

CITY OF BELLEVUE
SPECIAL EVENTS COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES

September 10, 2020
8:30 a.m.

Bellevue City Hall
Skype Meeting

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Susan Freeburg – Parks
Andy Heider – Parks
Mark Anderson – Fire
Dane Waisanen – Fire
Mike Shovlin – Police
Joseph Nault – Police
Ben Wright – Transportation
Rick Logwood – Transportation
Erin Hislop – Utilities -
Glenn Bartolome – Metro Transit
Mike Ogliore – Business Representative Downtown
Laurie Scott – Downtown Resident Representative
Meredith Langridge – Special Event Promoter, Position 1

OTHERS PRESENT:

Brad Bennett, Imane Elmesbahi, Parks; Councilmember
Barksdale; Amy Sherlock, Kemper Development Company

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

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

A motion to approve the agenda was made by Dane Waisanen. The motion was seconded by x and the motion carried unanimously.

4. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

A motion to approve the DATE meeting minutes as submitted was made by Dane Waisanen the motion was seconded by Benjamin Wright and the motion carried unanimously.

5. COMMITTEE REPORTS

- ❖ Routing and Location Subcommittee Report

6. OLD BUSINESS

- ❖ N/A

6. NEW BUSINESS

- ❖ Application of Intent – None

- ❖ 8:45 a.m. Snowflake Lane Event discussion for 30 minutes by Amy Sherlock and two of her colleagues from Kemper Development Company

Jennifer, Amy and Jeff from Kemper presented snowflake Lane changes for 2020. Jennifer stated their proposal would be different from previous years. There will not be road closures or a parade for 2020. The goal is to try to maintain street décor, drums, fencing, lights and snow. We will add large display decor for people to take pictures in front of Council Member Barksdale asked them if they are going to submit a new Application of Intent to reflect the changes.

Ms. Scott said she attends Garden d 'Lights every year and it is always well attended. She said given that that event will not be happening this year, Snowflake Lane will probably be the only thing available and it likely will draw crowds, making it difficult to keep people six feet apart. Ms. Sherlock said the people will have to have a certain amount of responsibility. Running the event over a long period of time will help to mitigate that as well. Having mini show moments will not be enough to keep people there. Those who visit the Botanical Gardens must use narrow paths to see the things they want to see, and they are often there for an hour or more. The Snowflake Lane show will last for only seven minutes over a span of four city blocks. Anyone not comfortable with the new format will likely not even come to the event.

Answering a question asked by Councilmember Barksdale, Ms. Sherlock said the snow will be deployed in the usual locations on the east side of the street, except the ones near the low awnings will probably be removed since those areas tend to be gathering spaces. The light

displays will be projected onto the Xfinity side. There is the potential to locate one at the Bellevue Arts Museum and another at Bellevue Place under the art piece. The latter are add-ons and could be left out if they will cause major problems. The spaces chosen are the ones with the biggest sidewalk areas.

Mr. Bartolome suggested that so long as no performance times are advertised, there likely will not be any congregation complaints.

Mr. Bennett said one good thing about the new approach is that people will be able to take stand and pictures all day long, not just during the event itself. Ms. Sherlock said the machines will be on all the time, but of course it gets dark early at that time of year. If for some reason the light features create a challenge, they may need to be removed.

Mr. Logwood stressed that no work can be performed within the public right-of-way, except areas under temporary construction use, between midnight on the third Wednesday of December and January 1 of the following year. Ms. Sherlock said the plan is to set up before Thanksgiving and to take it down the week of January 4. She said the only issue could be if one of the installations needs to be removed.

Ms. Sherlock said her take away from the conversation was that the Committee liked the spread-out timeframe for the lights and snow, that the show times should not be published, and that show times would be randomized rather than every 20 minutes or so. Additionally, she said she would look at adding new signage to all of the drum steps to include mask usage and social distancing requirements. A site plan of where the new lighting features will go needs to be delivered to the Committee for review, and the lights need to be above the awning level so that they will not be an issue for drivers. The lower level snow machines should be removed and kept at the higher-level position so snow falling heavily in certain areas will not be an attraction for children and families. She said it was still an open question as to whether or not the Committee wanted to see the skybridge covered to avoid making it an interesting place for people. Also more feedback is needed from L&I.

Ms. Sherlock asked how the Committee would like to be notified of any changes in the show. Chair Freeburg said that should be done by updating the application of intent.

❖ Holiday Events Status

Chair Freeburg asked about the ice rink. Mr. Ogliore said he was coming up against the deadline for making the decision, but he said he did not see any way of moving ahead with it. He said the ice rink is the Bellevue Downtown Association's largest revenue source and every attempt is being made to develop a plan that could work for all concerned, including the sponsors and underwriters. It does not, however, look good. A formal decision will be made very soon.

❖ SEC Code / Manual Review and Discussion

Chair Freeburg explained that the special events code governs the work of the Committee. Any changes to the code will need to be approved by the Council. The manual, which was created by the Committee, outlines specific guidance for carrying out the work of the Committee. She said the thought is that the manual should be split into two parts, an administrative manual and a user guide to make it easier for event organizers to follow.

Focusing on the recommended changes to the code, Chair Freeburg said no changes were under consideration to the title or purpose section. With regard to Section 7 and the Special Events Committee membership, she noted that a couple of departments have asked about being included, and suggestions have been made about adding outside organizations. As worded, additions must be appointed by the Council, but the actual process is not clear.

Chair Freeburg asked if anyone knew the process for filling vacancies on the Committee. Councilmember Barksdale stated he did not know the process for this committee. Chair Freeburg said there also needs to be clarification with regard to when terms end, and that should be reflected in the code.

In the section addressing the powers of the Special Events Committee, Chair Freeburg said the Committee is given the authority to adopt policies and procedures for administering the code. She asked if anyone saw anything that needed to be changed, including to the proposed revisions.

Councilmember Barksdale suggested something should be included regarding the management of payments and delinquencies. He also mentioned the notion of a sliding scale in terms of the fees.

Mr. Wright said the fee structure is very outdated. He said the Committee has in the past talked about updating it. Chair Freeburg said she had heard that but had not seen any documentation.

Mr. Bennett said the code is approved by the Council. Throughout the code, which was adopted by the Council in 1994, there are specific references to fees and the like, including a \$35 application fee. He suggested the Committee should walk through the code and pull out the specific details and reference them in a separate document, specifically the policies and procedures manual. That manual is what the Committee uses to carry out its functions. The issue of delinquent fees and a sliding fee scale should be housed in that document. The manual should then be updated on an annual basis. Fee changes do not require Council approval per the policies and procedures manual. However, because specific fees are spelled out in the code, and because they have not been updated since 1994, steps should be taken to remove them from the code and simply reference in the code the fee schedule in the manual.

Councilmember Barksdale suggested there should be an overall policy in the code addressing how delinquent payments. The code should also reference generally a sliding scale, though the details should be in the manual.

Mr. Wright noted that the current fee schedule is specific to various events. Two years ago the

Committee discussed the notion of eliminating that overall structure entirely in favor of a fee schedule based on the types of reviews needed and the departments involved.

Mr. Bennett referenced the section indicating all annual applications must be submitted by January 15 and 60 days prior to an event. He said he assumed the reference is actually to returning events. Chair Freeburg confirmed that. He said his issue with returning events submitting applications 60 days prior was that that does not really allow the Committee to hold their date. There needs to be a sooner deadline for any organizer wanting to hold an event date. Mr. Bennett noted that for 2020 the application deadline was moved up to December for returning events, which in essence are given priority for first right of refusal. Submitting an application by December will assure them their dates. The code, however, specifically references January 15 and 60 days prior as the submittal dates and that should be revised. Mr. Wright suggested organizers should know that the Committee will not seek to hold dates for events that do not submit their applications by the stated deadline.

Mr. Bennett said the code spells out the January 15 submittal deadline and states that applications will be processed within 60 days. The code also says first-time events are encouraged to list several options for location, date and time. That can be interpreted as meaning that new events are not guaranteed anything. What is needed is a specific mechanism for returning events to be given first priority over any new events.

Councilmember Barksdale asked if the Committee had a target date by which it wants to wrap up its reviewing and vetting of event proposals (inaudible) reach out to organizations with scheduled events as part of the process (inaudible) to include their perspectives on their experiences. Chair Freeburg said most post-event evaluations simply talk about how their events went and usually they contain praise for the department personnel they worked with, particularly fire and police. They do not generally talk about the process of scheduling events. She said the evaluation could be changed to touch on the topic of process.

With regard to the deadline, Chair Freeburg said she hoped to have ahead of the October meeting a substantial first draft of the code and manual for the Committee to review and comment on. She asked the members to review the current code and manual and send to her as soon as possible comments for and proposals for revisions so she can work them into the draft.

Mr. Bennett said it will be a huge help to event organizers to have the planning guide. The intent is to make it inviting and user friendly so people do not have to sift through information that is not relevant to them or which does not make sense.

Mr. Wright suggested that in the interest of keeping the fees issue moving it would be helpful to appoint a subcommittee to review the fees and collect input from the various departments that review special events, and to bring findings and proposals to the full Committee to review. He said he would be willing to serve on the subcommittee. Mr. Waisanen agreed to serve on the committee as well. Chair Freeburg said she would send out an email asking others to participate on the subcommittee as well.

❖ Post-Event Evaluations – None

❖ Comments / Follow-up – None

7. NEXT MEETING

❖ October 8, 2020

8. ADJOURNMENT

A motion to adjourn was made by Chair Freeburg at 10:04 am. The motion was seconded by Mr. Waisanen and the motion carried unanimously.