CITY OF BELLEVUE
SPECIAL EVENTS COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES

July 9, 2026
8:30 a.m.

Bellevue City Hall
Virtual Meeting

MEMBERS PRESENT: Susan Freeburg – Parks
Rick Bailey – Parks
Andrew Oltman – Fire
Maggie Whittemore – Fire
Robert Spingler – Police
Casiano Atienza – Transportation
Steph Collier – Development Services
Neal Christiansen – Community Rep. - East Bellevue
Mike Ogliore – Business Rep. - Downtown
Meredith Langridge – Visit Bellevue
Eric Stewart – King County Metro
Camilo Penuela – King County Metro

OTHERS PRESENT: Emily Martella, Parks; Nick Kim, BigHug RPD+K-pop; David Isaak, Sarina Miller, Experience Bellevue; Lizzette Flores, Community Development; Alex Clark, FAM; Claude Iosso, City Manager's Office; Ellen Montanana, Fire

RECORDING SECRETARY: Gerry Lindsay

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 8:31 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 Robert Spingler. The motion was seconded by Maggie Whittemore and the motion carried unanimously.

4. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

A motion to approve the June 11, 2026, meeting minutes as submitted was made by Robert Spingler. The motion was seconded by Maggie Whittemore and the motion carried unanimously.

5. COMMITTEE REPORTS

- ❖ Routing and Location Subcommittee Report

Casiano Atienza reported that there were no significant updates. The Flavors of India event is slated for the coming weekend.

6. OLD BUSINESS – None

7. NEW BUSINESS

- ❖ Applications of Intent

A. Experience Bellevue

David Isaak said the Experience Bellevue event is planned for September 19 and will celebrate the ways in which Bellevue welcomes the world. There are four primary programming elements to the proposed event, beginning with a focus on helping residents better understand city government through interactive exhibits, informational tables, and City Hall tours designed to engage attendees of all ages. The second component will celebrate Bellevue's cultural diversity through dance, music, art, and other performances held on the City Hall plaza. The third feature will consist of an afternoon storytelling program in the council chambers, developed in partnership with community organizations, where residents would share personal stories about finding a sense of belonging in Bellevue. The final major component will provide interactive, family-oriented activities throughout the building, including workshops such as Tai Chi, educational activities with the Bellevue Botanical Garden, children's programming with KidsQuest, and opportunities to sample a variety of international cuisines via a walking tour of Downtown.

The outdoor activities will primarily utilize the City Hall plaza, requiring only a temporary closure of the northbound lane of 110th Avenue NE adjacent to City Hall rather than the full roadway originally requested. The revised layout includes food trucks; displays of fire and utility vehicles; a performance stage located in an area previously used successfully for similar events; tented food service areas without open flames; seating on the plaza; and interactive public safety displays such as police motorcycle photo opportunities. Inside City Hall, approximately ten information tables will line the concourse where refreshments will be available. Workshops will be conducted in meeting rooms, children's activities will be located deeper within the building to encourage visitor movement throughout the facility, and staging areas for tours and scavenger hunt activities will be relocated because of renovation-related limitations in previously planned spaces.

David Isaak summarized several revisions made to the application since the original permit application. The request for a full closure of 110th Avenue NE has been reduced to a closure of only the northbound lane; guest seating areas have been reduced; the performance stage has been relocated to eliminate the need for additional infrastructure; food tents have been added to the plan; and the revised traffic configuration eliminates the impacts on adjacent private parking that would have resulted from a full road closure. The event represents an important opportunity to showcase Bellevue's commitment to welcoming residents and visitors while establishing a foundation for similar community events in future years.

Casiano Atienza stated that a detailed traffic control plan will be required for the temporary northbound lane closure. Access to nearby parking garages, including Skyline, the former Microsoft garage, and the City Hall garage, will need to be maintained or otherwise addressed during the event. In addition, Metro bus service will need to remain unimpeded throughout the

closure. Aside from those logistical considerations, Casiano Atienza expressed no significant concerns and indicated a willingness to continue working collaboratively with the event organizers as planning progresses.

David Isaak asked if there was precedent for closing only the northbound lane by City Hall, and asked if previous traffic control plans might provide guidance for addressing the identified operational requirements. Casiano Atienza explained that while closing a single northbound lane is feasible, the required traffic control plan will need to address pedestrian safety and operational details. If only one lane is closed, the available space will likely be limited to uses such as food trucks and will require additional safety measures to protect pedestrians entering the area.

Chair Freeburg stated that as the permitting process advances, the Routing and Location Subcommittee will address each operational detail and will assist in refining the event plan.

Camilo Penuela sought confirmation that NE 6th Street will remain open, allowing buses to continue accessing the Bellevue Transit Center without interruption. David Isaak confirmed that, and Camilo Penuela said Metro had no other concerns.

Maggie Whittemore asked for additional information regarding the proposed performance stage. David Isaak explained that the stage is expected to be approximately fifteen feet deep and will likely include a temporary stage surface to accommodate performances such as salsa dancing. The walkways into City Hall will remain open through the use of rope barriers and careful seating placement. Maggie Whittemore asked to be supplied with additional details as the planning progresses in order to ensure that any necessary permits for the stage and sound equipment can be obtained before the event.

Robert Spingler stated that if the proposed road closure is approved, police patrol vehicles will be used to secure the closure while allowing fire apparatus to enter and exit as needed throughout the day. Sarina Miller added that the organizers are coordinating with Fire Department personnel to assign an individual to remain with the display fire truck during the event, reducing the need to move equipment. Robert Spingler said patrol vehicles will still be assigned to the area to ensure safe operations regardless of the final arrangement.

Andrew Oltman said that the primary concern for Fire is maintaining access to the connections located near the loading dock off 112th Avenue NE. David Isaak confirmed that access will remain open, and then asked about accommodating two buses that would load participants for morning tours, including a photography tour and a visit to Mercer Slough. Andrew Oltman advised that oversized vehicle parking along the curb should provide sufficient space for loading and unloading, noting that the buses will occupy the area for only twenty to thirty minutes, which is an acceptable duration.

Steph Collier reminded the applicant that any food vendors using generators beyond standard electrical service may require additional permits.

Alex Clark raised several logistical challenges involving limited space at City Hall. It was noted that the organizers had requested use of the oversized vehicle parking area in the visitor lot for public safety displays, but it was also emphasized that accessible parking must remain available because the visitor lot contains the only ADA parking spaces at City Hall. One potential solution would be to temporarily move the ADA parking to the other side of the wall and creating a barricaded walkway with temporary striping and signage to maintain safe access throughout the event. Sarina Miller clarified that the oversized parking area will primarily be used for police

displays, including drones, motorcycles, and, if available, the department's bomb detection robotic dog if it is available.

Robert Spingler asked if those things had been coordinated with the Police Department. Sarina Miller confirmed that discussions with Police Department staff were already underway and that additional coordination will continue. The department's new drone program will provide an engaging educational opportunity for the attendees.

B. BigHug RPD+ K-pop Play Day Season 2

Nick Kim utilized an electronic translator in making the presentation and informed the Committee that the Big Hug RPD K-Pop Play Day non-profit organization was founded in 2014 to support Korean children and following the COVID-19 pandemic has expanded its mission to assist Korean small business owners and their families in the United States. The previous year's event celebrated Korean pop culture through continuous K-Pop dance performances held at Bellevue City Hall. Although attendance had originally been estimated at approximately 300 participants, organizers estimated that nearly 750 people attended. The event included approximately 14 commercial vendors along with additional community information booths. Building on that success, the proposal is to expand the event by increasing the number of vendor tables to between 25 and 40, with the aim of supporting small businesses.

Preliminary site plans were shared with the Committee showing both outdoor and indoor layouts. The indoor meeting rooms are needed to accommodate for the weather, allowing the event to continue even if it rains. It was noted that the planning has been expanded to include approximately ten organizing teams responsible for various operational functions. Attendance for the upcoming event is estimated at approximately 1500. Approximately 50 volunteers are being recruited to support the event operations.

Casiano Atienza asked how many food trucks will be involved. Nick Kim replied that although the site plan shows space for two food trucks, there was only one the previous year. The anticipation is that there will be two standard-sized food trucks for the upcoming event, along with as many as six food vendors overall. Casiano Atienza said food trucks must remain within the designated loading area and not extend into the travel lanes.

Alex Clark added that accommodating two trucks would depend on their size, noting that smaller trucks similar to those used during the previous year's event would fit within the available space, whereas larger trucks or those requiring generators might exceed the designated area. Nick Kim confirmed that only standard-sized trucks are being considered.

Maggie Whittemore asked how much space there will be between the stage and the egress from City Hall, and if there would still be a walking path. Nick Kim clarified that the performances will take place at ground level and not on a traditional stage.

Nick Kim added that the event has received sponsorship from the City of Seoul and intends to display promotional materials provided by that city during the event.

Robert Spingler commented that because all activities will remain confined to the City Hall campus, police will have no operational concerns. Officers will nevertheless be assigned to the event to assist with public safety and security.

Steph Collier wanted the organizer to be aware that the use other than plug and play generators

will need to talk to staff about an electrical permit.

Nick Kim displaying noted there are plans to install a 10-foot by 10-foot LED display screen behind the performance area. Steph Collier asked if the display will utilize the existing electrical connections available in the City Hall Plaza and Nick Kim said the expectation is that the existing electrical service will be used.

Maggie Whittemore asked for additional information regarding the LED display, specifically the construction specifications, to determine if permits or structural review will be required because of its size.

Alex Clark explained that the preferred installation method involves modular LED panels assembled on site rather than a trailer-mounted unit, thereby reducing the risk of damage to the raised plaza surface. Maggie Whittemore asked the organizer to provide the detailed specifications in advance for review.

Chair Freeburg returned the focus to the Experience Bellevue event and sought a vote on the date, time and location.

Maggie Whittemore said the occupant load the events can have on the plaza needs to be determined. Neither event has a ticket cap, and each event is projected to have between 1000 and 1500 attendees. Chair Freeburg pointed out that both events will be utilizing both indoor and outdoor spaces, which may alleviate some of the concern.

A motion to approve the date, time and location for the Experience Bellevue event at City Hall Plaza on September 19 was made by Robert Spingler. The motion was seconded by Neal Christiansen and the motion carried unanimously.

A motion to approve the date, time and location for the BigHug PTD+ K-pop event on September 26 was made by Meredith Langridge. The motion was seconded by Robert Spingler and the motion carried unanimously.

- ❖ 2026 Post-Event Evaluations

  A. Kelsey Creek Sheep Shearing

Chair Freeburg noted from the evaluation that the estimated attendance of 3500 was exceeded as approximately 4500 people attended. The event featured sheep shearing demonstrations, tractor-pulled wagon rides, pony rides, food vendors, children's activities, crafts, and educational experiences spread throughout the farm's outdoor facilities, including the barns, barnyards, fields, and pastures. The favorable weather contributed to a successful event with a steady flow of visitors throughout the day. The sheep shearing demonstrations were well executed due to careful planning and the use of a carpeted shearing area to improve safety for both the shearers and the animals. The expanded Country Lane children's activity area reduced congestion, while additional traffic flagging and newly installed curbing improved pedestrian safety near the tractor wagon rides.

The staff and volunteers were recognized for their significant contributions to efficient event setup and cleanup. The only notable challenge involved long wait times for the shuttle buses that were serving the remote parking lots. Adding shuttle service was cost prohibitive, and that limited the ability to reduce the wait times. There were no safety or security concerns reported.

The suggestions made for future improvements included adding a dessert vendor; improving shuttle bus signage; relocating the kettle corn vendor to improve traffic flow; and enhancing decorations within the children's activity area.

B. Purnava, An Asian Indian Festival

The event was held on May 9 at Crossroads Park. The number of attendees exceeded the expectations, with approximately 1500 participants attending. The good weather contributed to a successful celebration that included cultural performances by approximately 150 children; quiz competitions; puppet shows; food vendors; and community vendors. The event was inaugurated by Suzan DelBene, a member of the United States Congress who represents Bellevue. There were no issues regarding the parking. The primary challenge involved discovering that decorative temple structures required architectural drawings for permit approval, preventing installation of the planned structure. That issue will be address for future events. There were no safety or security concerns encountered. The primary opportunities for improvement involve becoming more organized and maintaining a better project schedule rather than requesting changes from the city.

C. MAPS Eid Celebration

The Muslim Association of Puget Sound's Feast of Sacrifice event was held on May 30 in Downtown Park. Although an exact attendance figure was unavailable, the organizers had anticipated more than 1000 attendees. The event featured approximately 40 participants, including food vendors, merchandise vendors, food trucks, sponsors, and community organizations, along with live entertainment, a magic show, a children's talent show, and other family-oriented activities. The weather conditions were favorable. The approved site plan was implemented without modification. Event setup, vendor loading, pedestrian circulation, programming, and site restoration all proceeded smoothly. Fire Department personnel, police officers and King County Public Health inspectors provided on-site support and oversight. While some vendors experienced challenges transporting heavy equipment into the park because of the parking limitations, the issues did not significantly affect operations. One challenge faced was the requirements regarding vendor placement, specifically the recommendation to avoid locating food vendors immediately adjacent to non-food vendors. Minor adjustments were needed to balance the electrical loads among the available public outlets. The issues were all resolved successfully with assistance from city staff. There were no significant security concerns reported.

D. Paws & Pride

Mike Ogliore reviewed the Paws & Pride Dog Walk that was held on June 6 in Downtown Park. Attendance was somewhat reduced due in large part to an unfavorable weather forecast and a scheduling conflict with a Pride event in Seattle. Despite those factors, the weather remained favorable throughout the event and only began raining during the final moments of take down. The Parks staff were praised for their assistance in coordinating the vendor loading and unloading. Although the vendors used vehicles to access the plaza before transporting equipment by hand into the park, the process operated smoothly. Overflow parking was available at a nearby private lot, but it saw limited use because of the lower attendance. The beer and mimosa garden operated successfully with all required permits in place.

Appreciation was expressed for the Bellevue Police for professionally addressing an isolated individual who became disruptive because of opposition to the event. Overall, the event was

successful. The intent is to return again on the first Saturday of next year.

E. Bubbles, Fairways & Football

The Bubbles, Fairways, and Football event occurred on June 13 in Downtown Park. Attendance reached approximately 500, which was within the projected range of 500 to 1000. The event featured an 18-hole World Cup-themed miniature golf course along with a large bubble party. The event began fifteen minutes early because attendees started arriving early. The list of what worked well included the pedestrian flow and distribution over a wide space; access to water, which was provided by Facilities; the efficiency of the Fire Department inspection; and the professionalism of Parks staff. The only operational issue involved designated parking spaces that were too short to accommodate the event's truck and trailer, requiring unloading from an adjacent fire lane. There were no unforeseen operational problems or safety concerns reported. Looking ahead, the organizers suggested improved parking and loading access closer to the event area; and allowing for a foam party attraction.

Rick Bailey said a foam party would not be permitted in Downtown Park because of concerns involving the park's water feature. Crossroads Park would be a more appropriate venue for such an activity as it would reduce operational risks and provide for easier access for event loading and unloading.

- Comments / Follow-up

Chair Freeburg announced being promoted to Parks and Community Services Manager, her new role includes oversight over the Special Events Committee. Someone new will be tapped to take over as chair of the Committee.

Chair Freeburg also reported that Brad Bennett is retiring, and Jen Newton has left the City and took a new job as Deputy Director in Redmond.

8. NEXT MEETING

- August 13, 2026

9. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Freeburg adjourned the meeting at 9:33 a.m.