

CITY OF BELLEVUE
SPECIAL EVENTS COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES

February 9, 2023
8:30 a.m.

Bellevue City Hall
Virtual Meeting

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Susan Freeburg – Parks
Chad Charbonneau - Parks
Mark Anderson – Fire
Jacob Branstetter – Fire
Mike Shovlin – Police
Landon Barnwell – Police
Christopher Rivera – Transportation
Casiano Atienza – Transportation
Erin Hislop – Utilities
Neal Christiansen – Community Representative East
Mike Ogliore – Business Representative Downtown
Jonathan Rose – King County Metro

OTHERS PRESENT: Brad Bennett, Imane Elmesbahi, Jera Gilmore Andy Heider – Parks ; Mark Heilman, Neighborhood Services; Ali Friedman, John Holloway, Chamber Music in the Park; Valeriy Goloborodko, Ukrainian International Festival; Ellen Montanana, Carl Lunak, Office of Emergency Management

RECORDING SECRETARY: Gerry Lindsay

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 8:31 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 Neal Christiansen. The motion was seconded by Mike Ogliore and the motion carried unanimously.

4. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

A motion to approve the January 12, 2023, meeting minutes as submitted was made by Neal Christiansen. The motion was seconded by Mike Ogliore and the motion carried unanimously.

5. COMMITTEE REPORTS

❖ Routing and Location Subcommittee Report

Casiano Atienza reported on a meeting with the organizer of the 5K and 10K event. For the most part the routes will be the same as before. Transportation is checking to make sure there will be no construction impacts.

A post-event discussion with the Ascend Hospitality Group was held on February 6 regarding the night market. The event had not been classified as a special event and it was handled just with right-of-way permits. The discussion was intended to identify lessons learned. It appears from the discussion the group intends to have additional special events in the future in the city and the group was urged to plan ahead and get their applications submitted well in advance.

A subcommittee meeting is planned for February 14 to discuss the Bellevue Family 4th event and dog jog/walk events.

6. OLD BUSINESS

- ❖ Tabled Event: Chamber Music in the Park (discussed later in the meeting)

7. NEW BUSINESS

- ❖ Application of Intent: CRY Holi

Chair Freeburg said the city has not hosted the event since 2019 due to the pandemic. The footprint will be similar to what it was previously. The date is March 11 in Downtown Park from 12:00 noon to 4:00 p.m., with setup starting at 9:00 a.m. and with cleanup being completed by 6:00 p.m.

Captain Barnwell noted having worked the event several time as a bike officer. There never were any issues with the event that involved the police.

Answering a question asked by Casiano Atienza, Chair Freeburg stated that the event takes place entirely in the park. Attendance in the past has been around a thousand. It was agreed the event would need a parking plan.

Jacob Branstetter commented that the National Institutes of Health has an article that indicates some of the powders used during the Holi festival are flammable. There have been some combustible dust explosions at some of the events. There should be a discussion with the organization to determine if there is something that can be done to prevent an incident. At the very least there should be some disclosure of what the powders are.

Chair Freeburg suggested the question would be a good one to pose to the organizers at the routing and locations subcommittee meeting.

A motion to approve the date, time and location for Cry HOLI was made by Sgt. Shovlin. The motion was seconded by Chad Charbonneau and the motion carried unanimously.

Captain Barnwell noted from reading past post-event evaluations that the event could have as many as 2000 attendees.

- ❖ Application of Intent: Flavors of India

Chair Freeburg said the event will be returning on September 2 and 3, which is Labor Day Weekend, to Crossroads Park and will be including the parade. The event runs from 12:00 noon to 8:00 p.m. both days, with setup at 7:00 a.m. and take down to be completed by 8:00 p.m. the second day. The event in 2022 went quite well even though it occurred at the same time as the Rock 'n Roll half marathon event.

Casiano Atienza voiced having no concerns with the event in 2022. All went well in terms of processing and if there are no changes to planned, everything should be fine in terms of transportation.

Chair Freeburg said all the details are the same except that the parade will be on Sunday instead of Saturday.

Sgt. Shovlin said during the 2022 parade the float used, which raises up and down, got stuck in the up position. That meant it could not get all the way up to the park because of the lights. It had to turn into Crossroads Mall, which did not want it there and called for it to be removed.

Andy Heider agreed that the event went off well last year as it has historically.

A motion to approve the date, time and location for the event was made by Chad Charbonneau. The motion was seconded by Mark Anderson and the motion carried unanimously.

❖ Fred Hutchinson Cancer Center Obliteride

Chair Freeburg noted that the Obliteride bike ride event comes through a portion of Bellevue every year.

Mark Anderson reported that fire has had no issues with the event in terms of operations and additional staffing.

Captain Barnwell said the same was true for police.

Casiano Atienza said it was necessary in 2022 for transportation to coordinate with the construction managers for some building projects. That was the only significant action transportation had to take. It will be necessary to check in with the same people regarding the upcoming event.

Chair Freeburg said the event occurs on a Saturday from 6:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Some temporary signage will be required to be posted.

Chris Rivera allowed that the riders follow the rules of the road but asked if the riders will be stopping at the signalized intersections along the route without some traffic control. Chair Freeburg said it is a ride and not a race so the riders may just stop for signals. Chris Rivera said if that is the case, there would not be a reason to have traffic control.

Chair Freeburg added that the event has not in the past been required to obtain a Special Event Permit, though the organizer has been required to have a permit from transportation. Chris Rivera said a right-of-way permit will be needed. That in part will address the placement of signage to avoid creating any sight distance issues.

There was agreement not to require a Special Event Permit for the Obliteride event.

❖ Event Organizers Presentations

A. Chamber Music in the Park

Chair Freeburg asked the organizer to share a high-level overview of the plan for the event. Ali Friedman said the organization has been doing chamber music in the park for many years at Volunteer Park in Seattle. It has become a beloved tradition there with world-class musicians gathering to perform for the community. The hope is that the programming can be expanded to Bellevue. The event is always community based and celebratory. The organization did the concert truck at a couple of locations in Bellevue last year, including at the Botanical Garden and Ashwood Park. In terms of setup, there will be a fairly basic stage about 16 feet square. There will be a canopy over the musicians and amplification for the music. There usually is a side setup area where there is additional information available about the Seattle Chamber Music Society, and some kids activities like coloring pages. An instrument “petting zoo” is also set up to allow people to try different instruments.

Chair Freeburg noted the location of the stage on the map submitted with the application and asked if there were any objections to moving it to the plaza area, which has a concrete pad and a built-in amphitheater. Ali Fried said that site would work well.

Neal Christiansen asked why the event was looking to move from Ashwood Park to Downtown Park. John Holloway said the concert truck will be coming back to the Seattle Chamber Music Society. The mobile concert hall will be hosting 18 concerts in all, primarily for smaller audiences. The concerts in the park, which is being proposed for Downtown Park, are more large scale and more suitable to a larger and more welcoming venue.

Chair Freeburg asked what the anticipated attendance is for the event. John Holloway said it would be difficult to estimate attendance for what will be a first for the organization in Bellevue. Attendance at Volunteer Park ranges from between 2000 and 3000, but the expectations are lower for the Bellevue concert at between 500 and 1000. Some marketing partners will be sought to help spread the word.

Casiano Atienza gave the event organizers the heads up about the need to submit a parking plan, and stressed that attendees should be encouraged not to park at the mall. Carpooling and public transportation should be encouraged.

Jacob Branstetter stated that stages over a certain size require a building permit. Additionally, tents of more than 400 square feet with sidewalls or 700 square feet without sidewalks require an operational permit.

Captain Barnwell said based on the proposed attendance police would decide whether one or two officers on site will be required. John Holloway said having a police presence will be welcomed.

Chair Freeburg said the specific details around the tents, number of police officers and a parking plan will be discussed by the routing and location subcommittee, adding that the event organizer will be invited to attend that meeting.

A motion to approve the date, time and location of the event was made by Neal Christiansen. The motion was seconded by Chad Charbonneau and the motion carried unanimously.

B. Emergency Management Thresholds for Event Action Plans (EAPs)

Emergency Manager Carl Lunak stated that different special events have been handled from the Office of Emergency Management (OEM) side of the house, and the current focus is on coming up with a standard format for when OEM generates an incident action plan (EAP). Such plans spell out specifically everyone involved and what rolls they play. Over the past ten years there

has been some inconsistencies in terms of when EAPs were drawn up for large events like the Bellevue Family 4th and Snowflake Lane. Standardizing the need for when EAPs are needed in terms of event size and scope only makes sense in terms of predictability. The OEM team sat down and talked through the issues with representatives from fire and police and determined the elements that should drive the process are the number of expected participants at any one event; a calculation on the number of participants in a certain square footage, or density; the duration of an event; and some sort of accounting for the impacts for different city divisions.

Carl Lunak said input from the Special Events Committee is needed to help put together a formula that will automatically trigger taking the time to support a special event with an EAP.

Neal Christiansen asked what the initial thinking was in regard to what the threshold should be, noting that on the 4th of July there are some 50,000 people in the park. Carl Lunak said the team has not flushed it out to the level of a significant number of attendees. It is open for debate as to whether or not an event that runs for a week and sees 10,000 attendees per day is more or less impactful than a single event that draws 10,000 people all at once. Density is an issue given that having 1000 people spread out over Downtown Park will not be a big deal, but that same 1000 people packed into a park less than an acre in size will have a significant impact. What the emergency management team wants to achieve is logical and rational reasoning for when it should put in an extra amount of effort and work in support of an event. Ultimately, there should be some benefit achieved along with consistency. There are other factors as well that have to do with law enforcement and intelligence in cases where there are political figures or regional characters who clearly have opponents, but how to calculate those factors is yet to be determined.

Chair Freeburg asked if emergency management is working toward a specific timeline. Carl Lunak said there is no specific timeline but allowed that sooner would be better.

Jacob Branstetter asked if there are any NFPA standards or guides that might influence the process and shed light on the calculations. Carl Lunak said the number of attendees in the square footage involved are factors that drive some support metrics. For instance, where events are a certain size, there is a requirement to have an aid vehicle on standby or on site. The complexities of a given event can also translate into higher risk potential, and that somehow also needs to be included in the calculation.

Answering a question asked by Chair Freeburg, Carl Lunak explained that the first process of putting together an EAP involves documenting who all the critical points of contact are and consolidates into one spot the paperwork from all of the permitting steps. The document includes points of contact for law enforcement and fire attached to the event, and outlines the basic steps that will be taken should something go wrong. The Emergency Operations Center (EOC), located on the third floor of City Hall, works to support field operations, such as closing roads and routing traffic. The EOC was activated during the Rock 'n Roll half marathon to coordinate all communication through a single point. As people progressed through the route and intersections were closed and reopened, and where there were medical issues, it was all being routed through the EOC. With the setup, should something go wrong, an immediate response can be launched.

Carl Lunak thanked the Committee members for their time and asked them to contact him directly if any thoughts and suggestions.

C. Ukrainian International Festival

Chair Freeburg commented that the event organizer had requested Downtown Park as the

location of the event and added that the September 9 date would work.

Valeriy Goloborodko said the Northwest Ukrainian International Festival has been held in Bellevue since 2016. It has been very successful for the Ukrainian community as well as the residents of Bellevue and the surrounding cities. The family oriented festival includes a great program on stage, foods, activities for kids, sports activities and vendors providing products and services, including community services. The festival has shown constant growth in attendance, starting with about 7000 attendees and growing to 18,000 in 2022. Crossroads Park has been a great venue for the event, but the event has outgrown that space, and that is the reason for the request to use Downtown Park. The event wants to be a good partner and a good neighbor for all city residents.

Continuing, Valeriy Goloborodko said the team that has been working on the festival for many years remains in place. Much will remain the same, including the food and other vendors and the stage company. It is expected that attendance at the 2023 festival will be even larger than in 2022. The Ukrainian ambassador to the United States is hoping to be able to attend. The food vendors will primarily be offering Ukrainian foods, but there will be other cultures represented as well. There will be stage programming as in the past. The organizing team has good relationships with fire and police and others.

Chair Freeburg said some changes will need to be made given the move to Downtown Park. It will be necessary to make some tweaks to the site map submitted and to include some new precautions.

Mike Ogliore acknowledged how hard Valeriy Goloborodko has worked on the event over the years, and noted being impressed with the work that has been done. It is easy to see attendance at the event growing to 30,000 or 40,000 in time and as such there clearly will need to be a solid parking plan in place. The Bellevue Collection could be a source of parking but their buy-off will be needed. Valeriy Goloborodko said shuttles were operated when the event was in Crossroads Park, allowing for remote parking. There are paid parking lots in the Downtown that could be advertised, and permission will also be sought from the Bellevue Collection once date, time and location are approved. Those who come to the festival are likely to also do some shopping while in the Downtown.

Sgt. Shovlin said it would not be surprising to hear that the Bellevue Collection would not want to open its parking to an all-day event projected to have 18,000 participants. The company is more inclined to allow the use of its parking facilities for early morning events that occur before the mall stores open.

Chair Freeburg asked if there is a parking plan in the works that does not include using the Bellevue Collection parking areas. Valeriy Goloborodko said the focus will primarily be on remote parking served by shuttles and on paid parking lots. All options will be reviewed. Not all of the attendees are at the festival at the same time; they come and go throughout the day so that only 4000 to 6000 are there at any given time. Carpooling will be advertised along with rideshare companies as good options. Even when large groups come to perform at the event, they use buses.

Chair Freeburg commented that 4000 to 6000 people in Downtown Park at the same time can have a significant impact on parking.

Casiano Atienza agreed with the need to stress carpooling and remote parking. The circumstances associated with Downtown Park are different from those associated with Crossroads Park. In the past designated areas have been provided for Uber and Lyft and it would

be good to do the same again.

Valeriy Goloborodko asked how parking is handled for the 4th of July and Snowflake Lane. Chair Freeburg said those events have buy-in from the Bellevue Collection for parking. The fact that the Bellevue Collection may deny access to parking for the event is a very real concern. A conversation with the Bellevue Collection should be scheduled sooner rather than later.

Sgt. Shovlin added that Snowflake Lane is actually run and paid for by Kemper Development Company, which is one reason attendees are allowed to use the Bellevue Collection parking facilities. The mall is also closed all day on the 4th of July, which means the parking areas are available.

Jonathan Rose said Metro normally would be happy to look at adding custom bus services, including shuttles, for the event. However, September 9 is the day of a Husky game for which Metro supplies a lot of service, leaving the provider no capacity to add additional services for another event. It would be much easier for Metro to accommodate additional services for the requested in date in August.

Chair Freeburg said the requested August date is not available.

Chad Charbonneau noted the site map shows boats on the plaza and asked what that plan was. Valeriy Goloborodko said the idea is to have battery operated remote boats for children as entertainment.

Chad Charbonneau reiterated the need to locate the stage on the plaza. Fishing at the location shown will be an option and it may need to be moved to a parking lot or somewhere else in the park. Valeriy Goloborodko said the fishing location was chosen because there is a drain there. Any other area with a drain would be suitable, however. Moving the stage to the plaza will be no problem.

Chad Charbonneau referred to the boiling pots used previously at the event created issues in terms of the grass under them dying. They will need to be moved to a hard surface. Valeriy Goloborodko stressed the need to have water and power available.

Andy Heider said parks would partner with the organizer on siting the various elements. There is all sorts of power in the plaza area. Water will be more challenging but can be addressed. Valeriy Goloborodko said the water is needed for food preparation.

Mark Anderson said there will need to be a conversation about the water for fishing as well. There will also need to be discussions about where to locate a fire truck for the attendees to interact with. Fire will need to hire some additional staff to cover such a large event.

Jacob Branstetter said as the details get ironed out, detailed site plans for the stage, the tents, including tents over food vendors, will need to be submitted so the permits can be issued.

Captain Barnwell promised to make sure everything police will want to see happen will be open, transparent and clear in terms of security. Depending on how the parking plays out, it may be necessary to add some officers. Valeriy Goloborodko asked if hiring a private security firm would impact the number of Bellevue officers needed. Captain Barnwell said it could, though that would depend on the private firm hired. Snowflake Lane hires security officers but they are just supplemental to the police department. In the event of an emergency or active situation, the department is going to want to have its own officers on the ground to respond.

Erin Hislop said all of the food vendors will be encouraged to reduce as much garbage as possible, and to ideally use all compostable materials.

Andy Heider encouraged reaching out to the Bellevue School District about possibly using the Bellevue High School parking lot as a remote parking location. Mike Ogliore added that the Bellevue Collection may allow promoting their paid parking facility on the east side of Bellevue Way in addition to shuttle locations.

Chair Freeburg noted that there were some sound issues in 2022 at Crossroads Park where the sound was too loud. In Downtown Park is a far more sensitive location when it comes to sound and a concerted effort will need to be put into keeping sound levels within the range allowed by the permit.

D. 7 Hills of Kirkland

The event organizer did not appear.

Chris Rivera expressed the need to talk to the organizer about the proposed route through Bellevue.

There was agreement to table the event to the next meeting.

❖ Post-Event Evaluations – None

❖ Comments/Follow-up – None

7. NEXT MEETING

❖ March 9, 2023

8. ADJOURNMENT

A motion to adjourn was made by Mike Ogliore. The motion was seconded by Captain Barnwell and the motion carried unanimously.

Chair Freeburg adjourned the meeting at 10:09 a.m.