ft. interval between the units throughout the Parade. Parade Marshals have the right and authority to remove Parade units from the Parade if they are unable or unwilling to maintain the required maximum 50 ft. interval.

5.3 Reigning monarchs

Miss Merry Christmas, the Christmas Belles, and the Natchitoches Christmas Angels are the reigning monarchs of the Parade and will be showcased on special Festival floats. Other participating visiting Queens may be invited by the Parade Committee. These invited Queens are required to ride in other Festival supplied floats and are the guests of the reigning monarchs. Only those Queens invited by the Committee will be accepted. No other cars or floats featuring Queens are allowed without Committee approval.

5.4 State Elected Officers or National Officers

5.4.1 These officials may walk, or if riding, are expected to provide their own vehicles that meet the Christmas Theme decoration requirements.

5.4.2 Blatant and obvious political/campaign signs will not be allowed.

5.4.3 State Elected Officers include the governor, lieutenant governor, treasurer, secretary of state, attorney general, commissioner of agriculture and forestry and commissioner of insurance.

5.5 Horses and other animals

5.5.1 No horses, except for the Budweiser Clydesdales or other similar equestrian units, are allowed. Exceptions to this limitation may be allowed by the Committee depending on the parade experience, number of horses and type of entry, such as horses pulling a float, horse riding clubs, etc. Muck collectors or proper sanitary considerations are required for ALL horses.

5.5.2 Only non-profit Humane Society groups are allowed to have animals other than horses as long as they are either caged, on a secure leash or riding on a float. If the animal is walking on a leash with an attendant, it will be kept at least 5 feet (1.5 meters) from the observers to prevent any physical interaction.

5.5.3 All animals to be included in the Parade and their number shall be made known to the Committee in the on-line entry application. The Committee will have final say as to acceptance of any and all animals in the Parade.

5.5.4 To show respect to the other Parade Partners and for sanitary reasons, entries with animals shall provide immediate and on-the-move clean-up of animal waste during the parade.

5.6 Other groups or organizations

5.6.1 Any entry belonging to an organization or group that is affiliated with and/or promotes a specific social agenda, protest, movement, purpose, or point of view which is deemed by the Committee to be contrary to or in conflict with the spirit of the Christmas Theme is strictly forbidden to display during the day of the Parade and during the Parade any sign, banner, flag,

float, vehicle, personal adornment or other visible object that promotes their agenda or is inconsistent with the Christmas Spirit.

5.6.2 Behavior by participants during the Parade that explicitly promotes or openly displays a particular political persuasion, social agenda, protest, message or point of view, other than the Christmas Theme, will not be permitted. Violation of this requirement will result in immediate removal from the Parade.

6 Festival Parade preparation and final instructions

6.1 Lineup and instructions

6.1.1 Routing, check-in and lineup instructions for denoting your check-in route will be sent to each Parade Partner at least a week prior to the Festival Parade along with instructions giving the lineup time, judging times and starting times.

6.1.2 The entry unit will designate an official 'check-in person' and provide the Committee that person's identity and contact information (**name and cell phone number included in the on-line application**). The entry's official check-in person will be responsible for notifying the Committee on the day of the Parade that their complete entry unit has arrived and will be responsible for accepting their entry's check-in packet of information and Parade wrist bands (if applicable).

6.2 Final approval and lineup

6.2.1 All entries and floats shall be at their check-in area (to be designated in a separate letter or email) for inspection at least 2 hours before the start of the Parade. After advancing to the assembly/staging area, the Committee will perform a final inspection for determining adherence to these Standards of Excellence; including adherence to the dress code (see section 5.2.5).

6.2.2 If an entry unit is not present in its lineup position 30 minutes prior to the start of the Parade, the unit may be removed from the lineup and may not be allowed to participate in the Parade. Violation of this requirement may jeopardize the entry's acceptance to future Festival Parade participation.

6.3 Parade progression, movement and end of Parade

6.3.1 Parade performances must be conducted 'on the move' (see section 5.2.7). Stoppages for performances are not allowed. All units must maintain an approximate 50 ft. interval.

6.3.2 End of Parade: Upon finishing the Parade, the unit must continue moving to a predetermined disbanding or reassembling area (on the NSU Campus). Units are **required to continue moving out of the way so they do not impede other finishing units coming up behind them.**

7 Inclement weather preparations and safety

7.1 Cancellation or route change due to severe inclement weather conditions

The Committee reserves the right to cancel the Festival Parade or change the Parade route for any reason, including severe inclement weather and/or natural disaster. In the event of a Parade cancellation or route change, the Committee, as early as practical, will use every means available to notify all Partners of a cancellation.

7.2 Consultation with National Weather Service experts

Prior to a cancellation decision regarding inclement weather, the Committee, along with the Festival Committee and City officials, will consult with the National Weather Service to determine an appropriate strategy for dealing with an inclement weather situation.

7.3 Partner preparation for inclement weather

7.3.1 Our Partners are expected to take appropriate measures for preparing their participants for inclement weather, such as cold, hot, wet or windy conditions.

7.3.2 Cold/windy conditions: Participants, especially those wearing uniforms, should be encouraged to utilize layering beneath their uniform to protect from wind-chill conditions. Uniforms should be visible at all times during the Parade.

7.3.3 Wet/slippery conditions: Precaution must be taken to protect individual performers, their equipment, and the floats and/or vehicles they are riding on. Vehicle drivers must use extra caution while operating their vehicle during wet/slippery conditions. **NOTE: If these conditions occur, be aware of operating difficulties on streets with steep inclines.**

7.3.4 Snow and icy conditions: If these conditions suddenly occur, all participants must exercise extreme caution. **Remember, all objects above ground may freeze and ice before the road surface.**

7.3.5 Hot conditions: In the unlikely occurrence of hot weather, our Partners must remember to provide adequate hydration for all of their participants before, during and after the Parade. The Committee will not provide drinks at any point over the Parade route.

7.3.6 **Railroad tracks:** The lineup, starting and return areas are near and encounter railroad crossings. Although the Committee has secured an agreement with the Railroad Company to cease all rail traffic during the Parade, in order to be safe, it is a requirement that all entries, vehicles, floats, animals and persons **DO NOT LINE UP OR PARK ON THE RAILROAD TRACKS.** After your entry has been notified to advance and start in the Parade, you are encouraged to move across the rail tracks as quickly as possible. Follow the same safety requirements upon finishing the Parade and returning to your starting point or designated return spot if required to cross the tracks again.

8 General rules for conduct

8.1 Alcoholic beverages

No alcoholic beverages will be allowed in Parade lineup areas or on Floats and vehicles during the Parade. A Natchitoches City Ordinance will be in effect the day of the Festival for NO ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES on the city streets.

WARNING: AT THE DISCRETION OF LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS, ALL DRIVERS OF VEHICLES TAKING PART IN THE PARADE WILL BE SUBJECT TO UNDERGOING BREATHALIZER TESTING.

8.2 Smoking and illegal drugs

8.2.1 Smoking will not be allowed on any Float before or during the Parade.

8.2.2 No member of the entry unit or anyone affiliated with the entry unit shall possess or use illegal drugs of any kind prior to, during or after the Festival and Parade. Law enforcement officers will be present to strictly enforce this rule.

8.2.3 In the interest of public safety, any unit or participants may, to the extent permitted by applicable laws, be subject to a search by law enforcement officers prior to their participation in the Festival Parade. Any unit/participant that refuses to consent to such search may be denied participation.

8.3 Entry unit sounds and loud noises

The music and the volume at which it is played is required to be at a tolerable level, be acceptable to the general observer, especially children, and be in the spirit of the theme of the Christmas Parade. **Music containing vulgar language shall not be allowed.** A violation of this rule will result in the entry's immediate removal from the Parade and may jeopardize its acceptance and participation in future Parades. Also, our Parade Partners should keep in mind that sudden loud noises, such as

gas-fired cannons, sirens, loud motorcycles, etc., may frighten children and cause a negative impression on them and their parents.

8.4 Throwing/distributing objects and candy, littering

8.4.1 Natchitoches City regulations prohibit the throwing or distribution of soft/chewing candy or gum (i.e., Tootsie Rolls, bubble gum, etc.) during the parade route. Also, throwing of large, heavy objects or any type of fruit shall not be permitted. Throwing/distribution of other small trinket-like objects (beads, etc.) is permissible. Keep in mind that small children are present. To prevent possible injury, persons throwing objects should be instructed to throw gently and attempt to throw to the restraining barriers or curb in front of observers and not directly at them.

8.4.2 Littering is not permitted at any point during the Festival Parade. There are city ordinances against littering and persons may be fined if cited by law enforcement officers.

8.5 Order and supervision of children

8.5.1 Children less than 18 years old participating in the Parade will be supervised at all times by their chaperon or an authorized responsible adult.

8.5.2 All of our Parade Partners’ participants will remain with their unit until the Parade is completed. This includes all participants riding on Floats, in vehicles or marching.

8.5.3 Participants shall exercise and display orderly, polite and socially acceptable conduct at all times, and show respect to all other participants and observers. Behavior that explicitly and openly promotes or displays a particular political persuasion, protest, social agenda or point of view will not be permitted.

8.5.4 **VIOLATIONS: Any confirmed violation of the above General Rules for Conduct for the Natchitoches Christmas Festival Parade may result in immediate removal of the entry from the Parade and possible fines by the City of Natchitoches. Any said violation(s) may jeopardize the entry’s acceptance and participation in future Parades.**

9 Evaluation of Parade Partners (entries)

9.1 Every unit that is deemed eligible for an award by the Committee will be evaluated and graded. This evaluation process begins on the unit’s arrival, during line-up and while they perform on the move throughout the Parade route.

9.2 The Parade Evaluation Matrix shown below presents the key components of the” Festival of Lights” Parade evaluation process, against which all entries will be judged. The evaluation committee will prepare an evaluation sheet for use by the evaluators/judges who will be stationed along the Parade route.

“Festival of Lights” Parade Evaluation Matrix

ITEM #	UNITS*	EVALUATED ACTION	POTENTIAL POINTS	EVALUATORS/JUDGES	REFERENCE
1	ALL	Parade Administration	5	Director	Stds of Excellence
2	ALL	Arrival & Line-up Activities	15	Line-up supervisor	“
3	ALL	Inspection of unit at line-up	10	Co-directors	“
ITEMS 4-7 = UNIT’S PARADE PERFORMANCE AND IT’S CHRISTMAS SPIRIT					
4	ALL	Christmas spirit (See Page 1)	25	Parade evaluators	“
5	ALL	Performance excellence	15	“	“
6	ALL	Music excellence	15	“	“
7	ALL	Maintain Parade pace and	15	“	“

		interval			
		MAXIMUM POSSIBLE POINTS	100	Items 1,2,3 provided to Evaluator Supervisor by Directors	
		*With the exception of items 1,2 & 3, Bands will be evaluated by NSF CAPA professionals			

9.3 Bands shall be evaluated by professionals from the NSU Creative and Performing Arts (CAPA).

9.4 Trophies: Trophies shall be awarded in the following categories.

The Committee reserves the right to determine the category in which each Parade Partner will compete for the following trophies. All decisions are final.

9.4.1 Band division

- Best music
- Most entertaining
- Most Christmas Spirit

9.4.2 Float division

- Best float
- Best Holiday Decoration
- Most Christmas Spirit
-

9.4.3 Other Awards for “Christmas Spirit”

- Best dance group
- Best cheer group
- Best marching group
- Best specialty group/entry
- Best Commercial entry

10 Acknowledgment and acceptance of the Standards of Excellence by our Parade Partner

The official representing the **Parade Partner** having read and acknowledging that they understand these standards, will and on behalf of the applicant/entry, accept and agree to abide by them by checking the Standards of Excellence Box on the submitted on-line Parade Application Form.