

CITY OF BELLEVUE
SPECIAL EVENTS COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES

September 8, 2022
8:30 a.m.

Bellevue City Hall
Virtual Meeting

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Susan Freeburg – Chair/parks
Andy Heider – Parks
Mark Anderson – Fire
Kyle Nelson – Fire
Landon Barnwell – Police
Casiano Atienza – Transportation
Neal Christiansen – Community Representative East
Mike Ogliore – Business Representative Downtown
Chris Dunham – Business Representative West
Laurie Scott – Downtown Resident Representative
Jonathan Rose – King County Metro

OTHERS PRESENT:

Brad Bennett, Imane Elmesbahi, Shelley Brittingham, Chad Charbonneau - Parks; Christopher Rivera, Rick Logwood – Transportation; Michelle Kinberg – Office of Emergency; Claude Iosso, City Manager’s Office; Jennifer Leavitt, Snowflake Lane; James Gagliardi, Joe Atkin, Garden d’Lights

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 Andy Heider and the motion carried unanimously.

4. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

A motion to approve the August 11, 2022, meeting minutes as submitted was made by Neal Christiansen the motion was seconded by Laurie Scott and the motion carried unanimously.

5. COMMITTEE REPORTS

❖ Routing and Location Subcommittee Report

Casiano Atienza reported that the subcommittee met with the Rock n Roll Marathon and Flavors of India events organizers to discuss event specifics. A few complaints were received regarding

detours and closures regarding the marathon, mostly in regard to not having received notices. Some changes will be made to the noticing for the event in 2023.

Rick Logwood said the focus in regard to noticing for the 2023 event will center on determining exactly how information gets to major stakeholders, such as Overlake Hospital and large corporations, so there can be general communications with all employees. The lessons learned will be carried forward into future events.

6. OLD BUSINESS

- ❖ Tabled Events – None

6. NEW BUSINESS

- ❖ Applications of Intent – None
- ❖ Garden d’Lights

Joe Atkin noted serving as the representative for the non-profit partner for the Bellevue Botanical Garden, the volunteers of which are the primary machine of Garden d’Lights. No major changes are planned for the operations of the event. The time-ticketing process that worked well previously will again be implemented. The event will begin the Saturday after Thanksgiving and will end on December 31. A total of 500 people per hour will be allowed in, which helps moderate the flow of traffic at the event.

James Gagliardi, new director of the Bellevue Botanical Garden, said the recent Arts in the Garden event saw some 8000 attendees over three days. The only planned change to Garden d’Lights is that the event will not be open on Christmas Day.

Kyle Nelson noted having worked earlier in the year with James Gagliardi on the outdoor arts festival on crowd management, adding that the requirements for Garden d’Lights will not be significantly different from the requirements for the arts event. James Gagliardi said consideration will be given to the ground plan for Garden d’Lights given the more restrictive borders and limits are those coming in and out.

- ❖ Bellevue Downtown Ice Rink

Mike Ogliore said the event would be replicating the 2021 event, with the exception of the mask mandate. The event will have the same timeline, starting on the Friday prior to Thanksgiving and remaining open every day through January 8. The pond draining will occur on October 21, allowing for time to start building the stage and the decking on October 29. Turf protection is important. The southwest parking lot near the Inspiration Playground will be used for staging of trailers and the like and plastic mats will be laid down as protection for the walking path while accommodating the forklift trips. The current plan is to put lights on the ice rink itself and not on the trees. The same vendors will be onsite, and they are all well-versed in the dos and don’ts. The large chillers will come in in early November and will have a sound wall constructed around them. Portable restrooms will be brought in and located near the entrance to the plaza. The closure of the rink each night will be closely monitored to adhere to 10:00 p.m. weeknights and 10:30 p.m. on the weekends and during peak times when school is out. There will be a 24/7 onsite presence with staff during the day and security after hours. Take down takes about two weeks and January 20 is eyed as the final sweep date. The 2021 event saw a record number of

skaters, more than 45,000, with all ticketing occurring online.

Chair Freeburg asked about the actions taken to mitigate rink noises, and asked if the site will be cleared by 11:00 p.m. on the nights the event closes at 10:30 p.m. Mike Ogliore said the tent itself is enclosed and the internal sound system used for music is kept at a very low level. There is a system in place to constantly check the decibel levels from various locations. Complaints about noise in the past were largely related to crowds of people on their way walking to and from the restrooms on the west end of the parking lot; installation of the portable restroom tent in the plaza has addressed many of those issues. The staff do a good job of making sure the music goes off and getting people off the ice at closing time. Upgrading to a higher quality generator also resulted in less noise.

Kyle Nelson noted that the occupancy load for the ice rink is below a thousand, which means there are no requirements in regard to crowd management. The permit review process for the ice rink should be started as early as possible.

Andy Heider asked if there had been any coordination with parks on the black mats. Mike Ogliore said parks did not previously provide them; the event provided them for both load-in and load-out.

Casiano Atienza noted the event had in 2021 applied for TE street right-of-way use permits. Mike Ogliore promised to work closely with the city on that.

❖ Post-Event Evaluations

With regard to the Jubilee Reach event, there were no remarks from the parks, police or transportation departments. Chair Freeburg noted the receipt of two noise complaints, primarily focused on setup occurring well in advance of the start of the event.

Andy Heider noted that there were some load-in issues associated with the Pakistan Independence Day event. It might be prudent to have a monitor in place next year. The event organizer did not appear to have a clear idea of what the park's expectations were. There was a monitor on site who had to leave for a while, and during the monitor's absence several cars with park users entered the park looking for a place to park. That will need to be tightened a little bit for the event's next iteration. Chair Freeburg stated that the organizer had been very clearly informed that personal cars are not allowed. Hopefully that issue will be addressed before next year. Setup started about an hour early than allowed so there will need to be an enforcement of the times on the permit.

There were no comments from police, transportation, or fire. Laurie Scott reported no concerns from Downtown residents.

With regard to the Rock n Roll Marathon event, Laurie Scott noted having received some complaints about noise, particularly about the music and how early it started. Chair Freeburg allowed having received some similar complaints. The permit allowed the music to start at 6:00 a.m. There were not many complaints about the Saturday kids run event; most of the complaints received were in regard to the main event on Sunday. The event ran very smoothly, and everyone had a great time. The organizers seemed happy.

Chris Dunham noted having worked the health and wellness expo at the Hyatt Regency and said it was interesting to see so many different cultures and groups participating. The runners all

appeared to have had a good experience.

Reading a chat message from Michelle Kinberg, Chair Freeburg noted there were 10 people in the EOC command center on Saturday and 23 on Sunday. The overall turnout was great, and a number of problems were solved. Major Sanabria deserves all the chocolate for how well the command post was run. Representatives from Kemper Development Company, Iron Man and Access Security were all in the command post along with staff.

Landon Barnwell vouched for those comments having also been present. The event went very well.

Chair Freeburg read comments from Jonathan Rose with King County Metro indicating that all went well from their perspective.

Rick Logwood offered kudos to the entire team and to Major Sanabria for keeping track of all the moving pieces. On the field operations side, things were set up well. Having the signal crews available to get the systems back up quickly paid real dividends for the public. The fact that there were only a few cars that entered the route is testament to how good the signage and the police enforcement was along the entire route. There were several complaints from people not being able to get through and not knowing where to go. Much was learned and there certainly are some refinements that can be made to the next iteration of the event. Having the same course next time will really help the process.

Brad Bennett reported that the volunteer registration for the 2023 Washington events is already open, which is a good indication the organizer intends to return again next year. There were quite a few spectators along the route cheering on the runners. Overall, it was a good experience for the participants.

Chair Freeburg remarked on having been in the park on Sunday and noting that it looked great. There were a number of people walking around cleaning up. There was great energy in the park and the music was good. People coming off the course remarked positively about having spotted Sasquatch along the route. Comments made about the city were very positive.

Neal Christiansen asked how many participants there were on Sunday and Chair Freeburg said just over 4800 started and completed the race. On Saturday, the 5K saw just under 1600 participants. There were 328 kids who participated in the kids run.

Chair Freeburg added that about \$3.6 million was brought in to the city as a result of the event. The hotels were about 85 percent full.

Rick Logwood said mention was made during the summary provided to the Council about a full marathon. If that is going to be the case, it will be necessary to start early in thinking about the route and all the staffing and resources that would be required.

Brad Bennett said the number of states represented in the event was significant. There were a few from British Columbia and one person from London. Chair Freeburg noted that at least eight different countries were represented.

With regard to Flavors of India, Andy Heider commented that the organizers did a great job. By Monday morning following the two-day event, one could hardly tell the event had even been in Crossroads Park.

Chair Freeburg reported that no negative feedback was received about the event.

Landon Barnwell said the motor officers that worked the parade route reported no issues or problems, nor were there any issues in the park.

Chair Freeburg said all permits for the upcoming Ukrainian Festival had been issued. The organizers are anticipating some 16,000 participants.

Casiano Atienza said the parking plan for the festival includes an agreement with Westminster Chapple. There is also private parking secured at the Salvation Army site, but only for the VIP members. Shuttles, carpools and public transportation are being encouraged. Parking at Crossroads Mall will be managed through advance notices, signs posted on site and by having someone posted near the entrance of the mall. Mall security will also monitor parking.

Christopher Rivera commented that in preparing for the next Rock n Roll marathon, attention should be given to the last-minute changes to signs that were made. It would also be good to get some feedback from police about they saw or experienced at the intersections in regard to how traffic control was set up. Chair Freeburg said a full debrief with the departments is planned to flush out the lessons learned.

Landon Barnwell said one last-minute decision made by Major Sanabria was that Sgt. Shovlin would not be allowed out on the course. That battle, however, was lost and it turned out to be a good decision to have essentially a forward command in place. Sgt. Shovlin should be asked to be part of the debrief exercise.

With regard to Garden d'Lights, Rick Logwood stressed the need for the routing subcommittee to be clear about how much parking will be needed at the school district sites and where pedestrians will be crossing the road to the park area, and how the crossings will be illuminated. Shoulder parking will need to be managed for the entire frontage to avoid safety issues and damaging the vegetation.

Landon Barnwell reported that has been assigned to take over for Major Sanabria on the Committee.

Jonathan Rose stressed the need to be kept fully informed about any road closures and the timelines for any event as far in advance as possible.

❖ Snowflake Lane

Jennifer Leavitt reported that Snowflake Lane is in its 18th year. The event will be similar to last year. There has already been a meeting with fire and a walk-through of the coverage plan for assembly. The show closes Bellevue Way between NE 4th Street and NE 8th Street. Both NE 4th Street and NE 8th Street are kept open except for the biggest nights where it is sometimes necessary to also close the curb lane to accommodate the crowd. The show begins at 7:00 p.m. and runs about 20 minutes. It usually takes ten to fifteen minutes to clear the street following the show. The parade comes from NE 6th Street and runs in both directions before concluding again at NE 6th Street. The characters will be on the street only, not on the sidewalk. The cast will be larger than last year and will come from both the north and the south.

Rick Logwood asked what measures will be implemented to harden the course from a safety

standpoint to prevent any intruding vehicles. If additional barriers are to be considered, they should be identified early on. Jennifer Leavitt said there is a full plan that has been in place for a number of years. There are weighted trucks at both ends of the street along with eco blocks that are placed based on specifications from the police department. The event owns safety barriers that are placed to keep cars from coming from any of the garages onto Bellevue Way. Bomb dogs are on site every night as well.

Jennifer Leavitt added that Kemper Development Company was very impressed with the way the Rock n Roll marathon was run.

❖ Comments/Follow-up – None

7. NEXT MEETING

❖ October 13, 2022

8. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Freeburg adjourned the meeting at 9:45 a.m.