

CITY OF BELLEVUE
SPECIAL EVENTS COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES

February 11, 2021
8:30 a.m.

Bellevue City Hall
Conference Room 1E-112

MEMBERS PRESENT: Susan Freeburg – Parks
Andy Heider – Parks
Mark Anderson – Fire
Dane Waisanen – Fire
Mike Shovlin – Police
Joseph Nault – Police
Rick Logwood – Transportation
Mike Ogliore – Business Representative Downtown
Chris Dunham – Business Representative West
Meredith Langridge – Special Event Promoter, Position 1

OTHERS PRESENT: Brad Bennett, Imane Elmesbahi, Parks; Councilmember Barksdale

RECORDING SECRETARY: Gerry Lindsay

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 8:30 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 x. The motion was seconded by x and the motion carried unanimously.

4. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

A motion to approve the December 10, 2020, meeting minutes as submitted was made by Mr. Nault. The motion was seconded by Mr. Waisanen and the motion carried unanimously.

5. COMMITTEE REPORTS

❖ Routing and Location Subcommittee Report – None

6. OLD BUSINESS – None

6. NEW BUSINESS

Chair Freeburg reminded the Committee members that work on a new process is underway but has not yet been implemented. Accordingly, the process for approving events will continue as it has in the past. She stressed that due to the continuing pandemic, the Committee would approve

the date, time and location of events, but if restrictions are in place at the time of a given event, the event will not be allowed to go forward. A covid form will be attached to the application and it will need to be signed by the event organizer confirming their understanding of the guidelines.

❖ Applications of Intent

Snowflake Lake/Celebration Lane

Chair Freeburg observed that the parameters for Snowflake Lane were largely the same as for previous years, with the exception of 2020.

There were no issues raised or questions asked about the application.

Lake to Lake Bike Ride, N

Chair Freeburg noted the event was largely the same as in prior years.

There were no issues raised or questions asked about the application.

Ukrainian International Festival

Chair Freeburg noted from the application that the event organizer had reduced the number of participants from up to 14,000 to 7000.

Sgt. Shovlin asked why they did that in light of the fact that their last event drew 16,000. He asked if the reduction was to limit the number of police officers they would have to hire. Chair Freeburg said she did not have a specific answer to the question, though she said the organizer did indicate he believed the event would be smaller due to the covid restrictions over the last year. It could be that if there are no covid restrictions in place at the time of the event that people will be itching to get out and will attend in large numbers. One approach would be to hold them to the higher numbers of the past.

Mr. Anderson said his department held discussions with the organizer about the number of fire personnel the event would need to hire and the organizer was quite upset about it. He agreed the Committee should plan on seeing the larger attendance number.

Sgt. Shovlin said the organizer should be informed that the Committee is planning on a bigger number. The covid argument alone is not enough to justify saying there will be fewer attendees. The recent Snowflake Lane event drew up to 10,000 per night. He said he would not hire to accommodate 7000 when it is likely far more will show up. Mr. Anderson said fire would take the same approach.

Chair Freeburg said she told the organizer when he submitted the application that the attendance number seemed low. The organizer did, however, said his understanding of the costs would cause him to reevaluate whether to do the event or not.

Sgt. Shovlin proposed informing the organizer that police and fire would be assuming an attendance of 16,000, and suggested having the organizer attend a Committee meeting if he has an argument with that. Chair Freeburg said she would reach out to the organizer and convey that message.

Mr. Nault asked if the issue of the damage that occurred to the park as a result of the event two years ago was ever resolved. Chair Freeburg said the event ultimately paid the amount that was agreed to. She said the organizer was also informed that a pre-event inspection would precede the next event.

Mr. Heider stated that regardless of the number of attendees listed in the application, parks will be requiring monitors to be onsite both days for setup, take down and during the event. Chair Freeburg said the organizer had been made aware of that requirement as well.

Jubilee REACH - Celebration in The Park

Chair Freeburg said the application indicates there will be 2500 participants. She said the event is essentially the same as has been done in the past.

Mr. Heider said the event has always been a good event.

There were no issues raised or questions asked about the application.

Bellevue Arts Museum ARTSfair

Sgt. Shovlin said his reading of the application was that the three events that became two were to be separated out again and held on three different dates.

Ms. Langridge explained that even though she submitted the permit for the Bellevue Arts Museum ARTSfair, it is unlikely the event will happen. If things miraculously move quickly, the event could take place. The museum is planning to produce a virtual event and is very sure an in-person event will not occur given the investment it would take, an expected low turnout, and concerns about safety and protocol for the artists and the attendees.

Mr. Nault observed that the second of the two events was scheduled for Labor Day weekend. If off-duty officers are called in to work on a holiday weekend, there will be significant overtime costs. He said the applicant needs to be aware of that.

Mr. Ogliore said the submittal for the two dates was completely dependent on the museum making the final call as to whether or not to shift back to the July dates. He said it would be good to come to an agreement on what the deadline for canceling needs to be. The September dates were selected with the idea in mind that the events would not occur on the typical July dates.

Mr. Nault said notification of cancelation should occur as soon as possible given the labor requirements with the police officers union in terms of locking down dates when people cannot have a day off and so forth. Mr. Anderson said fire would also want to know as soon as possible.

Chair Freeburg said transportation wanted at least two week's notice of the event proceeding or not in order to give notice to the holders of right-of-way permits.

Ms. Langridge said she would seek to have an answer by February 15.

Bellevue Four on the 4th Dog Jog Walk

Mr. Ogliore said he submitted the application but said it appears to be unlikely the event will go forward for a number of reasons.

Bellevue Magic Season Ice Rink

Mr. Ogliore said the planned date for opening has been bumped up to the week before Thanksgiving, which will impact the load-in timeline. It was hoped that a new tensile structure would be acquired but that is now not likely to happen until next season. The logistics of move-in and materials will therefore be the same as in previous years.

Mr. Bennett has when the break down will occur, and Mr. Ogliore said it was planned for January 8 or 9 to be the final day of skating, and move-out will occur immediately thereafter. It takes two to two and a half weeks to tear it all down and move it all out.

Heart of Bellevue Music Series

Mr. Ogliore said the name represents a rebranding of the old Live at Lunch series. The event in 2020 was fully virtual, and it will start virtual again in the April timeframe. Once appropriate, things will hopefully shift to in-person at some of the same locations used in the past, with the exception of the Bellevue Collection site at NE 6th Street and 106th Avenue NE, which will not be available. The event may run later into September but not without providing the Committee with an updated application.

Mr. Ogliore added that it is hoped the event will be able to partner with Wright Runstad in the Spring District for an in-person event on their property.

Bellevue Downtown Arts Market

Mr. Ogliore said the Bellevue Downtown Arts Market was previously called the NE 6th Fair. He said nothing else about the event is planned, except for possibly the September date. The intent is to go back to the July date in 2022.

Councilmember Barksdale asked how the city can better support getting the word out about events. Mr. Ogliore said the Visit Bellevue staff just prior to covid had formed a special events committee with the focus and purpose of supporting and promoting events in Bellevue. He said using that organization as a platform and a voice would be ideal. It also would be good to work with the city's communications team to develop a plan for promoting events.

Mr. Bennett added that the city maintains an events calendar that is inclusive of pretty much everything. Special events do appear on that calendar. He said he and Chair Freeburg had plans to make improvements to the webpage as well, including a list of approved events.

A motion to approve the date, time and location for each of the events, with the exception of the Ukrainian Festival, and contingent on covid conditions at the time of each event, was made by Sgt. Shovlin. The motion was seconded by Mr. Wright and the motion carried unanimously.

With regard to holding the 6th Street fair on Labor Day weekend, Sgt. Shovlin clarified that Saturday and Sunday would involve regular overtime costs. The much higher overtime cost would only kick in on Monday.

❖ Update on Progress on the Manual

Chair Freeburg reported that good progress was being made on the manual and that they were

close to finalizing a proposed fee structure. The fee structure will ultimately need to go to the assistant directors and then to the Council. As soon as the details of the administrative manual are finalized, the user guide will be presented. IT and graphics are working on updating the look and feel of the application to make it more modern. A web form is also being created to make it easier to fill out and submit applications, though the paper form will also still be available.

Mr. Bennett said the review of the policy and procedure manual for how the Committee functions highlighted the fact that mention is made of financial assistance without any clear attending policy or procedure, such as organization eligibility and the criteria the Committee should consider before approval. He said he has been focused on conducted best practices research and will be recommending some policies and procedures which will have to go through a review by the assistant directors before coming to the Committee. The application also talks about partnerships, something that is not addressed at all by either the administrative manual or the code. He said he would report back to the Committee at a future date.

Councilmember Barksdale asked if the evaluation form is something the Committee reviews periodically. Mr. Bennett said each event organizer is required to submit a post-event evaluation. Those evaluations are reviewed by the Committee during the meeting following the event date. A review of the post-event evaluation form and the questions asked would be a good idea, particularly if there is additional information the Committee members would like to have.

❖ Co-Chair Nominations

Chair Freeburg stressed that the position of co-chair is to support the running of meetings when the Chair cannot attend. That will require staying abreast of what has the Committee has done in previous meetings.

Councilmember Barksdale suggested it would be a good idea to outline in the duties of the co-chair in the policies and procedures manual. Chair Freeburg said the current manual calls for a co-chair, but noted that the Committee has not had one for a very long time.

Ms. Langridge said it would help to have a written description of the duties of the co-chair before having anyone commit to taking on the role.

Mr. Bennett said he would work with Chair Freeburg to draft roles and responsibilities for the co-chair position and have it available for review at the next meeting.

Mr. Nault said it would be difficult for the police department to commit to serving in the role for a full year given the level of turnover that occurs via assignments. He asked if the co-chair role is something that could be done on an as-needed basis. Chair Freeburg said her preference would be to have a chosen co-chair, and to have someone fill in as needed should both the chair and the co-chair be unable to attend a meeting.

Mr. Bennett suggested that should a vacancy arise due to reassignment or someone leaving city employment could be addressed in due course.

❖ Post-Event Evaluations – None

❖ Comments/Follow-up

Ms. Dunham asked if the Committee has discussed the types of things by way of policies and

measures that will need to be implemented once large-scale events come back into play. She said event managers will need to know what they are as soon as possible so they can be built into budgets. Chair Freeburg said the biggest thing will be follow the safe start guidelines and to make sure everything is in line with what the governor has requested of events. Event organizers will be asked to sign a form indicating that they will follow those guidelines.

Mr. Bennett added that as event organizers are planning their events, whether they be modified for full scale, they will be required to have their own covid operating plan. That plan will be part of what they will need to sign and submit to the city. He noted that the Committee and the city is supportive of events happening in Bellevue and the desire is to see them be successful. Given the odd situation the pandemic has triggered, the Committee will hopefully be very flexible in working with event organizers in an effort to create opportunities to meet with success.

Councilmember Barksdale asked if the Committee is taking steps to provide event organizers with the state guidelines so they can have a clear idea of what they will need to do. Chair Freeburg said it would not be difficult to include a link to the most recent state guidelines on the application page. She said she would hesitate to try creating a separate outline of the guidelines given that the state guidelines are subject to change.

Ms. Dunham said event organizers want to be fully in compliance with the guidelines. Safety is a bigger issue than it has ever been before. She said once things start to reopen, event budget lines are likely to increase accordingly, however. If there is a way for the city to offer any partnerships or support, it would be welcomed by event managers. Events always come down to cost, and the efforts to make sure the community is safe will have associated costs. There should also be a plan in hand for having more diverse events in the city along with an overall increased amount of events.

Mr. Ogliore echoed the need to be inclusive. He said event organizers are scared and are looking for guidance so they can all be operating off the same page as the people handing out the permits.

7. NEXT MEETING

❖ March 11, 2021

8. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Freeburg adjourned the meeting at 9:38 a.m.