

CITY OF BELLEVUE
SPECIAL EVENTS COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES

September 9, 2021
8:30 a.m.

Bellevue City Hall
Virtual Meeting

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Susan Freeburg – Parks
Andy Heider – Parks
Dane Waisanen – Fire
Joseph Nault – Police
Rick Logwood – Transportation
Weijun Zhu – Transportation
Benjamin Wright – Transportation
Claude Iosso – City Manager’s Office
Erin Hislop – Utilities
Jonathan Rose – Metro Transit
Neal Christiansen – Community Representative East
Mike Ogliore – Business Representative Downtown
Laurie Scott – Downtown Resident Representative

OTHERS PRESENT:

Brad Bennett, Imane Elmesbahi, Parks; Councilmember
Barksdale

RECORDING SECRETARY:

Gerry Lindsay

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 8:33 a.m. by Chair Freeburg who presided.

Chair Freeburg welcomed Jonathan Rose to the Committee as the new representative for King County Metro.

2. COMMUNICATIONS: Written and Oral – None

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

A motion to approve the agenda was made by Captain Nault. The motion was seconded by Ms. Scott and the motion carried unanimously.

4. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

A motion to approve the August 12, 2021, meeting minutes as submitted was made by Mr. Heider. The motion was seconded by Mr. Wright and the motion carried unanimously.

5. COMMITTEE REPORTS

- ❖ Routing and Location Subcommittee Report - None

6. OLD BUSINESS – None

6. **NEW BUSINESS**

❖ Winter Events Discussion

a. Snowflake Lane

Chair Freeburg reported that Snowflake Lane will only be offering one show and will be reducing the number of performers. The show will run nightly from 7:00 p.m. to 7:25 p.m. While the overall impact will be reduced, the organizer still wants to same level of support from police and fire.

Captain Nault said he and Mr. Anderson met with a representative from Kemper Development Company on September 7 to informally discuss the event. It was noted at the time that it was too early to tell if the event would be returned to the old format or if the Covid-19 Delta variant would dictate doing the same as was done in 2020. There was agreement that a lot can happen before the time of the event. He said it was informally decided that November 15 should be the date by which a decision should be made about which direction to go.

Chair Freeburg said a Snowflake Lane representative was planning to attend the Committee's October meeting.

b. Garden d'Lights

Chair Freeburg said the word passed on to her was that the event was on track to proceed as it has in the past. The event organizers have an alternative plan in hand that will be implemented should Covid restrictions so dictate.

c. Magic Season

Mr. Ogliore said the plan for the ice rink is the same as for the 2019-2020 season. The opening date will be bumped up a week to the Friday before Thanksgiving, and the closing date will be closer to New Year's Day. The use of mesh cabling will hopefully allow for increasing the airflow, but otherwise the footprint should be the same. The tentative timeline for infill and removal will mirror the previous year. A new online reservation system will be implemented to better monitor capacity and occupancy.

Mr. Rose asked if there is a place on the special event application to indicate street closures. Mr. Wright said there is check box on the application for traffic control. The details get outlined in the traffic control plans. Chair Freeburg said a check box for street closures could be added to the application.

Mr. Wright added that for events such as the arts fair staff communicates with Metro about the need to reroute buses.

❖ Application of Intent: Kelsey Creek Farm Fair 2021

Anna Marie Solomonson said the Farm Fair event is slated for October 2 from 11:00 a.m. to 4:00

p.m. The current planning focus is on what activities can be stretched out and located around the farm, including the wagon rides, pumpkin patch and pony rides. She said she has been working with Eastside Heritage for events in the log cabin. As much of the park area as possible will be used to spread out the visitors. A bus company will be contracted to transport from the Wilburton Park and ride and Bannerwood Park. The International School has also been secured for parking. Police and fire are also involved in the planning process.

Mr. Waisanen noted from his review of the map of the location of the food trucks it appeared they would be parked in the fire lane, reducing the width of the fire lane. He said a different location for those trucks should be sought to preserve the fire lane, noting that in 2018 there was an issue for an inspector who was concerned that an ambulance would not be able to gain access given that one of the food trucks was parked in the way. Ms. Solomonson said she was not aware of any access issues, noting that in the past when Station 7 came with their ladder truck they have always been able to get through and turned around in the second lot. She said she would work with fire to determine the best places to park the food trucks.

Councilmember Barksdale asked if masks will be offered by the shuttle operators to those who do not bring their own. He also asked about general accessibility. Ms. Solomonson said she was working with the bus company to address the mask protocols. The number of persons allowed on each shuttle will be reduced to 50 percent of the capacity. She said signage will be posted around the farm reminding people of the need to wear masks. The legal department is currently reviewing how to mandate masks in certain areas. Mobility and accessibility is a priority. The pumpkin patch is in a pasture and where someone needs assistance there is help available. The lower road is asphalt, which makes access easier, while the upper road is graveled, making access more difficult. The graveled path is needed to accommodate the animals. Parking accessibility is accommodated in the first parking lot.

Mr. Wright asked if extra masks will be available on the shuttles. Ms. Solomonson said the direction handed down from management will be followed. Chair Freeburg added that under the state guidelines, where there are more than 500 people at an outdoor event, masks are to be worn. She agreed it would be a good idea to have masks available for those who show up without one.

Ms. Hislop said she would like to see recycle and compost carts located in the area of the food trucks. She said she was willing to help work with the vendors to determine what materials they will be using to see if single use plastics and Styrofoam could be reduced. Ms. Solomonson said in the past they have worked with a service to bring in trash containers along with recycling and compost bins. They are distributed around the site generally and especially in the location of the food trucks.

A motion to approve the date, time and location for Kelsey Creek Farm Fair was made by Ms. Scott. The motion was seconded by Mr. Waisanen and the motion carried unanimously.

❖ Code/Administrative Manual Updates

Chair Freeburg said the work done on the code and the administrative manual was under review by the legal department. Once their review is done it will be handed to the ADs for review before sending it to the City Council for action.

Chair Freeburg said she was working to set up meetings with each department to go over the user guide and all pertinent information.

❖ Post-Event Evaluations

a. Jubilee Reach

Chair Freeburg said the event went well except for an issue with the sprinkler system in the plaza not being turned off and the power not being turned on. Some equipment got wet and there were problems locating the city representative to address the issues.

Mr. Heider said the sprinkler issue was unfortunate. He said his team was working on a failsafe plan. There was a communications breakdown that will not happen again. Fortunately the equipment that got wet was not damaged. Everything was eventually sorted out and the event was able to move ahead.

Chair Freeburg said some complaints about sound at 8:15 a.m. on a Sunday morning were received from neighbors. Mr. Wright noted that similar complaints are lodged every year.

Mr. Christiansen said he has little sympathy for those who choose to live on the edge of the park.

Captain Nault said one of the complaints about noise came from someone who has complained some 200 times in 20 months about noise in Downtown Park.

Mr. Bennett noted that parks manages the scheduled events in Downtown Park and is fully aware of who is there and when. The park is a public space and a number of unscheduled groups use the parks for a variety of purposes, which they have the right to do. He said his suspicion was that many of the complaints that come in are associated with activities that are not scheduled and not reviewed by parks or the Special Events Committee. There is a meeting scheduled to look at the issues and to determine what options if any can be implemented to reduce the number of calls.

b. Downtown Movies in the Park

Chair Freeburg said the annual event hosted approximately 5000 people for the series. The setup and takedown both went well, and seating the overall event was done well. There were challenges associated with parking for the participants. There were no real safety concerns registered.

Mr. Bennett said all went well from an operational perspective. The staff worked hard to make sure everything was cleaned up at the end of the event. The staff did note that the audience for the second movie left the park in the cleanest condition. The movies were shown starting when it was dark enough, which generally was around 8:30 p.m. The movies were over by 10:00 p.m. or 10:15 p.m.

Mr. Christiansen said it was a good sign that there was no feedback concerning noise. Mr. Bennett said he started the movie series in 2009 and since then upwards of 75 movies have been shown in Downtown Park. The only complaint he ever received was following the first or second movie the first year. Adjustments have been made over the years that have proven to be successful. There was a complaint received from a condominium owner on NE 2nd Street who was disappointed that the screen was facing the wrong direction, making it impossible for her to watch the movie from her patio.

Chair Freeburg said she received feedback from a neighbor who thought it was brilliant the

movies started a little earlier because of the date change.

c. Bellevue Downtown Arts Market

Chair Freeburg said the Bellevue Downtown Association hosted the event for the first time without the Bellevue Arts Museum and on a new weekend. She said the daily attendance was about 4000 and the weather was great. There were some issues with construction that impacted the footprint for the event.

Mr. Ogliore thanked police, fire and transportation for all they did to help make the event successful. He said he had every intention of moving the event back to its regular date in late July in 2022. The later date was selected to allow for Covid to play out, and it could not have been known that the Delta variant would appear. Between 70 and 80 percent of the attendees were masked, which was good. There were food trucks, live music and 110 artists participating. Construction on the Bellevue Connection property somewhat limited the site lines to the DOXA church lot. The artists were happy overall even though the crowds were not what they have traditionally been. Load-in and load-out went very smooth thanks to transportation and police. There were no staging locations as there have been in the past. Overall the event was a success.

d. Pakistan Independence Day Celebration

Chair Freeburg said the August 7 event in Downtown Park had an estimated attendance of between 1000 and 1500. The first-time event included music and vendors. The organizer though the event was a huge success. Load-in and load-out proved to be a challenge given that the organizer had not asked for vehicle access. The organizer voiced the concern that the city's requirements and guidelines were not completely clear, but added that all departments were helpful and cooperative.

Councilmember Barksdale said he attended the event and thought it was very good.

❖ Comments/Follow-up

Mr. Wright announced that he had accepted a new position in the transportation department and that his position on the Special Events Committee would be held by Weijun Zhu going forward.

Mr. Bennett thanked Mr. Wright for his service and commitment to the Special Events Committee. Chair Freeburg added her appreciation for Mr. Wright's service and congratulated him on his new position.

7. NEXT MEETING

❖ October 14, 2021

8. ADJOURNMENT

A motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Heider. The motion was seconded by Mr. Wright and the motion carried unanimously.

Chair Freeburg adjourned the meeting at 9:25 a.m.