

CITY OF BELLEVUE
SPECIAL EVENTS COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES

April 11, 2024
8:30 a.m.

Bellevue City Hall
Virtual Meeting

MEMBERS PRESENT: Susan Freeburg – Parks
Landon Barnwell – Police
Christopher Rivera – Transportation
Casiano Atienza – Transportation
Erin Hislop – Utilities
Mark Heilman – Neighborhood Outreach
Laurie Scott – Downtown Resident Representative
Jonathan Rose – King County Metro
Eric Stewart – King County Metro
Andrew Oltman - Fire

OTHERS PRESENT: Emily Martella, Parks; Andy Heider, Parks; Maggie Whittemore, Fire; Councilmember Stokes; Mei Chen, Martial Arts; Jennifer Leavitt, Kemper Development Company

RECORDING SECRETARY: Gerry Lindsay

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 8:30 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 Jonathan Rose and the motion carried unanimously.

4. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

A motion to approve the March 14, 2024, 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 over the past couple of weeks the subcommittee has been focused on All In For Autism on April 28, and the 2 Line opening on April 27. Both of those events are lined up and ready to go.

6. OLD BUSINESS

❖ Tabled Event: Snowflake Lane

Jennifer Leavitt addressed the crowding plan for the event. The Kemper Development Company team has spent quite a lot of time looking at options from the operational side and from the security side. There are a number of pieces in place that are related to security, and any change to the show can affect other elements. During the show last year a request was made to remove some of the fencing. The fencing was originally installed to keep people out of the street. Over time the event has evolved from a sidewalk show to a street show, and then back to a sidewalk show. One thing under consideration is removing the fencing between the light poles that are lit for the event. In a couple of cases where it seems most appropriate, which has been worked out with Fire, a couple of single fence pieces will be left in place between drums, but only to support wiring, for reasons of stability, or to prevent a trip hazard. Having the fencing in place has been a concern should the need arise for a mass evacuation.

Moving to two shows on the weekends, which are the key pinch points, has been determined to be the best option. The show will be the same both times, and there will be enough distance between the shows to allow for reopening Bellevue Way for half an hour or 45 minutes. That will help flush out the northeast and southeast parking garages, and will allow for more people to come in. Most of the barricade signage will be left up. The trucks will be moved in and out of place for barricades at both end of NE 8th Street and NE 4th Street. The recommendation is to go with a 5:00 p.m., show and a 7:30 p.m. show. The extra time in between is needed to get the characters and the floats back in place. NE 6th Street will be kept closed for maintaining the floats between the shows. The shows will start the weekend after Black Friday.

Maggie Whittemore said Fire has in the past voiced concerns about overcrowding. Having more than one show on the weekend is a good approach.

Landon Barnwell asked if the two shows would only be on weekend. Jennifer Leavitt confirmed the two-show days will be Saturdays and Sundays. Consideration was given to other days, but with the characters all being students, there are requirements regarding how much they can work. Additionally, the schools are not out until the Friday before.

Jennifer Leavitt said a meeting is scheduled to review all operations. Police and Fire will be involved in that. The discussion will include the issue of fencing and whether or not some fencing should be maintained in any specific locations to keep people from going into the street early.

Jonathan Rose said the details involving King County Metro will be addressed at that upcoming meeting as well.

6. NEW BUSINESS

❖ Event Organizer Presentation: Washington State Martial Arts Festival

Mei Chen said an application for a cross cultural grant was submitted in March, but even if the grant is not awarded the intention is to move ahead with the festival. Marketing flyers are being designed. Martial arts vendors and sponsors are being recruited. Shaolin Kungfu Academy in Bellevue is teeming up with the festival. The plan is to hold the festival annually. For May and June the focus will be on marketing and promoting, as well as recruiting vendors and sponsors and bringing volunteers on board. The event will run from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., allowing for

set up and take down the day of the event. An application for the event is being developed in the hope that it will help draw people to the event.

Mei Chen said the organization currently is renting the Crossroads Community Center every Thursday to host a weekly gathering for elderly people in the Chinese community.

Chair Freeburg asked what the anticipated attendance will be for the event to be held at Crossroads Park. Mei Chen said the projection is for between 1000 and 2000, but it could be higher if the weather is good.

Chair Freeburg said setup the day of the event cannot start any earlier than 7:00 a.m. and Mei Chen was asked if three hours would be enough time to accommodate the setup. Mei Chen said the work could be done in that much time.

Chair Freeburg said the Committee needs to have the site map sooner rather than later. The site map is used by the Committee in determining feasibility.

Chair Freeburg asked how many vendors are being planned for and Mei Chen said the hope is to have 20 to 30 martial arts groups, and about the same number of commercial vendors, for a total of about 60. Chair Freeburg said that is quite a large number for that park and said Parks and Fire will need to weigh in on the layout as soon as it is submitted.

Casiano Atienza explained that for events with more than 500 attendees requires a parking plan. Mei Chen was asked to submit a parking plan for the event.

Laurie Scott asked if the event will include food vendors. Mei Chen said there will be some food vendors who will be doing some cooking on site.

Andy Heider raised the issue of scheduling concerns. There are quite a few events slated for Crossroads Park in August and September, though some of those events are still up in the air. Chair Freeburg said the Ukrainian Festival will be held at Downtown Park. Flavors of India and the Ganesh festival will both be held at Crossroads Park. The martial arts event requested September 21 but the only option they have been given is September 29.

A motion to approve the date, time and location on September 29 at Crossroads Park was made by Casiano Atienza. The motion was seconded by Maggie Whittemore and the motion carried unanimously.

❖ Comments/Follow-up

Chair Freeburg said work with IT is continuing to identify a program that will help in serving customers in regard to the application process, and that will also improve the administrative side of the Special Events Committee.

Erin Hislop reported that Utilities has officially purchased a custom Quench buggy, which is a portable drinking water trailer that will be part of the water quality and utilities fleet. It has 14 touchless taps and also water fountains, and of course a custom wrap. It will be brought to various events throughout the year.

Landon Barnwell asked if there had been any feedback regarding the Beats of Redmond event at Crossroads Park. Chair Freeburg said overall the event went well. It did not have the number of

attendees the organizer had estimated.

Andy Heider reported having heard nothing about the event at all, which is good news.

Chair Freeburg said there were concerns about the number of garbage cans, but by the next morning the park was all cleaned up. Noise was kept under control. There was a small parking issue involving yellow tape put up that led to a misconception that the event was charging for parking, which it was not; the tape simply was how they blocked off the VIP slot.

Maggie Whittemore noted having done the pre-inspection walk and the only issue was the location for the number of vendors on site. Other than that, the organizer was very compliant and willing to make sure things were set up correctly.

Emily Martella said the organizer's post-event evaluation states there were between 4000 and 5000 attendees. Chair Freeburg suggested the actual number was quite a bit lower and closer to 1800.

With regard to approving Snowflake Lane, Landon Barnwell asked for additional time to gain input from the Chief. With the added days there will a bigger impact on Police, and indeed on Fire as well.

There was agreement to schedule the vote for Snowflake Lane at the Special Events Committee's meeting on May 9.

7. NEXT MEETING

❖ May 9, 2024

8. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Freeburg adjourned the meeting at 9:23 a.m.