

CITY OF BELLEVUE
SPECIAL EVENTS COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES

August 11, 2016
8:30 a.m.

Bellevue City Hall
Conference Room 1E-112

MEMBERS PRESENT: Jon Wilson – Parks
Pat Harris – Parks
Lt. Dave Sanabria – Police
Titus Butcher – Transportation
Jeanne Grote – Community Representative South
Joann Warren – Community Representative Downtown
Roz Liming – Business Representative, Crossroads
Chris Dunham – Business Representative Downtown
Mike Ogliore – Business Representative Downtown
Meredith Langridge – Special Event Promoter, Position 1

MEMBERS ABSENT: Dennis Warner – Fire
Reilly Pittman – Development Services
Glenn Bartolome – Metro Transit
Neal Christiansen – Community Representative East
Katherine Ombrellaro – Special Event Promoter, Private

OTHERS PRESENT:

RECORDING SECRETARY: Gerry Lindsay

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 8:35 a.m. by Chair Wilson who presided.

2. COMMUNICATIONS: Written and Oral - None

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

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

4. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

A motion to approve the June 9, 2016, meeting minutes as submitted was made by Lt. Sanabria. The motion was seconded by Mr. Butcher and it carried unanimously.

5. OLD BUSINESS

❖ Routing and Location Subcommittee Report

Mr. Butcher said Taste of Main will be going forward on August 20. The required signatures

from the affected business have all been collected to allow for the closing of 102nd Avenue NE, and a parking plan has been submitted.

Mr. Butcher said the subcommittee also met with the organizers for the Susan G. Komen 3-Day Walk. There has been some back and forth related to making sure the route is laid out appropriately. The route will pass by some construction zones.

There have been internal talks regarding signal timing for the 2017 4th of July Celebration.

Mr. Butcher said the subcommittee also met with the Ukrainian festival organizers.

Ms. Liming asked if there will be some oversight regarding the traffic plan for the Ukrainian festival. Mr. Butcher said they will be providing the “No Parking” signs and will be operating a shuttle. If they do not follow through with the stipulated conditions, permitting the event in the future would be subject to a great deal of scrutiny.

Chair Wilson added that the organizers will need to do all they can to make attendees aware, but they cannot force people to take the shuttle. Mr. Butcher told Ms. Liming it would be helpful for her to document what she sees relative to use of the Crossroads Shopping Mall parking lot by event attendees.

Lt. Sanabria commented that during the arts fair, both QFC and Bartells post their respective parking lots and have observers on site. They have had cars towed, and that message has spread widely and quickly.

Chair Wilson said he has a meeting set up with the event organizer as well and would take the opportunity to make the point about parking.

6. NEW BUSINESS

❖ Post-Event Evaluation: 4th of July Celebration

Lt. Sanabria said the estimated attendance in the evaluation report seemed a little high. He said a primary focus for next year needs to be on getting people out of the city. The internal meeting with the traffic signal folks was focused on that issue, and the intent is to continue developing a workable plan. By the next 4th of July, Kemper Development Company’s new tower parking garage will be open, which could trigger some problems. He said he also has some concerns regarding safety and security. It cannot be assumed that the blue parking lot will be available as the work to close the loop at Downtown Park goes ahead, so some attention will need to be given to where to stage the emergency response.

Chair Wilson commented that part of the new west lot could be in the drop zone. Mr. Harris said part of it will, but it will also be significantly larger and will include a primary entrance into the park. That is likely where the emergency response will be located.

Lt. Sanabria said the police department is looking a hard look at the four major events of 4th of July, Snowflake Lane, Strawberry Festival and Arts Fair. Those events involve large numbers of people and road closures. The cost of providing security personnel safety measures to protect the crowds cannot be borne by the city.

Chair Wilson called attention to the reference made to enforcement of unpermitted vendors and said the issue falls under code enforcement, but added that code enforcement officers are not

assigned to attend the event.

Lt. Sanabria said the police department tries to handle things at the lowest level possible. He agreed it might be necessary to get code enforcement involved where issues arise. In most instances, unpermitted vendors are those people walking through the event selling things like balloons.

Mr. Ogliore allowed that the events occur on public property and there is a fine line between free speech and those who are selling stuff. Clearly anyone who sets up some kind of permanent structure in the form of a table and/or a tent can be directed to not set up where they are blocking traffic.

❖ Post-Event Evaluation: Four on the 4th

Lt. Sanabria said the event continues to grow. He said the biggest challenge involved late arrivals.

Ms. Langridge commented that she saw an increase in the number of dogs in strollers at the event.

Chair Wilson said overall the event went off very well.

❖ Strawberry Festival Review

Lt. Sanabria commented that the city's new bike officers unit has been shown to be very effective at the larger events.

Ms. Liming pointed out that the parking situation was ugly. Ms. Liming said organizer came with her request just a week before the event, giving the Crossroads Shopping Center property directors little time to react.

Chair Wilson allowed that additional parking areas were secured, but human nature being what it is, people still chose to park at Crossroads Shopping Center even though management asked that event attendees not be allowed to park there. He said he will touch base with the organizer to discuss the problems.

Ms. Liming said she canvassed all of the merchants to determine if the festival impacted their customers in any way. Not a single one indicated that they had received any complaints.

Chair Wilson commented that Bellevue really has two major parks that host events, Crossroads and Downtown Park. Parking is an issue with both during events. He said he has reached out to VisitBellevue, the city's economic development office and the Chamber of Commerce about having a summit to talk about special events in the city. Special events are a big part of the city's tourism and they enjoy a lot of support, but there is a cost in the form of impacts that should be discussed.

Ms. Dunham said there have been recent discussions between the convention center and the hotel partners about issues related to motor coaches and shuttles and how people are being moved around the city. Double parking has resulted in being ticked by the police. She suggested there should be some offline conversations about where the vehicles could go while they are waiting.

Mr. Butcher said the best way for him to help from a transportation perspective would be to keep

him in the loop where there are shuttling issues. He said he could get the people involved who could help facilitate.

❖ Comments/Follow-up

Chair Wilson said the second food truck event went very well. There were 12 trucks, some 2000 people attended, and the food truck people seemed very happy.

Chair Wilson noted that the post-event evaluations were not yet in for the Art Fair. He said the event is certainly a lot of work for police and transportation as well as the event organizers. The event went very well.

Lt. Sanabria asked about attendance and Ms. Langridge said it is very difficult to know for sure. Kemper Development Company noted that garages filled steadily. When the weather was exceptionally hot, it appeared that the crowds fell off to some degree. Lt. Sanabria said it seemed to him that the crowds were significantly lower than last year, but allowed that he had no way of actually knowing. He said he had heard sales were up, though that is not necessarily an indicator that more people were there.

Mr. Butcher said traffic counts could be made as a way of gauging the number of people attending. Lt. Sanabria said that may yield some information but the fact is the downtown is growing steadily and trips to and from other businesses would also be counted. The officers working the intersections said they were crowded, particularly with foot traffic.

Lt. Sanabria added that there were no reports of significant criminal activity. A lot of uniforms were in attendance, including SWAT, and the people seemed to appreciate that.

Ms. Langridge said there were no major hiccups associated with the event.

Chair Wilson noted that Outdoor Movies in the Park began on August 4 in Crossroads Park. He briefly reviewed the list of upcoming events.

Chair Wilson said the issue of the ice rink will be on the Committee's agenda for discussion in September. Plans to use Ashwood for the site are moving forward. A meeting is slated for August 24 at Pacific Regent, and outreach efforts are under way to other neighborhoods and buildings.

7. NEXT MEETING

❖ September 8, 2016

Chair Wilson noted the September meeting would be at the Bellevue Youth Theatre in Crossroads.

8. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Wilson adjourned the meeting at 9:23 a.m.