

CITY OF BELLEVUE
SPECIAL EVENTS COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES

June 12, 2025
8:30 a.m.

Bellevue City Hall
Virtual Meeting

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Susan Freeburg – Parks
Rick Bailey – Parks
Cayla Ji - Fire
Kevin Masseth – Police
Casiano Atienza – Transportation
Christopher Rivera – Transportation
Eric Stewart – King County Metro
Neal Christiansen – Community Representative – East
Bellevue
Laurie Scott – Community Representative - Downtown
Mike Ogliore – Business Representative - Downtown

OTHERS PRESENT:

Emily Martella, Parks; Brad Bennett, Parks;
Councilmember Sumadiwirya; Bethany Kogut, Utilities;
Mia Davison, Development Services; Claude Iosso, City
Manager’s Office; Camilo Penuela, King County; Lizzette
Flores, Community Development; Hazel Phillips,
Emergency Management

RECORDING SECRETARY: Gerry Lindsay

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 8:33 a.m. by Chair Freeburg who presided.

Chair Freeburg welcomed new Council liaison Councilmember Sumadiwirya.

2. COMMUNICATIONS: Written and Oral - None

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

A motion to approve the agenda was made by Kevin Masseth. The motion was seconded by Rick Bailey and the motion carried unanimously.

4. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

A motion to approve the May 8, 2025, meeting minutes as submitted was made by Laurie Scott. The motion was seconded by Neal Christiansen and the motion carried unanimously.

5. COMMITTEE REPORTS

❖ Routing and Location Subcommittee Report

Christopher Rivera noted that several events had been reviewed during the previous month, including the Arts Fair, the Downtown Arts Market, Crossroads Movies in the Park, Youth for Impact, and the Bellevue Family 4th. The subcommittee discussed traffic control updates in regard to the Bellevue Family 4th. Additionally, planning is underway for Flavors of India. Routing and traffic considerations are ongoing and coordination with various stakeholders has been active throughout the month.

6. OLD BUSINESS – None

7. NEW BUSINESS

❖ 2025 Applications of Intent

Chair Freeburg noted that both applications of intent were for events to be hosted on private property. Typically the Special Events Committee permits events for public property unless there is a concern with public safety or impact to the public right of way.

A. BelRed Arts Night Market

Chair Freeburg said the event is proposed to occur on the Sound Transit lot. The event is expected to have fewer than 500 attendees and will include food vendors, music and artisan stalls. The layout plan indicates that only a portion of the lot is to be used, with the remainder reserved for parking.

Christopher Rivera commented that the event appears to be self-contained and supported by sufficient infrastructure, including transit access.

Casiano Atienza asked if the organizing entity had previously hosted a night market. Chair Freeburg said the organizer, BelRed Art Alliance, may have previously been associated with a similar event, but the proposed event has not previously been held in Bellevue.

Kevin Masseth voiced having no major concerns, pointing out the modest attendance numbers and the private location.

Cayla Ji asked for confirmation that the site plan had been uploaded to the portal. Chair Freeburg confirmed that it had been, but stressed that the event likely will not require a Special Event Permit. Coordination with departments regarding tents and sound permitting will still be necessary.

B. Stance Wars Seattle 2025

Chair Freeburg said the recurring car show occurs annually on the campus of Bellevue College. It is proposed for July 12. Although held on private property, the event traditionally has created some roadway impacts due to high traffic volume. While the event has not in the past been required to obtain a Special Event Permit, the Committee had often discussed requiring a permit due to the traffic concerns. Coordination with police and transportation has taken place in prior years and that is expected to continue.

Kevin Masseth said the event typically draws a large crowd and significantly impacts 148th

Avenue SE near the freeway. Attendees frequently gather along roadways to watch speed contests and burnouts, particularly as vehicles enter and exit the Bellevue College area. Due to the scale and nature of the event, the police department often hires an entire squad of officers to manage the crowd and traffic. The event has a strong car culture associated with it and the attendees like to display their cars and race them. The event has posed a public safety challenge for several years. The police department has billed the organizers in past years for their services. The event requires a high level of traffic enforcement due to recurring issues with racing and crowd behavior. Based on past experience, support was voiced for requiring a special event permit on the grounds of significant public safety concerns.

Casiano Atienza recalled transportation having had only limited involvement with this event in the past. Transportation did work with the police last year and for the most part the police were able to address all the issues.

Christopher Rivera added that because the event occurs on the private property of Bellevue College, transportation has not had a major role to play. The suggestion was made to coordinate with police to assess the situation on 148th Avenue SE to determine if transportation involvement would be necessary this year.

Chair Freeburg asked to be kept informed so that all can be documented for next year.

Claude Iosso highlighted an increased public concern about drag racing in Bellevue. Much has been heard about it on social media, which is an indication the topic has been gaining attention. If racing activity increases during the event, it likely will become part of the broader public narrative.

Neal Christiansen asked what the projected attendance numbers are for the event and was told it was 2500. Even though the event occurs on private property, a Special Event Permit appears to be warranted, particularly in light of the related traffic impacts.

Cayla Ji echoed the sentiment, emphasizing the large number of attendees and the need to ensure that fire crews have unobstructed access, particularly around Station Two, which is located near the impacted roadway. It is curious why the event would not automatically require a permit, especially given that smaller public events often do. Chair Freeburg explained that events on private property typically do not require special event permits unless they raise significant public safety concerns. The review process for the event is intended to determine whether the event has reached such a threshold. Smaller permitted events that occur on public property are addressed through a different permitting process.

Christopher Rivera added that the site map currently under review appears to be from 2017. The event layout actually changed in recent years and might involve public right-of-way on 145th Avenue SE, which would bring transportation into the permitting process. The location details need to be verified with police.

Kevin Masseth shared that for the 2024 event, the police department assigned two supervisors and eight officers and covered the event from 4:30 p.m. to 10:30 p.m. That level of staffing demonstrates the magnitude of the police response needed to keep things under control.

Given that the event date is only 30 days out, Chair Freeburg stated that if a permit is required, the departments will need to expedite their reviews.

A motion to require a Special Event Permit for the Stance Wars event was made by Kevin Masseth. The motion was seconded by Cayla Ji and the motion carried unanimously.

❖ Post-Event Evaluation

A. Kelsey Creek Sheep Shearing

Chair Freeburg said the event took place on April 26. The long-standing and family-friendly event was well-attended with approximately 4500 daily attendees. There were no reported issues from any department and the event was deemed a success. There were minor internal concerns regarding parking, vendors and volunteers, but no major operational problems.

❖ Paws & Pride

Mike Ogliore said the second annual iteration of the Pause & Pride event held at Downtown Park went very well. Appreciation was expressed to the Parks Department for its role in providing the venue. The event ran smoothly and had with no significant issues. The weather conditions were favorable until about noon at which point conditions changed. The majority of the event activities were completed by that time, however.

Mike Ogliore acknowledged the contributions of Bellden Café for organizing the mimosa garden, which was once again a popular attraction. The quality of entertainment provided on the stage was great, and the route around the park was also good for the non-timed event. Most of the participants casually completed an average of approximately two and a half laps around the park. The route was managed in a way that kept the park open and accessible to others.

The parking logistics were successfully handled. The primary lot at Downtown Park reached capacity, but overflow parking was made available at Park Plaza off of 106 Avenue NE, which adequately accommodated additional vehicles.

Mike Ogliore praised the support received from various departments, particularly the presence and assistance of the police and fire departments.

The event served as an early celebration of Pride Month in Downtown Bellevue. The organizers are already beginning to consider scheduling logistics for the following year and plan to finalize the details later in the year.

❖ Comments/Follow-up

8. NEXT MEETING

❖ July 10, 2025

9. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Freeburg adjourned the meeting at 9:01 a.m.