

CITY OF BELLEVUE
SPECIAL EVENTS COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES

June 13, 2019
8:30 a.m.

Bellevue City Hall
Conference Room 1E-112

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Jon Wilson – Parks
Russell Adelson – Parks
Dean Harm – Fire
Glen Albright – Fire
Michelle Kinberg – Fire
Leo Ramos – Police
Ben Wright – Transportation
Claude Iosso – City Manager’s Office
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, Parks
Matt Haugness, Honda Expo Event

RECORDING SECRETARY:

Gerry Lindsay

1. CALL TO ORDER

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

2. COMMUNICATIONS: Written and Oral

Ms. Pamela Johnson, a resident of the Bridle Trails community, said she has been looking at the city as a whole and was concerned about the Strawberry Festival having been canceled. One thing other cities have that Bellevue does not have is parades. Bellevue is strong on multiculturalism and it is a safe city, which are things that can be cited to draw people to the city. The heritage part of the Strawberry Festival should be molded into a multicultural festival and includes a parade celebrating everyone’s culture. Get more people out and about and coming together would be a good thing for the city. A parade rather than a festival could accomplish that.

Chair Wilson stressed that the Special Events Committee does not plan or develop events. He allowed, however, that he liked the idea and suggested having a conversation about it with the Eastside Heritage Society.

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

A motion to approve the agenda was made by Mr. Albright. The motion was seconded by Ms. Grote and the motion carried unanimously.

4. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

A motion to approve the May 19, 2019, meeting minutes as submitted was made by Mr. Christiansen. The motion was seconded by Ms. Grote and the motion carried unanimously.

5. COMMITTEE REPORTS

❖ Routing and Location Subcommittee Report

Chair Wilson said the subcommittee met on June 4 with representatives of Stance Wars, the car show event at Bellevue College scheduled for July 13. He said police, transportation and fire were all represented to discuss issues associated with the event. The tweaks made over the last couple of years have made things much better. No big changes are envisioned. The event organizer is very supportive of the city's actions and wants restrictions in place in order to ensure having a safe and fun event.

Chair Wilson said planning for the 4th of July events is ongoing. He said there was a meeting on June 12 with emergency operations folks to discuss incident action plans and security for the event. Overall the event will be largely unchanged from previous years.

Mr. Christiansen asked if having only two arts fairs instead of three is a permanent change. Chair Wilson said that certainly would be the case for 2019 but added that he could not say the change would be permanent. Festival of the Arts will not happen in 2019, primarily because it lost its venue.

6. OLD BUSINESS

❖ Tabled Events: Ascent Prime Steak & Sushi

Chair Wilson reminded the Committee members that Ascent Prime Steak & Sushi, the restaurant on the 31st floor of Lincoln Square South, would like to do a firework show on New Year's Eve. To date there has been a lot of discussion about the event being private and occurring on private property, with the fireworks being launched from the Bellevue Square parking lot. However, a fireworks show is never private given the impacts to a downtown area. The proposal has been reviewed by the land use team, which reviews all activities on private properties for permitting and code compliance. Their conclusion was that they would not approve the event. The event organizer has expressed his intention to pursue the event by submitting an application for a temporary use permit. Such applications are reviewed by the land use team and if it is not approved the team will include the reasons for the decision. It has also been intimated that the organizer may seek to create a public fireworks event, which is something the Special Events Committee would need to review and approve.

Chair Wilson noted that the event organizer has compared his proposed event to the 4th of July fireworks show and it has been pointed out to him that it is part of a larger day-long event that includes a variety of elements; it is not just a firework show. The organizer has reached out to Kemper Development Company about seeking a one-night extension to Celebration Lane and may reach out to the Bellevue Downtown Association which will have the ice rink in the park that night, about culminating the various activities in a fireworks event.

Mr. Christiansen asked what reasons land use has cited for not approving the event. Mr. Albright

said the noise ordinance is the biggest concern. The fireworks show would occur at midnight, which is outside the hours set by the noise ordinance. Mr. Christiansen pointed out that every New Year's Eve there are fireworks set off by residents all over the city. Chair Wilson agreed but said that is an ongoing issue that the city is also trying to put an end to. He allowed that there are generally people out and about at that hour on New Year's Eve, but a fireworks show would impact traffic and trigger possible road closures and would require a police and fire presence. He stressed that the impetus for the proposed event is to put on a show for the patrons of the restaurant, not for the public.

Ms. Scott asked what time the New Year's Eve fireworks at Seattle Center are shot off. Chair Wilson said they are launched at midnight. Mr. Bartolome added that Seattle Center is a public park and the fireworks show is a city sponsored public event. A noise variance is required for the event along with setting up fire exclusion zones.

6. NEW BUSINESS

❖ Application of Intent: Honda Expo Event

Chair Wilson said the Honda Expo is slated to be held at Bellevue College in August. He said an application of intent had been received, and that Bellevue College asked the organizer to come discuss the event with the Committee.

Mr. Matt Haugness said he started hosting car show events eight years ago, beginning with small events and working his way up to larger events, including the Triple X Root Beer for five years. He said he was well versed in working with cities to make sure any impacts from his events are minimal. For the Honda Expo event, the focus will be entirely on Honda and Acura cars, which limits the scope of participants. He said the event will not be as large or as impactful as Stance Wars.

Mr. Haugness said he said he wanted to minimize costs to the extent possible in the first year of the event. He said it was his understanding that he would need traffic support at the end of the event, and to that end he said he has been receiving advice from the Stance War organizers also at Bellevue College..

Mr. Bartolome asked how the limiting would occur. Mr. Haugness said it would be done at via the preregistration. The main event of the car show itself will be on the top floor. The next floor down will have VIP parking. Both of those floors will be limited through preregistration. There will be no day of registration for those floors. Almost all parking will be limited to the parking structure itself, though a plan will be in place for having overflow parking. Within a few weeks of the event it should be possible to have in hand a good idea of what the turnout will be. Spectators will enter from the bottom floors of the parking structure and steps will be taken to get them in as quickly as possible to avoid backups.

Mr. Bartolome said another car show is planned in Seattle on the same day. Mr. Haugness allowed that there will also be a Hot Wheels show in Everett on that day.

Mr. Albright asked about the size of the stage that will be used and Mr. Haugness said it will be about 24x16, two feet off the ground. It will have some trussing behind it but nothing overly large. He said he has been receiving some very good advice from Stance War event in regard to what works and what does not work, and that will help to make the process run smoothly.

Chair Wilson said there will be a requirement to have a police presence, especially out on the street. Additionally, all safety and security codes will need to be followed.

Mr. Haugness said there would be a few food trucks at the event. They will need to be approved by the college based on their requirements. Chair Wilson said having 15 or more food booths triggers a special event tax based on per day per booth. Having fewer than 15 simply requires the vendors to have valid business licenses.

Mr. Albright noted from the map that there would be vendors on site. Mr. Haugness said he anticipated having five or six vendors. He said he was aware that tents cannot be erected in the parking structure, so they will all be placed only on the top floor or surrounding the stage. Mr. Albright asked how large the HXPO tent would be and Mr. Haugness said it would be a 10x10 tent.

Mr. Albright informed Mr. Haugness that he would want to go over emergency procedures with him at some point prior to the event. Mr. Haugness agreed and added that he was hoping to limit off-duty police to the end of the event and have them located at each of the exits. Chair Wilson pointed out that there is a minimum number of hours requirement. Mr. Haugness said the plan calls for having Bellevue College security staff on site as well.

Chair Wilson asked where the event participants are expected to come from. Mr. Haugness said they will come primarily from Washington state, though some Canadians will come down.

Ms. Kinberg said the office of emergency management staffs a duty officer 24/7 should there be something catastrophic. She provided Mr. Haugness with the phone number to call.

Mr. Haugness said he estimated attendance would be about a thousand or less for the first-year event. He said he could see it growing to 1500 or more over time. He said he would work with Bellevue College on a contingency plan for addressing a larger-than-expected crowd.

- ❖ Post-Event Evaluations: None
- ❖ Comments/Follow-up

Chair Wilson said he was working on developing event categories as part of updating the special events fees matrix for 2020. He said as drafted one category is athletic events, which involve runs, walks and cycling events, both recreational and competitive that might require individual or team registration fees. All In For Autism, the Lake to Lake Ride, Four on the Fourth and the Komen 3-Day Walk events would all fall into the athletic category, and the events that are more detailed would obviously have a higher fee. Another category in the draft is commercial events, which are controlled or ticketed entry events. Such events are not necessarily run by commercial entities. Examples would be concerts, the car show planned for 2020, and any festival that requires a ticket. Most of the events that occur in Bellevue would fall into the proposed community events category. They are free events that are open to the public. They provide a public benefit and are typically organized by non-profit entities. Examples include fee festivals and fairs, free concerts and public holiday celebrations, such as 4th of July, Live at Lunch, the Ukrainian Festival and Flavors of India. Snowflake Lane would fall into the proposed parade category. As drafted, other categories include free speech events, such as marches, rallies and protests; and citywide events that have impacts regionally, such as Seattle's Seafair races and which in Bellevue would be the arts fairs, 4th of July and Snowflake Lane.

Chair Wilson said he would the draft out to the Committee members for review and would schedule a fuller discussion for a future meeting.

Chair Wilson said he was recently contacted about a coast-to-coast Model T race event, which is apparently a reenactment of a 1909 race. The race will be end in Seattle and the organizer would like to swing by Downtown Park, which would be on June 12, something supported by the Chamber of Commerce. The details of what that would entail are not yet known. There is a private event scheduled for Downtown Park that same day from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. He said he did not expect crowds of people to show up for the Model T event.

7. NEXT MEETING

❖ July 11, 2019

8. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Wilson adjourned the meeting at 9:27 a.m.