

CITY OF BELLEVUE  
SPECIAL EVENTS COMMITTEE  
MEETING MINUTES

March 14, 2024  
8:30 a.m.

Bellevue City Hall  
Virtual Meeting

**MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Susan Freeburg – Parks  
Chad Charbonneau - Parks  
Andrew Oltman – Fire  
Mark Anderson – Fire  
Kyle Nelson – Fire  
Landon Barnwell – Police  
Christopher Rivera – Transportation  
Mike Ogliore – Business Representative Downtown  
Laurie Scott – Downtown Resident Representative  
Meredith Langridge  
Jonathan Rose – King County Metro  
Lisa Siegman

**OTHERS PRESENT:**

Emily Martella, Parks; Anthony Gill, Economic Development; Zachary Lyons, Police; Claude Iosso, City Manager’s Office; Maggie Whittemore, Fire; Lizzette Flores, Community Development; Eric Stewart, King County Metro; Treencee Russell, Melissa Johnson, Nadescha Bunje, Midlakes United Soccer; Syed Asif Nasar, Mumtaz Malik, Pakistan Independence Day, Jacob Melaragno, Rodger Harrison

**RECORDING SECRETARY:** Gerry Lindsay

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 8:32 a.m. by Chair Freeburg who presided.

**2. COMMUNICATIONS: Written and Oral**

**3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

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

**4. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES**

A motion to approve the February 8, 2024, meeting minutes as submitted was made by Laurie Scott. The motion was seconded by Kyle Nelson and the motion carried unanimously.

**5. COMMITTEE REPORTS**

## ❖ Routing and Location Subcommittee Report

Christopher Rivera said the subcommittee met to discuss a number of events, including Cry Holi for which the event will largely be the same other than a possible relocation within the park. The event organizer has agreed to look into having a parking attendant on-site off of 100<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE.

The Bellevue Family 4<sup>th</sup> event will also be largely the same as last year, with the notable difference of the command center moving from the south parking lot to the grass area on the east side of the park. There have been discussions about possibly closing a street, possibly beginning in 2025. The 2025 event may also be affected by redevelopment of the Goldfarb Jewelers site.

The Bites and Beats event locations will be largely the same as last year with the exception of the Compass Plaza event being switched back to the lunch hour from the previously proposed evening time slot.

The subcommittee also discussed the Kelsey Creek Farm Fair and Sheepshearing events, both of which will same the same as previous years.

There was a discussion regarding the Sound Transit event and the conclusion reached was that input from fire, police and parks prior to determining whether or not a Special Event Permit is needed.

## 6. OLD BUSINESS

### ❖ Tabled Applications

#### A. 2 Line Opening Celebrations

Anthony Gill said the date for the 2 Line grand opening has been set for April 27, the date on which light rail trains will begin rolling through the Eastside. The event will celebrate the grand opening of eight stations between South Bellevue and the Redmond Technology Center, six of which are in Bellevue, and two of which are in Redmond. There will be a ribbon cutting at the Bellevue Downtown station as well as concurrent station activations and events at each station. The celebration will be community centric and aimed at encouraging people to get to know their light rail stations. The events will recognize key stakeholders and staff, and will promote ridership.

The only two events that will be larger will be the Bellevue Downtown station and the BelRed station. There will be a ribbon cutting celebration at the Bellevue Downtown station, and a small street fair on 110<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE with family activities and food trucks. At the BelRed station there will be a similar scale and it will take place in the Sound Transit park and ride lot at the station. There will be a small music stage there along with some food trucks and some interactive arts activities. The events at all of the other stations will be low-scale and not likely to have much local impact.

The ribbon cutting will start at 10:30 a.m. The event window for all activities at all of the other stations will be from 11:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. There will be some Grand Connection experiences at City Hall Plaza. The intent is to close 110<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE between NE 6th Street and NE 4th Street, allowing for some local access to the City Hall visitor garage. The street closure is

envisioned to start at 5:00 a.m. if not the night before. Most of the activities will take place on the station mezzanine.

It is hoped that people will take transit to the event sites. There will also be shuttles from the South Bellevue park and ride.

Continuing, Anthony Gill said there will be no right-of-way impacts outside of the Downtown. The biggest thing outside of the Downtown will be the potential for amplified sound and the location of canopies for vendors at select locations, mostly at BelRed and the Spring District stations.

Kyle Nelson asked to be supplied with emailed information about which locations would have food trucks.

Maggie Whittemore asked if the live music will be on a stage. Anthony Gill said there will be stages for the music only at the Downtown and BelRed stations. The other locations will see only popup music. The stages are all less than 400 square feet.

Jonathan Rose voiced the assumption that if 110<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE is to be closed overnight, the closure would occur very late at night. Anthony Gill confirmed that.

Landon Barnwell said closing off 110<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE will require more than just stanchions; hard barriers will be needed. Christopher Rivera agreed.

Christopher Rivera added that if the visitor parking at City Hall is used, some traffic control will be required in regard to ingress and egress. Another Gill said the details of whether or not the garage will work are still being worked out. The P3 and P4 employee parking will be open, but those sites will not work as well for load-in and load-out. Load-in and load-out issues may be the trigger for closing 110<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE overnight.

A motion approve the date, time and location for the Sound Transit celebration was made by Laurie Scott. The motion was seconded by Mark Anderson and the motion carried unanimously.

#### B. Scooped All You Can Eat Ice Cream

Chair Freeburg reported that it does not look like the event will be happening. Some adjustments to their site plan and the overall event were proposed, and the organizer was unable to come up with a compromise that would work for parks and for the event.

#### C. Pakistan Independence Day

Syed Asif Nasar noted that the event has been held in Bellevue for the last ten or twelve years. The event is basically a community get together with music to celebration the independence of Pakistan.

Chair Freeburg asked if there would be anything new about the event. Syed Asif Nasar said the only question is whether or not there will be a live musical performance like there has been the last two years. All other elements of the events, including the vendors will be the same. The same parking challenges will also be in play. There will be 20 stalls at which local community members can display their goods and sell them, and there will at least one and maybe two trucks. The canopies and the stage will be located as they have been in past years.

Maggie Whittemore asked how big the stage is. Syed Asif Nasar recalled that the stage is about 10 by 30. Maggie Whittemore said a permit is required if the stage is larger than 400 square feet. Syed Asif Nasar commented that every year the festival has been located in Bellevue there have been new requirements. That is very challenging for non-profit organizations. The city should just allow things to proceed exactly with the same requirements.

Chair Freeburg made it clear that the city works with a number of non-profit organizations. There are some requirements that change as time goes on for various reasons. It was pointed out that the Pakistan event made a huge jump three or four years ago from a small picnic style park scheduling event to a full on large-scale event. That triggered compliance with a number of different requirements and fees that are tied to the required level of coordination on the part of the city.

Mumtaz Malik said the Pakistan event has adapted over time and has continued to grow. The city has always been good to work with and hopefully that spirit will continue. The event is intended to bring joy to everyone who attends. There is no desire to avoid meeting the requirements or to create any problems. The 2023 event had a couple of police on bikes helping with security, and their services came at a cost. If private security could provide the same level of security for less cost, that should be allowed.

Chair Freeburg said there is a standard that must be met when it comes to security, but the details can be worked out between the event coordinator and the police. The same is true of the other departments. One issue that has continued to happen with the Pakistan event that must be addressed is private vehicles driving into the park, even when there are staff on site to prevent it. If that happens again in 2024, it could be that the event will not be allowed to occur at Downtown Park.

Syed Asif Nasar voiced the understanding that things like garbage containers will be delivered to the site on Friday and picked up on Monday following the Sunday event. The question asked was what the process would be since there is also an event on Saturday. Chair Freeburg said only one large special event is allowed in the city on the same day. The Saturday event will occur at Crossroads Park, so all of the deliveries will not be affected.

Landon Barnwell said security needs for the event will be discussed in more detail at the Subcommittee meeting.

Mark Anderson noted having nothing to mention from fire.

Christopher Rivera asked if anything different will be done in regard to the parking plan. Mumtaz Malik said no changes are anticipated. The issue of cars driving into the park was minimized in 2023 and will be addressed again in 2024. Christopher Rivera said the parking details and issues around how attendees will get to the park can be addressed at the Subcommittee level. Mumtaz Malik said flyers will be sent out that state attendees must use the parking that is available to use legally in specified lots.

Chair Freeburg added that parking has not really been an issue for the event in recent years.

Chad Charbonneau said having vehicles driving into the park are a major concern for parks. That will be addressed specifically in the Subcommittee meeting.

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

## 6. NEW BUSINESS

### ❖ Midlakes United Soccer

Chair Freeburg informed the Committee that the organization intends to host some soccer games at Bellevue College.

Treencee Russel, with Melissa Johnson and Nadescha Bunje, noted that they are members of a semi-pro USL-2 soccer team that will be playing ten home games at Bellevue College in May, June and July. USL-2 is essentially an all-star league for college athletes, proving the players an opportunity to stay sharp over the summer months. In association with Bellevue College and KPFF Engineering, a site plan was created and attached to the application of intent. The site plan outlines the location of things like portable toilets. There is ample parking at Bellevue College, and the college's own public safety officers will be on site.

Chair Freeburg said the event is planned to occur on private property, so the Committee's only concern is if there will be any impact to the public.

Treencee Russell said seven of the ten games will be played on Friday nights; of the other three, one is on a Tuesday night, one is on a Saturday night, and one is on a Sunday night. The field at Bellevue College is located on the northwest part of the campus so there will be no real impact to any city streets. The games will start at 7:00 p.m. and end by 9:00 p.m. The lights will off by 10:00 p.m. in compliance with what the college has worked out with its neighbors. The number of attendees is difficult to project; it could be as low as 200 or as high as 1000. Somewhere in the middle of that would be good.

Landon Barnwell said police had no concerns. Bellevue police work with the college's security, so if there were to be any safety issues they would reach out.

Christopher Rivera said transportation had no concerns given the event location.

Maggie Whittemore also noted having no concerns.

Mark Anderson asked if a standby ambulance of medical staff will need to be onsite. Treencee Russell said there will be a trainer onsite.

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

Mark Anderson took a moment to report that Andy Oltman would represent fire on the Committee going forward. Chair Freeburg added that Zachary Lyons will be taking over for Mike Shovlin representing police.

### ❖ Post-Event Evaluations

#### A. Garden d'Lights

Chair Freeburg said the event went well. The weather was mostly good. The biggest challenge

with the event is that its popularity continues to grow. The admission limits and parking changes implemented have certainly helped. There were no safety concerns registered.

Maggie Whittemore noted having worked the event, including the walk through. All went smoothly. If the attendance numbers continue to rise, it might be wise to require having an additional crowd manager or two. Chair Freeburg said the garden may not be able to handle many more, which is why they are sticking with the ticketed entry approach. There has been talk of doing smaller events during the day for certain groups, like seniors, to pull back on the evening rushes.

### B. NYE Night Market

Chair Freeburg noted the event, having moved from private property, had a different footprint involving a road closure.

Kyle Nelson reported having heard comments that the event intends to expand significantly for New Year's Eve 2024. Chair Freeburg noted not having heard that directly from the event organizer, though it is true the organizer has stated the intent of growing the event.

Landon Barnwell said the closure setup was okay but there were not near enough officers at the event for the amount of people that were there. Chair Freeburg said it would make sense to plan for more people. The projected number of attendees was 2800 and it ended up being closer to 6000.

Christopher Rivera said transportation did not receive any negative feedback. All went well with regard to the closure, and there were no major parking issues. Chair Freeburg also commented on not having received any negative feedback from the public.

### C. Snowflake Lane

Chair Freeburg said there were some definite concerns with crowds at the event and there are conversations going on about that.

Mark Anderson said fire had a post-incident meeting with Kemper Development Company, the police, OEM and fire prevention. There was good feedback offered about things to consider for the coming year. The three agencies will continue to conduct table top planning.

Chair Freeburg remarked that there were continued issues with vendors setting up in the middle of the sidewalk.

Kyle Nelson said it appears the focus has been on trying to put more and more people on a too narrow sidewalk along Bellevue Way. Extending the route north and south along Bellevue Way might be one solution to that.

Landon Barnwell said staffing continues to be the biggest concern. The department is staffing 23 officers per night at the event for up to 30 nights. Expanding the footprint would likely require even more officers. The best outcome would come from changing the event itself. The department is working with the right-of-way staff to come up with a game plan to accommodate the continued growth.

Kyle Nelson said the biggest concern is the size of the crowd in a confined space. In the event of

a panic, the result could be injuries.

Chair Freeburg asked if Kemper Development Company has proposed any changes to the event to make it better and help prevent some of the concerns. Kyle Nelson said Kemper Development Company has not seemed to be open to extending the route. They have not proposed a lot of changes.

Chair Freeburg said there may come a point when the city will have to say the event cannot go on unless certain things happen.

Landon Barnwell said the only comments made by the organizer have been somewhat nebulous. The ideas tossed out include not doing the parade; doing more things in the street and opening more street space for the attendees; and doing two shows per night, especially on the heavier nights. Kemper Development Company does seem to realize that something needs to change.

Mark Anderson suggested having Kemper Development Company come and share with the Committee some of things they are considering. They have been willing to talk through the concerns and struggles the Committee has voiced.

#### ❖ Applications of Intent

##### A. New Year's Eve Night Market

Chair Freeburg said the organizer is looking at holding the event on New Year's Eve with setup beginning at noon and breakdown concluding by midnight. The location chosen is Main Street to accommodate a larger footprint. The application has a projected attendance of a thousand or more, but that likely needs to be raised to closer to the 6000 mark. There will be sound equipment, generators, portable toilets, garbage facilities and traffic control just as before.

Landon Barnwell said police will want to work out the details regarding the larger attendance number.

Mark Anderson said with an attendance of 6000 the event will be required to hire an aid car with fire department staff. The department will work with the organizer on that.

A motion to approve the date, time and location for the event was made by Kyle Nelson. The motion was seconded by Christopher Rivera and the motion carried unanimously.

##### B. Snowflake Lane

Landon Barnwell commented on being unwilling to commit to approving the event before hearing from the organizer. The Committee would benefit from hearing directly from Kemper Development Company about any proposed changes.

There was consensus in favor of going in that direction.

Chair Freeburg said Kemper Development Company will be invited to attend the April meeting.

##### C. Fred Hutch Cancer Center Obliteride

Chair Freeburg commented that the event occurs annually in Bellevue. It has not in the past

impacted any services and has not been required to have an event permit. The Committee has traditionally just renewed the plan to make sure there will be no issues.

Landon Barnwell said police had no concerns with the event. Officers were assigned to a couple of different intersections in Bellevue and there were no issues. Given that the route is the same, police will be doing the same again.

Christopher Rivera said the department simply issued a right-of-way permit for the event to allow for posting signs giving the riders directions. The riders follow the rules of the road, assisted by the police at certain locations. The same will be done for 2024.

Mark Anderson said fire has no concerns. Fire staff on duty that day will be made aware of the event and the route.

Kyle Nelson said prevention has no concerns.

There was consensus that the event should not be required to obtain a Special Event Permit.

#### D. Washington State Martial Arts Festival

Chair Freeburg said there are details yet to be addressed. The permit application for the event was only recently submitted. The new event is seeking Crossroads Park. The requested June 21 date will not work for the park. The event will bring together martial arts practitioners in a festival format, not a competition. They are anticipating 3000 participants. They are looking at having some vendors, amplified sound, food and beverages, and a stage. The application indicates the event is waiting to hear if it will be awarded a grant from Equity Coordinator Sara Boyle but it will not be a true partnership or city sponsored event. The intent is to start at 10:00 a.m. and be out of the park by 4:00 p.m.

Kyle Nelson said fire prevention had no concerns.

Mark Anderson said fire operations had no concerns either.

Chad Charbonneau voiced no concerns as far as parks is concerned.

Christopher Rivera said the same in regard to transportation.

Chair Freeburg said no action will be taken relative to approving date, time and location until other details are made known.

#### E. Machinists Union Contract Rally

Emily Martella allowed that the organizer wants the use of Downtown Park but has not confirmed an August date. Chair Freeburg added that every person talked to so far has painted a different picture, so some solid details will need to be in hand before making any decisions.

#### ❖ Comments/Follow-up

Landon Barnwell noted having been contacted recently by the corrections officer memorial group. They have a meeting scheduled with parks on March 19.



Chair Freeburg said they have held their event in Bellevue before.

Chad Charbonneau said the meeting on the 19<sup>th</sup> will be on the concrete area near the waterfall in Downtown Park. Committee members are welcome to attend.

**7. NEXT MEETING**

❖ April 11, 2024

**8. ADJOURNMENT**

Chair Freeburg adjourned the meeting at 9:57 a.m.