

CITY OF BELLEVUE
SPECIAL EVENTS COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES

April 10, 2025
8:30 a.m.

Bellevue City Hall
Virtual Meeting

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Susan Freeburg – Parks
Rick Bailey – Parks
Kevin Masseth – Police
Casiano Atienza – Transportation
Christopher Rivera – Transportation
Lisa Siegman – Development Services
Laurie Scott – Community Representative - Downtown
Mike Ogliore – Business Representative - Downtown
Maggie Whittemore – Fire

OTHERS PRESENT:

David Oh, Shanon Yop, Sujin Kang, Mk Cho, Daniel Yoon, WABA Korean Expo & Festival; Rajesh Brundala, Sateesh Kanchukatla, Ganesh Festival; Bethany Kogut, Utilities; Tim Stever, Transportation; Camilo Penuela, King County Metro; Nathan Hasselblad, FAM; Lizzette Flores, Community Development; Mark Heilman, Neighborhood Outreach

RECORDING SECRETARY: Gerry Lindsay

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 8:34 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 Mike Ogliore and the motion carried unanimously.

4. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

A motion to approve the March 13, 2025, meeting minutes as submitted was made by Laurie Scott. The motion was seconded by Mike Ogliore and the motion carried unanimously.

5. COMMITTEE REPORTS

❖ Routing and Location Subcommittee Report

Christopher Rivera said the subcommittee met to discuss Shades of Brilliance and preparations for the Bellevue Family 4th events. Upcoming activities include meetings related to the Pacific Northwest Youth Entrepreneur Expo, the Indian American Community Services event, and the

Flavors of India event. The next meeting for Flavors of India is scheduled for the April 15.

6. OLD BUSINESS – None

6. NEW BUSINESS

❖ 2025 Applications of Intent

A. 2025 WABA Korean Expo & Festival

Shanon Yop, president of the Korean American Chamber of Commerce of Washington, shared that the event began on Pier 62 Waterfront Park in Seattle with a K-Pop concert and global networking.

Sujin Kang explained that WABA translates as "come and see" in Korean. The event is being planned to occur in Bellevue on October 4 in Downtown Park. The event will feature between 70 and 100 vendors showcasing authentic Korean business products and foods. It will also feature Korean cultural performances, K-Pop bands, dancers, local and global cultural artists, and workshops on government contracts. Social media influencers and bands from Korea will promote the event. The event is intended to facilitate sales of vendor products through local online sellers to avoid the need for return shipping. The site map for the event was adapted from the Ukrainian event, with consultation obtained from that group prioritizing safety and security.

Chair Freeburg voiced the understanding that the event is projected to draw approximately 3000 people, while noting that past events in Seattle attracted only around 1000 visitors at outdoor venues like Pier 62 and Magnuson Park.

Rick Bailly noted that Parks will collaborate closely in regard to the site map and event details. Chair Freeburg said typically there is a walk-through in the park once the event is approved to make sure all parties are aware of what needs to happen.

Kevin Masseth said an event with 3000 attendees will require at least two police officers for security, potentially more depending on the final attendance figures and any threats or other concerns.

Casiano Atienza said Transportation will require a parking plan showing something other than the use of parking at Bellevue Square.

Shanon Yop confirmed for Casiano Atienza that the event will be contained within the park boundaries and that no street closures will be needed.

Maggie Whittemore highlighted the fact that several permits will be required, including temporary membrane and tent structure permits, operational permits for food trucks, outdoor assembly permits, and possibly a building permit for the stage. All tents will need to be NFPA 701 listed. Additionally, trained crowd managers will be required, with one manager needed for every two hundred fifty attendees to handle emergencies effectively. Shanon Yop expressed a willingness to comply with all safety regulations and to seek further guidance from city departments regarding the permitting processes.

Kevin Masseth noted from the application that the event is planned to conclude at 9:00 p.m., and pointed out that while the Ukrainian festival runs that late, sunset occurs significantly earlier in

October than it does in September. Shanon Yop acknowledged the difference and confirmed the event could feasibly end around 6:30 p.m. Sujin Kang added that there could potentially be some Korean music performances after sunset

Chair Freeburg pointed out the need to have an end time for the Committee to approve. David Oh emphasized a preference for maintaining simplicity by avoiding the complexities associated with nighttime events, such as additional security, lighting, and equipment. In that light, an ending time of sunset might be better. Recognizing that the end time could be later adjusted to align with the time the sun sets, the organizer voiced a preference for maintaining the original application end time of 9:00 p.m. The Committee supported the flexible approach, allowing for immediate approval based on the initial application while acknowledging the possibility of future modifications.

Shanon Yop said the volunteer-based organization is non-profit and will not be making a profit from the event. Support from the city in the form of sponsorship would be appreciated. Chair Freeburg explained that the Special Events Committee has no control over sponsorships, rather it is responsible only for event safety, logistics, and policy adherence. It was noted that there are a few grant programs offered by the city. Once the Committee approves the date, time and location for the event, the Routing and Location Subcommittee will set up meetings to discuss the logistics and the fine details.

B. Ganesh Ustav 2025

Rajesh Brundala said the Ganesh Festival, originally planned to occur over a three-day period, has been pared down to only two days in August at Crossroads Park, with setup the day before and take down the day after the event. The event was previously hosted successfully in various locations, including Marymoor Park in 2019 and at the Redmond Library in 2022. COVID-19 and certain logistical challenges interrupted consistently hosting the event. The organization is eager to secure a venue 2025. The Ganesh Festival aims to promote Indian culture. The event will include various vendors selling products, food provided primarily by external vendors reheating dishes prepared off-site, and a special devotional music performance by an invited celebrity, which will draw a larger attendance on Saturday evening. The floating attendance model will result in crowd sizes of 500 to 1000 over the course of each day.

Christopher Rivera shared that it is up to event applications to provide a parking plan. The park parking lots will not accommodate the number of attendees highlighted, thus it is necessary to secure other locations where attendees can park and use transit or other means to get to and from the park. In the past event organizers have secured parking at nearby schools and churches. Crossroads Mall rarely approves event parking in their parking lot, but they can be asked.

Rajesh Brundala suggested that the floating attendance model means parking will not be needed for more than a hundred cars at a time. Christopher Rivera remarked that even so there will need to be a parking plan submitted.

Chair Freeburg added that the park will still be open to the public during the event and as such the park's parking stalls cannot all be used for event attendees. Crossroads Mall is very strict about people parking in their parking lot and allows it only with permission. The Chair suggested leveraging relationships with other Indian organizations that previously hosted events at Crossroads Park given that they could offer valuable insights based on their experiences.

Christopher Rivera also recommended promoting public transportation, carpooling, and ride-

sharing options to attendees when advertising the event as a way to alleviate parking pressure.

Rick Bailey told Rajesh Brundala that an example site map from previous similar events would be forwarded and noted that there are designated areas within the park for essential event infrastructure such as stages, portable restrooms, dumpsters, power, and potable water. There is a requirement for overnight security during the event due to its multiple-day duration. A mandatory pre-event site meeting will occur about a month in advance of the event, though an earlier meeting to assist with event planning could be accommodated. Rajesh Brundala voiced appreciation for the proactive approach and recognized its value for determining stage sizes, decorations, and overall logistics. It was agreed that a walkthrough would be coordinated at a convenient time in advance of the event.

Kevin Masseth suggested that if no more than a hundred attendees are present at any given time a police presence may not be necessary. Rajesh Brundala said police assistance during the evening peak hours on both days of the event may be needed due to the likelihood of the crowd exceeding five hundred people.

Chair Freeburg explained that once the Committee gives its approval, there will be communication and meetings through the city's approval system, where additional specifics and permits required by the fire department, such as staging and tenting permits, will be clarified. Rajesh Brundala expressed a willingness to comply fully and sought transparency and cooperation from city officials to ensure smooth event execution.

Chair Freeburg noted that some Ganesh festivals bring in some very large pieces of art and asked if there are plans to do the same. Rajesh Brundala said the plan is to transport the items in a U-Haul truck rather than a semi-truck. Chair Freeburg stressed the importance of fully communicating with Parks the size and logistics related to bringing in the items during the planning meetings. Semi-trucks cannot not enter the park, and unaddressed logistical issues could cause significant disruptions on the day of the event.

Rajesh Brundala asked how early setup can begin on Friday. Chair Freeburg said the work can begin at 7:00 a.m. It was stressed that the park closes at dusk, even during setup days, and the closing time will be strictly enforced due to limited lighting and support infrastructure. There is no flexibility in extending hours beyond dusk, which in August is around 8:00 p.m.

Chair Freeburg pointed out that such events tend to draw decent turnouts; a thousand-plus can be expected each day.

A motion to approve the date, time and location for the Ganesh festival event at Crossroads Park August 29 to September 1 was made by Laurie Scott. The motion was seconded by Rick Bailey and the motion carried unanimously.

A motion to approve the date, time and location for the WABA Korean Expo & Festival in Downtown Park on October 4 was made by Laurie Scott. The motion was seconded by Rick Bailey and the motion carried unanimously.

C. Bellevue International Festival

Chair Freeburg said the event, hosted by the city's Diversity Advantage Team, was first held in 2024. The intent is to hold the event again on August 2 at Crossroads Park. No real changes from the previous event are planned, except that the hope is attendance will be higher and on the order

of a thousand. There will be food vendors, and backpack distribution from the school district. Portable toilets will be brought in.

Rick Bailey asked about the indication on the site map regarding water. Chair Freeburg explained that Utilities purchased a water buggy and the location marked is where it will be parked. The portable unit allows people to fill their water bottles.

A motion to approve the date, time and location for the Bellevue International Festival at Crossroads Park on August 2 was made by Kevin Masseth. The motion was seconded by Laurie Scott and the motion carried unanimously.

❖ Post-Event Evaluations

A. CRY America's CRY Holi

Chair Freeburg noted from the post-event evaluation that adverse weather conditions impacted the event. Even so, the organizers managed well overall.

Rick Bailey reported that there was turf damage typical of the event in years past. There was minor staining from colors outside the designated area, and there were two noise complaints.

Chair Freeburg said there were some metal detector enthusiasts digging in the park who left once the police arrived.

B. Bellevue Hindu Temple and Cultural Center's Holi Festival of Color

Chair Freeburg said the event at Crossroads Park encountered cold, windy weather but otherwise proceeded smoothly.

Rick Bailey said attendance at the event was significantly higher than initially expected, with approximately one thousand attendees rather than the projected five hundred. There also was color spread beyond the designated areas, which necessitates clearer guidelines going forward.

There were no significant issues noted by transportation or the other departments.

C. Beats of Redmond's Holi: The Color Fest

Chair Freeburg said the event enjoyed sunny weather but faced operational issues. An automobile accident on NE 8th Street delayed the morning preparations and led to a prolonged street closure, complicating event logistics. The organizer has asked for additional setup time in the future.

Maggie Whittemore expressed concern that the event organizers failed to follow the explicit instructions.

Rick Bailey agreed, noting that the organizer was somewhat dismissive and did not fully abide by the specific conditions that had been established. In delivering the stage they backed into an area they had specifically been asked not to. On the day of the event caution tape was used to essentially close off the north parking lot, and people associated with the event were turning regular park users away. That led to confusion and dangerous congestion for those wanting to use the park amenities. There is a need to be firmer with the organizer about abiding with the

conditions.

Maggie Whittemore emphasized the need for clearer communication and improved compliance ahead of the next iteration of the event. Given that the north parking lot was essentially closed, a number of drivers turned into the fire station, which created a bad situation. Chair Freeburg agreed that if there is a need for a closure, it should be addressed the correct way.

Kevin Masseth pointed out that the accident investigation included establishing a crime scene. That necessitated taking portions of the parking lot, but not to the point of preventing access to the parking area.

Chair Freeburg allowed that park parking lots are very rarely closed to accommodate events. There will be communications with the event organizer regarding the issues.

❖ Comments/Follow-up

8. NEXT MEETING

❖ May 8, 2025

8. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Freeburg adjourned the meeting at 9:47 a.m.