

CITY OF BELLEVUE
SPECIAL EVENTS COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES

November 14, 2019
8:30 a.m.

Bellevue City Hall
Conference Room 1E-112

MEMBERS PRESENT: Andy Heider – Parks
Dean Harm – Fire
Dane Waisanen – Fire
Mike Shovlin – Police
Wei Chen Zhu(?) – Transportation
Ben Wright – Transportation
Reilly Pittman – Parks
Glenn Bartolome – Metro Transit
Neal Christiansen – Community Representative East
Jeanne Grote – Community Representative South
Mike Ogliore – Business Representative Downtown
Chris Dunham – Business Representative West
Laurie Scott – Downtown Resident Representative

OTHERS PRESENT: Imane Elmesbahi, Brad Bennett, Parks; Brian Gomez, Fire;
Valeriy Goloborodko, Ukrainian Festival

RECORDING SECRETARY: Gerry Lindsay

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 8:32 a.m. by acting chair Andrew Heider who presided.

2. COMMUNICATIONS: Written and Oral – None

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

A motion to approve the agenda was made by Mr. Waisanen. The motion was seconded by Mr. Christiansen and the motion carried unanimously.

4. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

A motion to approve the September 12, 2019, meeting minutes as submitted was made by Mr. Christiansen. The motion was seconded by Mr. Harm and the motion carried unanimously.

5. COMMITTEE REPORTS

❖ Routing and Location Subcommittee Report

There was no report from the subcommittee.

6. OLD BUSINESS

❖ Tabled Events

- a. WWII & Holocaust Remembrance Day 2020
- b. Kids Festival 2020

Mr. Heider noted that the date of May 9 had been requested for the WWII and Holocaust Remembrance Day event, and that the date of September 6 had been requested for the Kids Festival 2020 event, with both events in Downtown Park. He said the anticipated number of participants for the WWII event was just over a hundred. With a setup time of 8:00 a.m. and with the event ending at 1:00 p.m., the impact on the park should be minimal. The same organizer, sponsored by the Russian Jewish Community, is in charge of both events. He said Parks had no concern regarding the event.

Mr. Ogliore commented that both events are focused on music and asked if they will be using the plaza. Mr. Heider said he did not have a setup map.

Mr. Wright observed that the estimated level of participation is lower than the Committee's permit threshold. He asked if there were any reason to believe attendance might be greater than expected. Mr. Heider said he did not believe it would be. Neither is a large event.

Mr. Christiansen asked how the event will be advertised and Mr. Heider said he did not have any information about that.

Ms. Elmesbahi said the Committee had previously tabled discussion of the event to allow for more information to be submitted by the event organizer. She said no additional information has been submitted to date, and attempts to contact the organizer have been unsuccessful.

Mr. Bartolome informed the Committee that there is a WWII and Holocaust event in Seattle. It is a parade that goes from Occidental to Westlake Park. It usually draws up to 300. He said he did not know if that event is tied to the event proposed in Bellevue. If they are connected, it is possible that the Bellevue event could draw that many participants.

Mr. Heider stressed the need to have more information, including site map. He proposed tabling the event while waiting for more information from the event organizer.

A motion to table the event was made by Sgt. Shovlin. The motion was seconded by Mr. Wright and the motion carried unanimously.

6. NEW BUSINESS

❖ Special Events Committee Transition Plan

Mr. Bennett reported that leadership of the Special Events Committee was open following it being vacated by Jon Wilson. He said Mr. Heider had kindly agreed to fill in on an interim basis. The recruitment process is under way to replace Mr. Wilson. The list was narrowed to four, but one withdrew. A second round of interviews of the three very qualified candidates is scheduled for November 20. Two are from the area and one is from outside the area. Given the upcoming holidays, it is not anticipated that anyone will step into the role until the first of the year, following which there will be a significant learning curve for the new person.

❖ Applications of Intent

a. Bellevue Family 4th

Mr. Ogliore said the team had not yet met to discuss any significant changes to the 2020 event. He said he did not foresee any. There continue to be good partnerships in place.

No concerns were voiced by the Committee members.

b. Kelsey Creek Sheep Shearing

Mr. Heider noted the returning event has been ongoing for several years.

No concerns were voiced by the Committee members.

c. Live at Lunch

Mr. Ogliore said the event came off very smoothly over the summer months, with only a couple of reschedules for rain and inclement weather. The event is as good as it has ever been and there are many partners excited to continue to play host. There have been minimal complaints issued. With respect to noise levels, there was an issue when a neighboring venue offered a conflicting private event with live music; that issue will be addressed with better scheduling coordination in 2020. With the Thursday event at the Bellevue Connection shifting to an evening format, some other venues will be shifted around.

d. Bellevue Four on the 4th, Dog Jog Walk

Mr. Ogliore said the event enjoys a good partnership with Transportation and Police. About a thousand people take part in the event. Parking is at the library through a partnership with them. The Ashwood Park neighbors seem to enjoy having the park programmed as it is. The event serves as a fundraiser for the Humane Society in Bellevue. Plans call for using the same route in 2020.

Mr. Wright spoke up to indicate there will be some evening work on 112th Avenue NE in 2020 as well as some additional work in the corridor.

No other concerns were voiced by the Committee members.

e. Bellevue Live after Five

Mr. Ogliore said the new event was driven by a need for a new home for a venue that has existed for Live at Lunch. With the potential new construction at the Doxa church site beginning in the spring of 2020, the venue at the Bellevue Connection will not work for a daytime live music event. Accordingly, Live at Lunch will be shifted to other downtown locations for Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, and the proposal is to keep the Bellevue Connection venue as an Wednesday evening option. It will be similar to what the Bellevue Collection offers on Thursday nights in Compass Plaza.

f. NE 6th Street Fair - A Taste of the Arts

Mr. Ogliore reminded the Committee that construction at the Doxa church site will necessitate

the relocation of the booths that have traditionally been set up in that parking lot to 10th Avenue NE. The setup there will be tighter than before but will follow all applicable fire and safety requirements. If for some reason construction on the site is delayed, the lot may be used again. Loss of the lot will mean there will not be food available as there has been in the past. Food trucks might be an option.

No concerns were voiced by the Committee members.

g. Bellevue Magic Season Ice Rink

Mr. Ogliore said the event timeline will largely reflect the flow of the last three or four years relative to opening the day after Thanksgiving and running through the Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday, a 53-day season. Load-out has been very smooth the last couple of years, facilitated by having a machine that melts the ice.

No concerns were voiced by the Committee members.

To accommodate the Ukrainian Festival event coordinator, the Committee took up the post-event evaluation of the Ukrainian Festival next before returning to a review of the applications of intent.

❖ Post-Event Evaluations Follow-Up: Ukrainian Festival 2019

Mr. Heider welcomed Valeriy Goloborodko who represented the event sponsor, the Pacific Ukrainian Society. He reminded the Committee members that there had been some issues with the 2019 event at Crossroads Park. While the event is an asset to the community, there is also a need to see the park venue left in good condition.

Mr. Goloborodko said he serves the Ukrainian American community as the honorary consul of Ukraine in Seattle, and as a board member of the Pacific Ukrainian Society. He stressed that he is not the event coordinator. In its fourth year, the event in Bellevue is growing and every year sees more attendees. The 2019 event drew over 15,000 participants throughout the day. The event draws far more than just Ukrainians and Eastern Europeans. Given that the event continues to grow, consideration is being given to holding it as a two-day event rather than a one-day event, which would decrease the number of people in the park of a given day.

Mr. Goloborodko agreed that there are things about the event that can be improved, but he said the event is successful. The recent iteration enjoyed beautiful weather. The rain held off until just after 8:00 p.m. when heavy rain began to fall in association with lightening. People ran from the park, including some volunteers. Other volunteers stayed and assisted in disconnecting power sources. Many of the vendors packed up during the rain and drove out of the park, damaging the grass. There were also a couple of vendors who failed to include proper protections for their cooking devices, which also resulted in burning the grass. The event is open to doing what needs to be done to address the issues.

Mr. Goloborodko said there were no other issues encountered. There were no lost children, no problems with alcohol or drugs, and no fights. Most of the people who work at the event are volunteers. People from different nationalities are invited to take the stage, showing their cultures in a spirit of cooperation between communities.

Mr. Heider said he and Mr. Bennett met with Mr. Goloborodko a month ago to talk about some

of the issues involving the park grounds. He invited the Committee members to offer their comments and observations.

Sgt. Shovlin said there were too many people for the number of officers posted to the event. There were only three officers, one in the street to monitor parking and two patrolling the grounds. In 2020 more officers will be required. Parking was a problem, both on the streets and in the Crossroads Mall parking lot. People were ignoring instructions not to park mall parking lot, so next year there will need to be a police officer posted there. He allowed that there were no issues for the police to deal with in terms of drugs or fights, but parking was certainly an issue as was crowding on sidewalks spilling out into the street.

Mr. Bennett asked how the Ukrainian Festival compares to the old Strawberry Festival which had about the same number of attendees. Sgt. Shovlin said he has attended both festivals and had never seen as many people in the park as he did for the Ukrainian Festival. He said the park was as full as he had ever seen it, which would seem to argue that the reported numbers do not match up. The level of problems experienced by Crossroads Mall far exceeded anything that ever happened with the Strawberry Festival, particularly in terms of the number of people who just absolutely disregarded mall representatives who were telling them not to park there.

Mr. Ogliore asked about the shuttle service and Sgt. Shovlin said he did not have any direct information on that. He added that there were problems in the park's parking lot in that it was so crowded Fire could not have gotten in there if needed. Cars were parked every which way. Things like that will need to be fixed next year.

Mr. Goloborodko said a shuttle was operated between the park and Westminster Chapel. Advertising for the event encouraged people to park off site and use the shuttle and to carpool. Next year neighboring schools and churches will be contacted about using their parking lots. He said he personally observed people walking from outlying areas to the park. With regard to Crossroads Mall, he said he did receive a complaint from the mall authorities about people parking on their lot. It was also reported that one person made threats, though it was not clarified how they knew the person who made the threats was part of the Ukrainian Festival. Where such threats are made, a call to 9-1-1 should be made so the police can come to take care of it. No parking signs were posted in the mall parking lot in the past, but for the recent event there was no interest on the part of Crossroads Mall to put up the signs provided by the event organizer.

Sgt. Shovlin said he was less concerned about a single person making a threat and more about how many people chose to park in the mall parking lot even when told not to. Next year the police will have a presence there to assist enforcing the no event parking ban.

With regard to the parking lot near Crossroads Park, Mr. Goloborodko said it was used in part to accommodate the members of a 25-person orchestra, all of whom drove in with their instruments. That was not anticipated. They were instructed to park at Westminster Chapel but they argued that because they were carrying instruments that would be very difficult. People were directed to help them park on the parking lot and then again to help them leave.

Sgt. Shovlin said event attendees elected not to park to the north of NE 12th Street where there were problems in the past. The posting of signs certainly helped, but the drivers chose instead to cram in along 164th Avenue NE. He agreed that people do not mind walking, but they seem to try to get as close to the park as possible to reduce their walking distance, and the result is a mass of cars parked not particularly well.

Mr. Christiansen asked how likely the two-day option is next year. Mr. Goloborodko said if the city gives the okay, the event will be a two-day event next year.

Ms. Scott pointed out that churches likely would not allow the use of their parking lots on Sunday. Mr. Goloborodko said the expectation is that there were be fewer people attending on Sunday. The majority of attendees will come on Saturday, and whoever was not able to make it that day would come Sunday instead. Parking at the schools can be used on Sunday.

Answering a question asked by Ms. Scott, Mr. Goloborodko said attendance in 2018 was down to around 8000 due to rain. In previous years there have been 12,000 to 13,000. If the weather is good, the expectation is that next year there will be 1000 to 2000 more attending given that more people know about the event. Another big factor is that there is no Strawberry Festival.

Ms. Dunham noted that there is parking available at Westminster, which is where the shuttle connects. She suggested the opportunity should be taken to direct traffic to the parking areas to help alleviate some of the congestion.

Mr. Ogliore concurred that the cancelation of the Strawberry Festival has created a vacuum which the Ukrainian festival has filled. The responsibility, however, falls on the event organizer to be proactive in advertising and encouraging the use of the shuttle, and to be a good neighbor to Crossroads Mall by clearly communicating to the public that no event parking is allowed there. He suggested taking a proactive approach by going to Crossroads Mall to talk over the parking issues and to seek solutions.

Mr. Goloborodko said the event website is being redone to incorporate parking advice and suggestions. He agreed that parking is a growing issue as attendance at the event increases. There will be a committee meeting on November 21 at which the issues, including parking, will be discussed.

Ms. Dunham asked if the shuttles run full and Mr. Goloborodko allowed that they do. He added that they run every 10 to 15 minutes.

Mr. Goloborodko said the intent is to run an event that is beneficial to everyone and that does not harm or cause inconvenience to anyone. He said his intention was to work out something with the Crossroads Mall that will work for everyone involved.

Mr. Harm pointed out that Fire had an issue in getting an aid unit parked at the site. He said next year the department would make sure there is a designated spot for the aid unit. Given the number of people who attend the event, Fire will work with Police to establish a unified command post, an approach that is consistent with the way Snowflake Lane is manned.

Mr. Bennett asked if there will be costs for the event associated with the additional conditions. Mr. Harm said there will be the cost of having an additional member from Fire. Sgt. Shovlin said the cost of having additional officers on site will also need to be paid by the event.

Mr. Goloborodko said the event provides its own security in the form of many volunteers, many of whom are 18 to 20 years old. They are assigned to different zones to guide people and help them find places. There also are volunteers who are older, including one person from the Ukrainian community who works in the medical field. The security volunteers work to make sure everyone is safe and that there is no danger for the community. The volunteers are provided with training about what to do in the event of an emergency.

Sgt. Shovlin said while that is good, it will not reduce the need for Police or Fire personnel. Mr. Waisanen added that his department works under certain guidelines handed down by the county. When a call is made to 911, the department is required to attend. Even though there is a fire station adjacent to the park, resources from it cannot be drawn on to serve the festival because they are dedicated to assisting the rest of the community. Under the International Fire Code, one crowd manager is required for every 1000 attendees. There are changes coming that will reduce that to one crowd manager for every 500 attendees. That could be a volunteer or a paid security officer but they must be trained and wear identifiable clothing. Mr. Goloborodko said the recent event had about 60 volunteers on site dedicated to providing assistance. Mr. Waisanen said that meets the intent of the code, provided they receive basic training and stay in their assigned zones.

Mr. Wright said Transportation will be looking for an improved transportation setup to avoid the same parking issues. He agreed the marketing materials should highlight and encourage the use of the shuttle. Mr. Goloborodko said carpooling is encouraged along with the use of services such as Uber.

Mr. Heider pointed out that a signed application of intent for the 2020 Ukrainian festival had not yet been received. He commented that once the document is received, it will likely be tabled until the issues and concerns are addressed, including an improved parking plan for the entertainment that comes in and out. He said the Committee sees the event as an asset to the city and something that should be continued.

Mr. Goloborodko left the meeting.

Ms. Dunham commented that the applications submitted by Mr. Ogliore had an increased focus on risk management and she asked if that had been required. She said hope is not a strategy when dealing with large crowds and asked if the Ukrainian Festival could be required to submit a strategy given their attendance numbers. Mr. Heider said that could be a possibility in conjunction with Fire.

Mr. Ogliore said he was asked by Fire to submit a risk management plan. Mr. Waisanen said the trigger was the anticipated daily attendance. Sgt. Shovlin said he thought the threshold was 10,000. Mr. Waisanen said the event will be asked to submit a risk management plan.

Mr. Heider said one thing the Committee will have to consider going forward is whether or not the event has outgrown Crossroads Park. Mr. Christiansen pointed out it is the largest park in the city. Mr. Heider stated that given the way the park is sectioned off, it would not be possible to use the entire park for a single event given how spread out it is.

Ms. Dunham noted that Mr. Goloborodko had indicated the organizers encourage people to Uber to and from the event, but she stated that absent a dedicated pick-up and drop-off site that could simply add to the overall level of congestion. Mr. Bartolome said it is very difficult for an individual to do geofencing for Uber and Lyft, unless partnered with the city. He said the event started out small but has grown way too big. The parking by the park should be reserved for ADA access. Clearly the organizer needs help and the Committee should provide it. The number of people attending the event is about what fits into Key Arena, certainly a number large enough to require more than just six officers.

Sgt. Shovlin pointed out that anyone wanting to make a violent statement of some sort would find the event a good place to do it given the 16,000 people literally body to body. Having police

on each side to watch, plus some to take care of the traffic, plus someone to police the mall parking lot, adds up the numbers quickly. There are some 20 police officers assigned to Snowflake Lane every night, including eight SWAT officers and an equal number of traffic control officers in addition to four bike officers and sometimes foot officers. All of that is in addition to the security personnel Kemper Development Company hires.

Ms. Dunham said nothing should be left up to the organizer when it comes to determining how much security assistance is needed. The Committee should determine the numbers and dictate them. Sgt. Shovlin said the Committee would indeed dictate the requirements. He added that regardless of how many volunteers will be serving, a set number of officers will be required.

Mr. Christiansen asked how many officers were assigned to the Strawberry Festival. Sgt. Shovlin said the numbers changed over the years, but the most assigned was five or six. That was for an attendance of about 16,000 over three days. There are 60 officers assigned to the Fourth of July event in Downtown Park, 20 in the park, two or three directing traffic on the surrounding streets, some that remain mobile around the edges, and several who are assigned to the upper levels of the surrounding buildings and those who serve in the command post. He suggested a minimum of five or six officers assigned to the park during the Ukrainian Festival, another two or so on the street addressing parking issues, and one in the mall, but he allowed that number could be increased.

Mr. Christiansen asked if having the event over two days instead of one will make a difference. Sgt. Shovlin said he is not an event planner but he suggested the attendance on Saturday would still be the highest, with far fewer attending on Sunday.

Mr. Wright said he was glad to see the organizer trying to mitigate the issues by spreading out the crowd over two days.

Mr. Bartolome said his concern was that the organizer does not know how to do that effectively. Mr. Ogliore agreed and said the organizer is working from a business plan that is outdated. He added that he did not see them having the resources or the experience to expand. All of the expansion will cost money, and given the testimony that the event is not making any money, the organizer is simply doing whatever he can to slice and dice.

Mr. Bartolome said his job entails listening to a lot of event planners. He said in his opinion the Ukrainian Festival organizers are essentially planning a small block party when what is in front of him has become overwhelming. The Rock and Roll Marathon draws some 16,000 people, and they have professionals come in and do the organizing for it. For a traffic control plan for a Husky game day requires 65 police officers, excluding all inside security.

Mr. Heider commented that before the event can be approved for next year, all of those concerns are going to have to be met.

Ms. Scott asked if the city has resources the event planner can be directed to. Mr. Ogliore said he would be happy to sit down and have a cup of coffee with the organizer and line out the details that will have to be addressed and provide some guidance and suggestions.

Mr. Bennett pointed out that conditions, including the number of police officers required, is based on the projected attendance in the application of intent. He asked if there is a mechanism in place that would allow for bringing in additional officers on the day of the event should the attendance numbers far exceed the projections. Sgt. Shovlin said Police could certainly put out a

call for more officers if deemed necessary, and of course the costs would be billed to the event in the hope of being reimbursed. Mr. Bennett suggested spelling out up front in the permitting documents that certain attendance numbers will require a set number of officers, and where the numbers go up, the number of required officers will go up as well.

Sgt. Shovlin said his department would plan for more officers for next year based on the most recent iteration of the event. Clearly the department did not assign enough people last year but that will change, and the event will have to pick up the tab.

❖ Applications of Intent (Continued)

h. Bellevue Live after Five

Mr. Ogliore said the proposal is to include a beer and wine garden on the private property at Compass Plaza. He said there are still details to be worked out with the property manager about who would facilitate that.

No concerns were voiced by the Committee members.

i. Crossroads Movies in the Park –

Mr. Bennett said the event, which has been ongoing for several years, continues to be successful and without issues. A fair number of the attendees walk to the park and there have not been any traffic, parking or noise issues related to the event.

No concerns were voiced by the Committee members.

j. Kelsey Creek Farm Fair

No concerns were voiced by the Committee members.

k. All in For Autism

Mr. Heider said the event involves a 5k/10k run/walk

Mr. Wright said the status of 112th Avenue NE and whether or not it can be used as part of the route will depend on where things stand with the East Link project.

Sgt. Shovlin noted that an alternate route was set up for the event last year to avoid 112th Avenue NE but it was not needed. Currently the roadway has only one lane in each direction and if that is the condition on the day of the event it will be necessary either to shut down the road altogether or find an alternate route.

l. Festival of Colors

It was noted that the Festival of Colors and Cry Holi were held on the same date last year, with one at Downtown Park and one at Crossroads Park. Mr. Heider pointed out that the event had not yet submitted a site map and setup plan

No concerns were voiced by the Committee members.

A motion to approve the date, time and location for each event reviewed was made by Sgt. Shovlin. The motion was seconded by Ms. Grote and the motion carried unanimously.

❖ Post-Event Evaluations

a. Kelsey Creek Farm Fair

The Committee reviewed the post-event evaluation for the event.

b. Komen Seattle 3-Day

The Committee reviewed the post-event evaluation for the event.

It was noted the event would not be returning.

c. Live at Lunch

The Committee reviewed the post-event evaluation for the event.

❖ Bellevue High School Homecoming Parade

Sgt. Shovlin said the high school has held a homecoming parade for the last 50 years or so. No special event permit has ever been required and said the background discussion has been about whether or not a permit should be required. He said he only recently learned the event was allowed under a right-of-way permit.

Mr. Wright said for future years it would be good if the police had an awareness of the need for a right-of-way permit. Sgt. Shovlin said in all the years the event has been held, no one had ever talked with him about it.

Mr. Christiansen commented that the Committee has not in the past required a special event permit for the parade, though it has required a right-of-way permit.

Mr. Bennett pointed out that the issue was added to the agenda on the belief that no permit of any kind had been required in the past, but in fact a right-of-way permit has been required and obtained. Sgt. Shovlin said he did not believe the parade needed anything other than a right-of-way permit.

Mr. Wright said for next year he would like Police to provide a simple map of where officers will be posted.

❖ Comments/Follow-up – None

7. NEXT MEETING

❖ December 12, 2019

8. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Heider adjourned the meeting at 10:19 a.m.

