

CITY OF BELLEVUE
SPECIAL EVENTS COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES

September 12, 2019
8:30 a.m.

Bellevue City Hall
Conference Room 1E-112

MEMBERS PRESENT: Jon Wilson – Parks
Andy Heider – Parks
Dean Harm – Fire
Glen Albright – Fire
Dane Waisanen – Fire
Mike Shovlin – Police
Weijun Zhu – Transportation
Claude Iosso – City Manager’s Office
Glenn Bartolome – Metro Transit
Neal Christiansen – Community Representative East
Mike Ogliore – Business Representative Downtown
Roz Liming – Business Representative, Crossroads

OTHERS PRESENT: Imane Elmesbahi, Shelly Brittingham, Parks; Haija Nunn,
Ascend Hospitality Group

RECORDING SECRETARY: Gerry Lindsay

1. CALL TO ORDER

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

Chair Wilson noted that Dane Waisanen with the fire marshal’s office would be taking over on the Committee for Glenn Albright. He also noted that Weijun Zhu was sitting in for Ben Wright.

2. COMMUNICATIONS: Written and Oral – None

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

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

Chair Wilson reported that he would be leaving the city for a job in Flagstaff, Arizona. He allowed that it was still undecided who would step in to chair the Committee going forward.

Assistant Parks Director Shelly Brittingham thanked Chair Wilson for his service to the city over the last ten years, particularly as chair of the Special Events Committee and his work with the emergency operations group.

4. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

A motion to approve the July 11, 2019, meeting minutes as submitted was made by Sgt. Shovlin. The motion was seconded by Mr. Ogliore and the motion carried unanimously.

5. COMMITTEE REPORTS

- ❖ Routing and Location Subcommittee Report – None

6. OLD BUSINESS

- ❖ Tabled Events: Ascend Prime Steak & Sushi

Haija Nunn with Ascend Hospitality Group noted that she had been in contact with the city about an event being planned for New Years Eve. She said she had not been able to get any clarity relative to a permit that may be needed for a fireworks launch over Meydenbauer Bay and whether or not a special event permit would be required. She noted that the idea of launching from the same location used for the Fourth of July event was off the table in favor of a location in the waters of the city of Medina. The perimeter of the fallout zone, however, may touch portions of waters in the city of Bellevue.

Chair Wilson said the issue of the fallout zone was something fire would need to address. As far as a special event permit, he said it would come down to how it would be advertised, where the crowds would be and how the crowds would be managed. When planned for the Kemper Development Company property, the understanding was that the event would not be advertised. Ms. Nunn said all the details of the event remain the same. The fireworks will be launched at midnight and the show will last about six minutes. The move to Medina was made to avoid triggering all of the requirements outlined by the city of Bellevue. She said her question was whether or not fallout from the fireworks touching city of Bellevue waters would trigger the need for a special event permit. Chair Wilson said given those circumstances, no special event permit would be required. There would, however, be permits required from fire. The noise from the fireworks certainly will impact residents of both Medina and Bellevue, but that will not trigger a need for a special event permit.

Ms. Nunn said she would contact the fire marshal's office but asked to continue as a tabled event given that an application of intent had been submitted. She said in the event things do not work out for launching from the bay in Medina, she likely would return to work with the Committee about launching in Bellevue.

6. NEW BUSINESS

- ❖ Applications of Intent

- Arbor Day-Earth Day 2020

Chair Wilson commented that the event organizer submits an application of intent well in advance of the planned event date. He said the Committee has not in the past required a special event permit for the event because of its size, and added it appeared nothing was different for the 2020 event. Planned for Lewis Creek Park, the event has around 400 participant volunteers planting trees.

A motion not to require a special event permit was made by Mr. Christiansen. The motion was

seconded by Mr. Ogliore and the motion carried unanimously.

- Kids Festival 2020

Discussion of the event was tabled. Chair Wilson said the proposal is to schedule the event for September 2020.

- WWII & Holocaust Remembrance Day

Discussion of the event was tabled. Chair Wilson said the event was held in May at Downtown Park in 2018. The crowd was relatively small but the organizer intends to grow the event, which is sponsored by the Russian Jewish community.

❖ 6th Street Fair: Future Development and Impact to Location/Footprint

This item was discussed as a post-event evaluation.

❖ Post-Event Evaluations

- Bellevue Arts Museum 2019

Chair Wilson said the comment about the art installation was in regard to the Macy's fountain court off of Bellevue Way. It was installed and tied off to city light poles, which is not allowed. Absent the proper permitting, the right-of-way folks made them remove the installation. In the future everything the group does involving city property will need to be carefully reviewed and communicated ahead of the event so that no one will be taken by surprise.

- 6th Street Fair 2019

Chair Wilson asked Mr. Ogliore to speak briefly about the impacts of the construction project around the Doxa church, noting that during next year's arts festival the Doxa church and Barnes and Noble sites likely will be only a large hole in the ground. There have been discussions about expanding the fair's footprint on the streets.

Mr. Ogliore said the lot from the Doxa church all the way out to NE 8th Street will be redeveloped, the construction scheduled to start in April 2020. A new home will need to be found for 40 artist booths and food vendors. He said he has talked with Mr. Waisanen and Bellevue fire about utilizing more of 106th Avenue NE for artist booths. The north-south route on 106th Avenue NE would need to be kept open. There have also been talks with Paccar about utilizing the former California Pizza Kitchen lot.

Mr. Ogliore said the 2019 fair went very well. There was a concern about the impact of losing the third fair and the negative PR that led some from the public to believe the arts fair was not happening at all. The crowds were, however, great and the event was very successful. The 6th Street Fair currently accommodates 105 artists and even by maximizing everything possible on 106th Avenue NE will mean losing about 14 artist booths.

Mr. Albright asked how the loss of the one arts festival affected the other two. Mr. Ogliore said there was no significant drop as a result.

- Jubilee REACH 2019

Chair Wilson reported that he received no calls or emails regarding the event. Sgt. Shovlin said police heard no complaints, and Mr. Heider said parks had no issues either.

- Crossroads Movies in the Park 2019

Ms. Liming said attendance was lower this year, even though there were no weather issues. She said the movie events are family oriented and they trigger no problems.

- Downtown Movies in the Park 2019

Chair Wilson noted that the first movie event in Downtown Park had to be canceled due to rain. Otherwise attendance was largely the same it has been in past years. All went well and there were no complaints.

- Bellevue Family Fourth

Chair Wilson reported that there were the usual challenges of dogs in the park and the like. There were some drones flown, but rather than being over the park they were primarily over the streets. The event ushers in rules that are in place for only the one day, including a ban on dogs in the park, a requirement for tents to be removed by a certain time, and no smoking.

- Ukrainian Festival

Chair Wilson said the event had to deal with lightning and thunder just as the event was closing and cleaning up. The park was not brought back to its original condition. He recommended having parks staff meet individually with the event organizer to talk about the damage done to the park and any rules and regulations not adhered to. Many of the power extension cords were not covered, thus there were numerous tripping hazards, including on sidewalks. After meeting with parks staff, the event staff should also come and meet with the Committee. There have been issues with the event in the past, but not damage to the park.

Ms. Liming said the event drew 16,000 people in a ten-hour period. Businesses at Crossroads Mall was impacted severely. No signs were put up by the organizer about not parking at the mall or any business area. Conversely, the Flavors of India organizer did everything right. The mall received a large number of complaints from customers and merchants. Business at the mall just about died on Saturday from 10:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Physical and verbal threats were made to mall security personnel who were trying to enforce the no parking rules. The Committee should think beyond just the impacts on the park and consider the impacts on the community generally and the local businesses. Mall management holds the view that should the event be allowed in Crossroads Park again in 2020, the issues will have to be addressed, particularly if the event is extended to two days. The event continues to grow and it has outgrown Crossroads Park.

Chair Wilson said the idea behind extending the event to two days has been that it might split the crowd into two smaller crowds. The Strawberry Festival at its peak drew 20,000 people per day. The issue is a matter of managing the crowds better. He added that if security personnel are threatened, a call should be put in to the police.

Sgt. Shovlin said he went by the event a couple of times while it was going on. He said the event

was clearly busier this year than any year in the past. He said he had never seen that many people in the park, even for the Strawberry Festival. Given that nothing happened that required police, there were more than enough police on site. However, should there have been an incident, far more officers would have been needed. The event will be required to have far more officers in 2020. There were huge parking problems, and even though signs were posted at the mall about no event parking, all of the parking spots there were taken and cars were spilled out into the neighborhoods. For some reason no one chose to park along 164th Avenue NE where there have always been problems in the past.

Mr. Harm said fire had a dedicated aid unit posted there during the event, though no room for the unit was provided for in the park so it was located at the fire station next door. Going forward, if there are going to be that many attendees fire will require that a command post be set up.

Mr. Christiansen asked if the event operated a shuttle service and outlying parking area. Chair Wilson said they did operate a shuttle service. He allowed that its efficiency, as in all cases, was impacted by people doing what they want to do, and parking far away from the event is often not something people want to do. Certainly better signage is needed at the mall, and people should not feel threatened for enforcing the rules. Mr. Christiansen suggested having a police officer posted to the mall parking lot might be in order.

Sgt. Shovlin reiterated that in 2020 he would demand that there be far more officers assigned to the event. He agreed that an officer could be posted to the mall parking lot.

Mr. Heider said parks intends to seek reimbursement for some fairly extensive turf damage. There was some sort of open-flame cooking that occurred on the grass. There were several areas on which hot grease was either spilled or dumped. Vehicles drove on the grass. Parks will require having parks staff paid for and posted to the event. He confirmed that park staff would be meeting soon with the event organizer, who has been claiming that most of the damage to the park occurred prior to the event. It is good that the event was well attended and well liked, but it clearly has outgrown the Crossroads Park.

Chair Wilson commented that the event has clearly become a regional event for the Ukrainian community. People come from all over to attend, including from Portland and Idaho. He reiterated that after parks staff meets with the event organizer, the Committee will want to invite the organizer to come and discuss the issues and possible additional requirements before approving the 2020 event. The city wants to host cultural festivals, but location and safety will always be paramount.

Mr. Iosso reported that he was approached by the event organizer through Facebook wanting the city to promote the event. He said his response was that the city does not promote events that are not sponsored by the city. Clearly the event did not need additional promotion anyway.

Chair Wilson stated that when the event first came to Bellevue, the Ukrainian ambassador to the United States met with the City Council and talked about the event. The city threw a lot of support behind the event. The cultural diversity manager met with the organizer as well and there was a loose agreement that the city would support the event by waiving some fees. There was, however, no Memorandum of Understanding or agreement put in place making it a city sponsored event.

Mr. Ogliore asked if the event organizer has looked at Marymoor Park. Chair Wilson said he did

not think so but agreed it should be considered as an option.

❖ Comments/Follow-up

Chair Wilson announced that the Komen 3-Day Walk event organizer has made it known that this year will be the last year the walk will be held in the Seattle area. The event used to draw 3000 walkers, while this year it is down to 300 or 400. The walk will be coming through NE 12th Street between 116th Avenue NE and 120th Avenue NE where there is an active construction project under way. The construction managers have been made aware that walkers will be coming through.

Chair Wilson also noted that the final concert in the park would occur later in the day at Compass Plaza.

Chair Wilson stated that working with the Special Events Committee over the years had been a pleasure and a highlight of his time spent in Bellevue. He said he would miss everyone associated with the Committee.

7. NEXT MEETING

❖ October 10, 2019

8. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Wilson adjourned the meeting at 9:31 a.m.