

CITY OF BELLEVUE
SPECIAL EVENTS COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES

July 10, 2025
8:30 a.m.

Bellevue City Hall
Virtual Meeting

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Susan Freeburg – Parks
Rick Bailey – Parks
Kyle Nelson – Fire
Andrew Oltman - Fire
Robert Spingler – Police
Casiano Atienza – Transportation
Eric Stewart – King County Metro
Camilo Penuela – King County Metro
Mike Ogliore – Business Representative - Downtown

OTHERS PRESENT:

Emily Martella, Parks; Maverick Perez, Out of the Darkness Walk – Eastside King County, Lizzette Flores, Community Development; Hazel Phillips, Emergency Management; Mia Davison, Development Services; Christopher Rivera, Transportation; Bethany Kogut, Utilities

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 - None

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

A motion to approve the agenda was made by Kyle Nelson. The motion was seconded by Robert Spingler and the motion carried unanimously.

4. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

A motion to approve the June 12, 2025, meeting minutes as submitted was made by Kyle Nelson. The motion was seconded by Rick Bailey and the motion carried unanimously.

5. COMMITTEE REPORTS

❖ Routing and Location Subcommittee Report

Casiano Atienza reported that the Routing and Location Subcommittee had met several times since the last Committee meeting to prepare for events, including Pakistan Independence Day,

the Bellevue Children's Business Fair, the Bellevue International Festival, Jubilee Reach, Finesh Ustav, Stance Wars, Bellevue Family 4th and Flavors of India. The subcommittee is awaiting additional feedback on the Bellevue Family 4th event to better understand what went right, what went wrong, and where things can be improved. Planning is continuing in regard to the Northwest Ukrainian Festival.

6. OLD BUSINESS – None

6. NEW BUSINESS

❖ **Post-Event Evaluation**

1. Shades of Brilliance Artwalk

Chair Freeburg said the Downtown Park event on June 8 saw 1000 attendees. The event featured about 23 vendors, three local Black performance artists, a DJ, and one food truck. The mayor attended and expressed support. The event was described as having been successful, with 60 to 75 percent of attendees coming from outside Bellevue. Load-in and load-out procedures went smoothly, and there were no reported safety issues. The organizers praised Bellevue's user-friendly permitting process compared to other cities. Their primary focus for future improvement is expanding their reach by collaborating with more local organizations.

Rick Bailey confirmed that there were no operational issues from the perspective of Parks.

2. International Day of Yoga

Chair Freeburg said the event enjoyed favorable weather conditions. The parking arrangements were well organized both onsite and offsite. However, there was a significant logistical issue during setup that involved electricity not being available as anticipated, which prevented the installation of an LED wall and delayed the timeline. The organizers recommended confirming utility access in advance and assigning a dedicated onsite staff member to offer support. The event drew about 400 people and aligned with wellness and sustainability goals. The organizers made the suggestion that the city should waive all permit and park rental fees for free community wellness events.

Rick Bailey allowed that there was a miscommunication that led to the electrical hookup not being available during setup on Friday. The connection was made first thing Saturday morning. While no safety concerns occurred, a private vehicle was driven onto park property against explicit instructions. The vehicle violation was documented.

Emily Martella shared with the Committee two concerns offered by Maggie Whittemore. First, there was confusion regarding what would be placed on the stage. The LED screen arrived late in the planning process and it was noted that a fire department permit would be required in the future for events using structures of that size. Second, the approved site plan was not used on the day of the event. The layout onsite differed entirely from what was anticipated, which complicated the inspection process.

❖ **2025 Applications of Intent: Out of the Darkness Walk – Eastside King County**

Chair Freeburg said the new event is planned for October in Downtown Park from 11:00 a.m. to

2:00 p.m. The participants will be walking around the circle and around the park on the sidewalk. The planned attendance is 500. There will also be tents and vendors.

Maverick Perez, chair for the Out of the Darkness Walk, said the event is held in affiliation with the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention. The organization has held walks in Seattle, Pierce County, Spokane and Bellingham. The fact is mental health resources are disproportionately concentrated in Seattle and there is a desire to bring awareness and community support to the Eastside.

Maverick Perez said the event involves a 1.7-mile loop walk around Downtown Park. In addition to raising funds, the event is intended to bring the community together in support of those who may be silently impacted by suicide ideation or mental health issues. The event will feature a small stage with two speakers, 15 informational and support-oriented vendors, and a few booths offering pre-packaged sweets as fundraisers. There will not be any onsite cooking. The event will begin with setup at 8:30 a.m. and that will be followed by an opening ceremony at 10:00 a.m.. The walk itself will begin at 11:00 a.m., and there will be a closing ceremony at about 12:30 p.m. Breakdown and pack-out will conclude by 2:00 p.m.

Rick Bailey pointed out that the proposed route passes through two staircases that could pose accessibility issues. The offer was made to send Maverick Perez a map highlighting the locations of those stairs to assist in making any modifications for ADA compliance.

Kyle Nelson asked how large the stage will be. Maverick Perez said the stage will be ten feet by eight feet and will have a height of approximately thirty inches above ground level. Kyle Nelson confirmed that a stage of that size will not require any permitting. Any overhead structures above five-foot nine inches would need to be reviewed for purposes of permitting. The organizer was asked to submit the technical specifications for any structures, especially speaker towers, for review as part of the event approval.

Casiano Atienza commended Maverick Perez for bringing attention to the issue of mental health. Noting a projected total attendance of 500 to 600 people, it was stressed that a parking plan will be required. There are prohibited parking areas, including at the mall without formal written permission. There are some potential parking alternatives.

Robert Spingler explained that when events reach 500 to 600 attendees consideration is generally given to requiring a police officer to be present. The projected attendance will be evaluated closer to the event date and if it is deemed that a police presence is warranted that fact will be made known along with the associated costs.

Eric Stewart added that public transit options are available to support access to and from the event. King County Metro Route 550 runs fairly close to the park and the Bellevue Transit Center is within walking distance. The organizer was encouraged to promote the transit options to reduce parking pressures.

Chair Freeburg told the organizer that follow-up details regarding approvals and next steps will be sent via email.

A motion to approve the date, time and location for the Out of the Darkness Walk was made by Rick Bailey. The motion was seconded by Casiano Atienza and the motion carried unanimously.

❖ Post-Event Evaluation (Continued)

3. Lake to Lake Bike Ride

Chair Freeburg stated that the event, which took place at Robinswood Park, had an attendance of approximately 500 people. The weather was favorable. The site plan was slightly revised leading up to the event, and ten days beforehand staff recommended the inclusion of a paramedic unit, which proved beneficial even though it was only used to treat minor issues. Parking was handled successfully using designated lots at Big Picture School and St. Andrews Lutheran Church. Parks crews facilitated setup beginning at 5:45 a.m. and the preparations were completed ahead of the 8:30 a.m. check-in time. Riders started from Robinswood Park and crossed the street to Big Picture School and the organizer reported there was a smooth flow of participants. There were no mechanical issues or incidents requiring support from the rescue van. The children's ride took place at 12:15 p.m. and concluded without problems. Breakdown proceeded efficiently.

Chair Freeburg highlighted the event director's learning curve with the new Eproval system. Emily Martella provided significant support, which the team found helpful. The fire department inspection went smoothly. One vendor experienced long lines due to staffing shortages. The police department bicycle unit, a valued presence in past years, was unable to attend due to a last-minute deployment. There were no safety issues reported.

4. Pacific Northwest Youth Entrepreneur Expo

Chair Freeburg said the June 20 event ran exceptionally well in terms of coordination and planning. The vendors arrived on time and complied with all guidelines, including for setup and breakdown. The revised event layout was effective and feedback from community participants was overwhelmingly positive. The afternoon schedule helped maintain a steady visitor flow. The expo hosted 75 youth entrepreneur booths, offering meaningful learning experiences for all involved. The live performances contributed vibrancy to the event. The kickoff meeting with the city set clear expectations, and the in-person site visit helped organizers understand updates and finalize logistics. The updated vendor lists and insurance templates were noted as being helpful tools. The organizer said the support of Emily Martella was considered critical to the event's success.

Continuing, Chair Freeburg said on the day of the event there were some unexpected fire safety requirements. The fire marshal inspector introduced new mandates, including the need for six fire extinguishers, and the need for all tents to meet NFPA 701 certification, requirements which the organizer claimed had not been previously mentioned. The fire inspector acknowledged the oversight and recommended earlier involvement with the fire department in future planning. There were no safety or security concerns reported.

Kyle Nelson acknowledged the communication lapse and agreed that while the requirements were publicly available, more direct verbal reminders would be helpful in future cases.

Rick Bailey commented that the event clearly demonstrated significant improvement over the previous year in terms of accommodating all of the requirements. The only issue was that an electrical cabinet was left unpadlocked, though it was closed and secured.

Chair Freeburg acknowledged the outstanding support and contributions of Emily Martella in regard to event processes and expressed deep appreciation on behalf of the entire Committee.

❖ Comments/Follow-up

Kyle Nelson brought to the table the Ukrainian Festival's request to change the date. Emily Martella clarified that there were no changes to the event date. A meeting originally scheduled for the afternoon of July 10 was rescheduled. Kyle Nelson acknowledged having misunderstood that the event date itself was to be changed.

7. NEXT MEETING

❖ August 14, 2025

8. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Freeburg adjourned the meeting at 9:08 a.m.