

CITY OF BELLEVUE
SPECIAL EVENTS COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES

March 14, 2019
8:30 a.m.

Bellevue City Hall
Conference Room 1E-112

MEMBERS PRESENT: Jon Wilson – Parks
Andy Heider – Parks
Mike Shovlin – Police
Marcia Harnden – Police
Ben Wright – Transportation
Glenn Bartolome – Metro Transit
Neal Christiansen – Community Representative East
Mike Ogliore – Business Representative Downtown
Jane Kantor – Business Representative West
Roz Liming – Business Representative, Crossroads
Laurie Scott – Downtown Resident Representative

OTHERS PRESENT: Imane Elmesbahi, Parks
Brian Gomez – Fire

RECORDING SECRETARY: Gerry Lindsay

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 8:34 a.m. by Chair Wilson who presided.

2. COMMUNICATIONS: Written and Oral – None

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Chair Wilson noted the addition to the agenda that had been mailed out the Ascend Fine Stake and Sushi New Years' Eve fireworks show under New Business.

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

4. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

A motion to approve the February 21, 2019, meeting minutes as submitted was made by Ms. Liming. The motion was seconded by Sgt. Shovlin and the motion carried unanimously.

5. COMMITTEE REPORTS

❖ Routing and Location Subcommittee Report

Chair Wilson said the subcommittee did not meet in March. The meeting in February addressed the color festival events. The next meeting will be the first Monday in April and the focus will be

on the Family 4th of July and the two arts fair events.

6. OLD BUSINESS

❖ Stance Wars

Chair Wilson said discussion of the Stance Wars event was tabled at the January meeting due to an outstanding balance due the fire department. The invoice has since been paid. The Saturday event, which has been held at Bellevue College for several years, made it onto the Committee's radar about four years ago as a result of complaints regarding noise, traffic and post-even shenanigans in the form of street racing. Conditions were established two years ago but a special event permit was not required. In 2018 the Committee chose to require a permit due to the growth and impact of the event. All went smoothly for the 2018 event and the same conditions and permit should be required for 2019.

Sgt. Shovlin said it took far fewer cops to handle the event in 2018, and the event organizer was fully supportive.

A motion to approve a special event permit for Stance Wars for the date and time was made by Mr. Ogliore. The motion was seconded by Mr. Wright and the motion carried unanimously.

❖ Tabled Events: 5K-50K Run at Lake Hills Greenbelt

Chair Wilson said the event begins at the Kelsey Creek Shopping Center, goes south through the blueberry farms, across Lake Hills Boulevard, continue down and then circles back up. The down and back route amounts to 5K. The event involves relay teams that collectively run the event ten times for 50K. Given the team approach, no more than 20 or 30 participants are running at any given time. The crossing of Lake Hills Boulevard will require the posting of an officer to address the safety and transportation impacts. The event in 2018 saw the runners spread out along the course, with some of them walking, which meant that the event lasted much longer than there were officers on site.

Sgt. Shovlin suggested that signs should be posted indicating that traffic may be held up at the street crossing. Additionally, either officers are going to need to be scheduled to be present for a longer period of time, or the event is going to have to be given a timeframe in which to operate, outside of which runners will have to stop at the street.

Chair Wilson said the signage could take the form of a variable message board supplied by the event organizer. He stressed that the event is not huge and the impact on traffic is not all that great with the hit or miss closure to allow the runners to pass by.

Sgt. Shovlin said the event was scheduled for four hours but at the pace it was being run it took more like six hours. For the shorter down and back route, the traffic delays were greater because there was a single large group running together. For the longer route, the runners were more stretched out and the traffic was delayed for shorter periods of time, but over a much longer period of time.

Capt. Harnden said Kirkland uses special event signs, including some smaller ones, and the signs are put up in advance of events. Sgt. Shovlin said he did not care what kind of sign is used but stressed the need to post signs to warn drivers of the possible delays.

Chair Wilson noted from the application that the event organizer anticipates having 250 participants and some 20 spectators. Sgt. Shovlin also noted from the application that the event time was listed as being from 7:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., with setup starting at 6:00 a.m. and take down completed by 5:00 p.m. He said if runners are to be on the course from 7:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., there will be a large number of crossings of the street.

Mr. Ogliore said 50K is 30 miles and added that a slow person walking a marathon takes six or seven hours. He said he would establish a threshold and stress that the organizer will need to be paid someone to man the crossing for the entire time. Sgt. Shovlin reiterated his preference for allowing the event to continue for a set period of time during which traffic is stopped to facilitate runners crossing the street, after which the runners would need to be stopped if there is traffic on the roadway.

Chair Wilson tabled the event and said he would talk with the event organizer about the timeline and other issues. He said he would not rule out telling the organizer that the Committee would not be able to handle the event for 2019 given the concerns and the need to plan well in advance of the event.

Mr. Wright asked if the event could simply operate under a street use permit. Chair Wilson said the event would still need a park permit in addition to the street use permit, and the same concerns would still have to be addressed.

6. NEW BUSINESS

❖ Post-Event Evaluations

- Bellevue Magic Season
- Garden d'Lights
- Snowflake Lane

Chair Wilson noted that each of the three wintertime events mentioned the weather in their post-event evaluations.

No other comments were made.

❖ Application of Intent – Ascend New Year's Eve Fireworks

Chair Wilson noted that the event organizer asked back in November 2018 about doing the event New Year's Day 2019. It could not be made to happen that quickly. An application has been submitted for New Year's Day 2020. There was a party held at Ascend on New Year's Eve 2019 but it did not include fireworks. The application indicates that while Ascend is not opposed to partnering with another party, there is no desire to hold a citywide viewing opportunity for the residents of Bellevue and as such no citywide promotion or activations around fireworks are proposed. Chair Wilson said he read that statement to mean the event is not a public event, which takes it out of the Committee's domain. While the fireworks certainly would be visible to the public, it is clear that the public will not be invited to attend the event, which will occur on private property.

Chair Wilson said the conversation would more appropriately be held with fire, police and transportation.

Mr. Wright observed that the event likely would need a noise exemption.

Sgt. Shovlin said he assumed that some streets would need to be shut down, meaning that both police and transportation will need to be involved. Chair Wilson said fire would need to identify the drop zone relative to the fireworks. Additionally, any road closure would impact nearby condominiums in the drop zone. The stated intent is to launch the fireworks from the same place used for the 4th of July event, but to use fireworks that do not go as high, which might make the drop zone perimeter smaller. Even so, both NE 4th Street and 100th Avenue NE would likely be affected.

Chair Wilson reiterated that the event will not be a public event. Mr. Bartolome agreed but suggested that because the event will involve police, fire and transportation, it should be handled by the Committee. Chair Wilson stressed that the Committee is not charged with overseeing private events on private property.

Mr. Christiansen said it was his recollection that private events on private property that in fact do have a public impact can be addressed by the Committee. Chair Wilson said the rule is that the Committee can only be involved in public events, even if they are held on private property. Stance Wars, Wintergrass and the Bellevue Jazz Festival are all cases in point given that they are public events held on private property. Even though a private event occurring on private property might impact the public, the Committee is not the body to address it. He allowed that his fear was having the public show up for the event.

Sgt. Shovlin said that was his concern as well. The event may not be widely advertised to the public, but everyone who works at Ascend and everyone who works at the mall will likely know about it, and they may spread the word to their friends that there is going to be fireworks in the downtown. A large number of people could show up in Downtown Park, overwhelming the number of officers assigned to control things. Chair Wilson agreed and said if that were to occur, the private event would become a de facto public event.

Mr. Bartolome pointed out that other special events committees he works with deal with private fireworks shows as public events simply because the police, fire and transportation all must be involved. It is always better to coordinate those efforts and the Committee is the most qualified to make sure all appropriate boxes get checked.

Chair Wilson tabled the event to allow for additional internal investigation. He said he would look first to fire for their assessment of the drop zone and which streets would be impacted. He agreed that the event would have public aspects that would need to be coordinated.

❖ Committees

Chair Wilson informed the Committee members that he had attended the Municipal Special Events Summit in Raleigh, North Carolina. He said he came away with a lot of good information and ideas. The event will be held next time in Reno, Nevada, and will involve a number of specific issue sessions. The event is intended for city staff who do all the permitting and impact analyses of special events.

Chair Wilson said a communication and neighborhood outreach subcommittee has been formed. He said Ms. Scott was serving on that subcommittee along with staff from neighborhood services and the City Manager's communications team. The subcommittee is focused on setting up criteria for event organizers to follow in communicating the impacts with neighborhoods and

businesses prior to an event.

Chair Wilson reported that with the help of Mr. Bartolome and staff from Seattle and Kirkland he is working to set up a regional networking event to involve special event staff from all the jurisdictions in the three county area. The initial meeting will focus on getting to know each other and discussing common themes, questions and concerns.

❖ Surveys – General and at Events

❖ Comments/Follow-Up

Chair Wilson reminded the Committee members about the grand opening of the Meydenbauer Bay Park on March 16 from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. There will only be two speakers and there will be historical displays about the whaling building and the history of the waterfront. There will be an activity on how to tie knots and the Pacific Science Center will offer some activities.

The two color festivals are slated for March 23. Both events run from noon to 4:00 p.m. Park staff will be on site at both events.

Ms. Liming asked for an update regarding the Ukrainian Festival. Chair Wilson said they moved their date to September 7. They will be invited to attend an upcoming meeting to discuss their overall event plans. They have discussed going to a two-day event. Last year they delayed the start of the event because of rain, which meant the event went beyond the scheduled end time. The organizer has been informed that the deadline will be strictly enforced.

Chair Wilson noted that there will be no Strawberry Festival in 2019. Cycle the Wave and Festival of the Arts will also not be held during the year. The reasons for canceling the events focused primarily on their having become too big and costly to put on, and the fact that those who originally planned the events are moving on and no one has stepped up to carry on.

7. NEXT MEETING

❖ April 11, 2019

8. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Wilson adjourned the meeting at 9:21 a.m.