

CITY OF BELLEVUE
SPECIAL EVENTS COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES

November 10, 2022
8:30 a.m.

Bellevue City Hall
Virtual Meeting

MEMBERS PRESENT: Susan Freeburg – Parks
Chad Charbonneau – Parks
Jacob Branstetter – Fire
Mike Shovlin – Police
Rick Logwood – Transportation
Casiano Atienza – Transportation
Neal Christiansen – Community Representative East
Mike Ogliore – Business Representative Downtown
Laurie Scott – Downtown Resident Representative
Jonathan Rose – King County Metro

OTHERS PRESENT: Imane Elmesbahi, Brad Bennett-Parks; Michelle Kinberg – Office of Emergency Christopher Rivera – Transportation; Jeff Orswell, Rock ‘n’ Roll Marathon; Heija Nunn, Ascend

RECORDING SECRETARY: Gerry Lindsay

1. CALL TO ORDER

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

2. COMMUNICATIONS: Written and Oral – None

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

A motion to approve the agenda was made by Laurie Scott. The motion was seconded by Sgt. Shovlin and the motion carried unanimously.

4. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

A motion to approve the October 13, 2022, meeting minutes as submitted was made by Laurie Scott. The motion was seconded by Jonathan Rose and the motion carried unanimously.

5. COMMITTEE REPORTS

❖ Routing and Location Subcommittee Report

Casiano Atienza reported that the Downtown ice rink was good to go, as is Garden d’Lights. A meeting was held last week regarding Snowflake Lane. All of the players were involved and the plans were communicated. All right-of-way permits are in and the event is good to go.

6. OLD BUSINESS

A. Tabled Events – None

6. NEW BUSINESS

❖ Applications of Intent

A. Bellevue Downtown Arts Market

Mike Ogliore said the two-day event did receive some pushback from some members of the public and some artists who indicated their preference for going back to a three-day format. The proposal is to return to the three-day market in 2023, potentially with a smaller footprint given possible construction activities. The plan is to locate booths along 106th Avenue NE and the NE 6th Street sidewalk. If the construction schedule allows for once again using the parking lot, the plan could change.

B. Bellevue Beats Music Series and Popup Market

Mike Ogliore said communications are occurring with the Food Truck Association about some possible changes. The Special Events Committee will be kept informed going forward. The intent is to again use the Connections Plaza, but if the next-door construction project is under way the timing and location for the event may need to be reconsidered.

C. Bellevue Downtown Ice Rink

The intent for the ice rink event for 2023 is to follow the plan in place for 2022. The ice rink is currently being set up and all is going well. The event will open to the public on Friday, November 18.

D. Ascend Hospitality Night Market

Heija Nunn, who works with Ascend Hospitality Group and other Eastside non-profits, outlined a proposal to introduce a small popup night market on New Year's Eve. The new event will partner with Amazon and VanderHoek Corporation in hosting a small outdoor market in the alley behind Main Street on NE 1st Place. The planning is being handled by an experience events production company that is well-versed in working with public safety officials in making sure their outdoor events meet all code and safety requirements. The free event will be open to the public and marketed mostly to the neighborhood. The anticipated attendance is fewer than 300 over the course of the event hours of 8:00 p.m. to 11:00 p.m. Tents will be set up to highlight local vendors and artists, and representatives of the arts and culture organizations on the Eastside. The intent is for the event to have a vibe but without having music above the prescribed limits. The footprint has deliberately been contained to the alley on NE 1st Place to limit the number of interactions with public safety needs, and the desire is to close the street to automobile traffic other than emergency vehicles. Some 22 tents will be set up on the sides of the alley to accommodate wares and crafts of local vendors. Cooking will be limited to preprepared items. Ingress and egress for the apartment building on the northwest corner of the street will not be impeded other than by fencing limiting the pedestrian thoroughfare to eight feet wide.

Rick Logwood commented that NE 1st Place is a public access easement for vehicles and emergency access. Typically emergency access requires a 12-foot wide pathway. Heija Nunn clarified that while the pedestrian access lane will be limited to eight feet wide, the actual

opening between the tents will be 20 feet.

Rick Logwood stated that the city's transportation department has established holiday season corridor restrictions. The restrictions begin at midnight the third Wednesday of December and runs through the first business day after the New Year holiday. The restrictions prohibit the closing of lanes and any work in public rights-of-way. That includes all public rights-of-way with the boundary of 100th Avenue NE to 120th Avenue NE, and from Main Street to NE 12th Street. The exception is for approved special events. As things stand, the proposed event has not been approved as a special event.

Referring to the draft site plan, Rick Logwood asked if the yellow bollards on the north side of the building on the south side of NE 1st Place is a fire department connection. Heija Nunn said appears to be a back door entrance to an office establishment.

Sgt. Shovlin asked if the alley is the way in and out of an apartment or condominium development. Heija Nunn said the west end of the alley is the entrance to a parking garage for the building. The skinny alley that runs north and south also serves as an egress for the building. Sgt. Shovlin voiced having the impression that the alley served as the only way in and out of one of the buildings. If that is the case, traffic flow in that portion of the alley will need to be preserved. Heija Nunn said the entrance to the garage is actually a little to the west of the alley. The wider western portion of NE 1st Place serves as the ingress to the parking garage. That should leave a 50- to 80-foot buffer between the gate on the west end. A temporary barrier could be erected if necessary, and all safety requirements will be met. The intent is to use on-site production staff rather than police officers to control the flow of people.

Jacob Branstetter said the layout of tents as proposed would be acceptable but stressed the need to either obtain a tent permit or allow for a ten-foot break somewhere in the long row of tents. The width is fine, as are the barricades provided there is some form of staff to move the barricades if necessary. It is likely that on New Year's Eve the weather will be cold. Any sort of gas-burning heaters will need to be placed with a substantial separation between the tents. The better option would be to use electric heaters. Heija Nunn agreed with the need to at least have a heated area, possibly under a larger tent in the center. Jacob Branstetter said an NFPA 701 rating will be required for canopies.

Rick Logwood asked if the 8:00 p.m. to 11:00 p.m. timeframe was inclusive of setup and take down. Heija Nunn allowed being flexible, though expressed the understanding that 8:00 p.m. to 11:00 p.m. would be the actual event period, with setup and take down occurring before and after. The intent is to be out of the neighborhood's way completely by midnight, with the roadway cleared. The question is whether or not all of the staging materials would be removed that night or the next day.

Rick Logwood asked if a full cleaning of the area to remove all debris is intended to be done. Heija Nunn confirmed that.

Rick Logwood asked what the expectations are in the event of snow and ice conditions. Heija Nunn said likely there will be cancellation insurance and a plan for canceling the event should it be necessary.

Rick Logwood voiced the assumption that all alcohol will be restricted to the planned bar and beverage service area, noting that a Washington State Liquor Cannabis Board license will be required. Heija Nunn answered yes to the first question and indicated all necessary permits will

be in hand.

Chair Freeburg said typically there is a process with the Liquor Cannabis Board that takes between 45 and 60 days to complete. Heija Nunn said the permit may already be in the hands of one of the vendors. Chair Freeburg stated that Heija may want to double check the requirement. Chair Freeburg then said there will also be health department permits required if food is served and obtaining those permits can also take some time.

Casiano Atienza asked if there is an entrance to the apartment building on the east side of NE 1st Place that would not be affected by the potential road closure. Heija Nunn said there appears to be an emergency exit into the alley that would not be impeded by the closure. Chair Freeburg said there is an entrance in the alley to the garage, and there is an entrance to the other building on the far end of the alley. That will need to be verified. Jacob Branstetter said it appears one can enter from NE 1st Place by turning left into the alley instead of entering off of NE 3rd Street and turning right into the alley.

Chair Freeburg said a decision would be made by the Committee after a full discussion.

❖ Post-Event Evaluations

A. Rock 'n' Roll Running 2022

Event coordinator Jeff Orswell took a moment to thank the Committee for making the event happen and successful. There was nothing but positive feedback from participants, partners and Iron Man staff. Everyone was overwhelmed by the city of Bellevue and everything that was accomplished. Major Sanabria and Sgt. Shovlin with the police department made the impossible happen by working closely with the access security team. Rick Logwood and Casiano Atienza with transportation did amazing work as well, as did Captain Anderson and others from fire; Brad Jones with VisitBellevue; the economic development team; parks staff; Mike Ogliore from the Bellevue Downtown Association; Jonathan Rose with King County Metro; and Linda Hoffman with the Spring District.

Holding the event on Labor Day weekend proved to be a difficulty, but the issues were worked out. There was not much negative feedback or complaints from the community largely owing to the excellent job done in terms of community outreach. The course was amazing, if a little hilly. The sasquatch activation on the Lake Hills Connector was spectacular. The post-event vibe the park was awesome. The bands were amazing, and the beer garden went very well.

On the downside, the numbers mark was missed. A fair number of the participants that registered for the race were deferrals from races that could not happen in 2020 and 2021. The final tally was just under 6500 participants, far fewer than the anticipated number. There were no significant issues and overall it was a great event.

Jonathan Rose said moving such a large event from Seattle to Bellevue tends to cause a lot of waves for King County Metro and its customers. There were some stresses involved in mitigating the impacts. The level of communication from the organizer team was appreciated. King County Metro also appreciated the work of the Bellevue police and transportation departments. It worked in Metro's favor that the event took place on a Sunday morning and very few complaints were received.

Jeff Orswell allowed that the event organization is an intrusive species, one that comes into cities

and messes things up to a great degree. The flexibility Bellevue showed in making it happen is very much appreciated.

Laurie Scott reported having had a conversation with someone who had quite an issue in getting to the airport the morning of the event. The biggest concern was that the police officers who were directing traffic were not able to tell the person how to navigate around the event. There were concerns voiced by other residents of the Downtown area who encountered difficulties with traffic. While communications were generally good, better communication on the day of the event was needed. Jeff Orswell pointed out that Main Street is somewhat pinned in when Bellevue Way is closed to allow the run down Main Street. Every attempt was made to keep traffic flowing through the detour routes. It certainly is challenging to keep every single vehicle moving when there are thousands of people on the roadway. There is just little leeway for directing vehicles trying to come in or leave from that area.

Laurie Scott said some of the issue could be addressed by working with the HOAs or the managers of the buildings and having them communicate with their residents. There was a lot of information shared with local residents, but of course it is not possible to make people read their mail. Jeff Orswell said a lot of time was spent looking all the Main Street garage entrances and exits, and did the best job possible was done.

Chair Freeburg said for the most part the event went very well. There never will be any event in which there are no persons upset or disrupted. The response from the community was generally positive.

Jeff Orswell thanked Chair Freeburg for serving as the tip of the spear for all city departments and organizations. The work of Chair Freeburg was recognized.

Neal Christiansen reported having a friend who participated in one of the bands along the course who commented afterwards on how well organized everything was. It was a fun experience and the bands loved interacting with the runners as they passed by.

Jeff Orswell shared with the Committee that a decision has been made by the senior leadership team in Tampa to not bring the event to either Bellevue or Seattle in 2023. There were a lot of budgetary issues involved in the decision. A new race was added to the August 2023 calendar in Salt Lake City. If the race does come back to Bellevue, it likely will not be on Labor Day weekend. Race directors are evaluated on a net promoter score that comes out of post-race survey results. The results that came out of the Bellevue event were in fact through the roof with positive feedback on almost every element, with the exception of parking. It is sad coming off such a huge win that the event will not be repeated in Bellevue in 2023. The event served as a good learning experience both for the city and for the Iron Man organization. Bellevue did an excellent job hosting the event and the hope is that it will come back to Bellevue at some future time.

❖ Comments/Follow-up – None

Returning to the applications of intent, a motion was made to approve the date, time and location for the Bellevue Downtown Arts Market, the Bellevue Beats Music Series and Popup Market, and the Bellevue Downtown Ice Rink events was made by Neal Christiansen. The motion was seconded by Laurie Scott and the motion carried unanimously.

With regard to the Ascend Hospitality night market event, Neal Christiansen pointed out that

according to what was said by Rick Logwood, a Special Event Permit would be needed given the holiday season restrictions in place. Rick Logwood said the established restrictions do accommodate approved special events. The normal process of reviewing and seeking all the necessary approvals, along with all the communication that must happen with all affected businesses, takes quite a lot of time. The organizer can request an exemption from the Director of the transportation department, but they must substantiate the public benefits. It does not appear that closing the roadway would affect the residential tower and businesses to the west because access can be had from 102nd Place. However, with high pedestrian volumes coming and going through the area could affect things. Weather conditions will play a role in people being driven to the event and dropped off. Traffic control outside the perimeter of the event was not discussed by the organizer. The load and unload for the event likely would need to be contained within the area, avoiding the closure of any on-street parking areas. There is on-street two-hour parking in the area that is enforced, even during the holidays.

Jacob Branstetter suggested all requirements of the fire department could be met in the short timeframe.

Sgt. Shovlin said it did not sound like there would be much for the police department to address. Even if a police presence is required for the event, it would not be overly difficult to work that out.

Mike Ogliore asked Laurie Scott to indicate any specific concerns regarding residential access. Laurie Scott noted being unclear with regard to how close the alley is to condominiums or apartments. Noise is less of an issue on New Year's Eve. The event is set to end at 11:00 p.m. and there typically are fireworks at midnight. Jacob Branstetter confirmed there will be a fireworks display that night launched from a barge in Meydenbauer Bay.

Neal Christiansen noted that nothing had been said by the organizer about siting portable toilets on site. Chair Freeburg said because the event will not be in a park, and because the traffic of 300 or less will be in and out, such facilities may not be required.

Chair Freeburg voiced concern with the fact that the organization has not filled out a special event application. If held on private property, a Special Event Permit would probably not be required. The fact that the private property identified for the event happens to be on an easement means the rules apply. That is why the issue came before the Committee. It remains to be seen if all the required permits from the city, the health department, the state Liquor Cannabis Board and others can be obtained in time.

Rick Logwood said if all of the event activities can be limited to what is a low-volume street, and if all the safety requirements involving access for emergency vehicles and building access, and if all police and fire concerns can be addressed, it could be that the event could be handled via just a right-of-way permit, something that could be reviewed and approved within 30 to 45 days. Calling it a community event could lead the transportation department Director to grant the holiday season restriction waiver.

Jacob Branstetter said the fire department would be okay with not requiring a Special Event Permit. Mike Ogliore concurred. Sgt. Shovlin said going either direction would not make a lot of difference to police.

A motion not to require a Special Event Permit for the night market event was made by Neal Christiansen. The motion was seconded by Jacob Branstetter and the motion carried

unanimously.

7. NEXT MEETING

❖ December 8, 2022

8. ADJOURNMENT

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Neal Christiansen. The motion was seconded by Laurie Scott and the motion carried unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:49 a.m.