

Special Events Committee Meeting  
May 13, 2020  
Skype call-in Meeting

Member Representatives in Attendance:

<b>Agency</b>	<b>Representatives</b>	<b>Noted in Minutes As</b>
Citizen Representatives	Tom Anderson	Citizen Representative
	Oliver Little	Citizen Representative
Department of Construction & Inspections	James Dasher	DCI Noise Abatement
	Jessica McHegg	SDCI
Department of Neighborhoods	Laura Jenkins	DON
Finance and Administrative Services	Brenda Strickland	FAS
King County Metro Transit	Glenn Bartolome	Metro
Parks and Recreation	Carl Bergquist	Parks
Seattle-King County Health Department	Rosemary Byrne	Health
Seattle Center	Gretchen Lenihan	Seattle Center
Seattle Department of Transportation	Mike Shea	SDOT
Seattle Fire Department	Tom Heun	FMO
Seattle Police Department	Sgt. Chris Kelley	Police
	Lt. Phillip Hay	Police
	Lt. Bryan Clenna	Police
		Police
Seattle Public Utilities	Sheryl Anayas	SPU
Special Events Office	Chris Swenson	Chair
	Meli Darby	SE
	Julie Borden	SE
	Jonelle Mogi	SE
WA State Liquor & Cannabis Board	Lt. Rob Rieder	WSLCB

Additional Attendees: Luke Sillonis – Downtown Seattle Association, Meredith Stone – FAS, Domonique Stephens – MO, A/C Steve Hirjak – SPD, Katy Willis – Visit Seattle, Clements James

Note: As always, these are “raw minutes notes” based on the discussion of the 5/13/2020 meeting and do not include every word spoken—not a literal transcript—merely a summary of ideas.

### Committee Roundtable Discussion

- Not able to distribute draft minutes for April; Approval of minutes will happen on a subsequent subcommittee meeting

### Committee Business

#### *Updates to Special Events Committee Cancellations, Re-Scheduling and Refund Process*

*Chris Swenson – Chair Special Events Committee*

- Washington's Phased Approach – Reopening Business and Modifying Physical Distancing Measures
  - Governor Inslee announced 4 phase approach when the extension of the 'Stay Home, Stay Healthy' extended from May 4<sup>th</sup> to May 31<sup>st</sup>
  - While there are some specifics and guidelines on timing, there is really no mention of major public gathering (parades and festivals); The only mention to public gatherings is at the end of Phase 4 when gatherings are allowed with over 50 people
  - Our interpretation moving forward, is that the phase approach does not give a lot of certainty and timing to major public events
  - Currently, there is a 15-day minimum timeline between each phase; At the earliest, could open in late July
  - **DON** – If larger events start up, what will community notification look like? We will need to consult with Public Health on how organizers should do outreach; Should not be telling people to go door to door for outreach given new normal
- Changes to the Special Events Committee: COVID 19: Special Event Rescheduling/Cancellation Policy and Procedures
  - At last committee meeting, discussed the COVID 19: Special Event Rescheduling/Cancellation Policy and Procedures document; The dates have been changed to no events can be permitted through May 31, 2020
  - Rescheduling Policies
    - Rescheduling process, needed to make clear what the timeline was for rescheduling; No ability for the committee to speed up the 90-day turn around
    - Noted with conversations with City Attorney that First Amendment expressive activity was not included; There should be some avenue for First Amendment activity to be considered, even with restrictions
    - Every event must show at the reschedule request how they are meeting State and Public Health social distancing requirements
      - **SPD** – If they reschedule 90 days out, by the time the event occurs, the requirement for social distancing could be more stringent so how will we compensate for the new rules that could be put in place; For example, the second wave scenario, do we approve now and then closer to event we tell them to revise
      - **Chair** – Good option here is to say something explicitly in the policy and procedures that things could change; We could include that and that will live in the top establishment; Those will apply to all of the projections
  - No Event Policies – New section added
    - No new major summer events (through September 30, 2020) that do not involve First Amendment expressive activity will be considered by the Special Events Committee. Events that prove they are meeting State and public health social distancing requirements may be considered.
    - Drive-in events that are happening around the country and world are providing a unique setting for movies, concerts, etc.; City and committee should be in the position to allow consideration even through lockdown

- If community wishes to do a drive-in and sets up a scenario with less than 500 people and social distancing in cars, then the committee should be able to consider
  - How to request a reschedule
    - **Citizen Representative** – August 5<sup>th</sup> date is based on the May 4<sup>th</sup> date, since now changed to May 31<sup>st</sup> the date should be August 31<sup>st</sup>
  - Resources for the organizers and Committee
    - Resource page has been created and is a living document, so it is updated as needed
    - The Special Events Office has published a webpage showing cancelled/postponed events and it is updated weekly
  - External Messaging Talking-Points
    - There is no certainty at this time that the “stay safe, stay healthy” order will not be extended past May 31, 2020.
    - The Special Events Committee interprets the State Phased Approach as major events being considered at or after the end of Phase Four.
    - There are no projections on what additional or evolved public event or gathering restrictions may come once the “stay safe, stay healthy” bans end.
    - The City of Seattle is considering a regional approach to address major summer events scheduled for after May 31, 2020.
- Definitions
  - Definition of major events for the purpose of our work, major events are any events that would be permitted through the special event process Define major special event in this document
  - Major Event: Any event per Seattle Municipal Code that would require a Special Event Permit.
  - **Citizen Representative** – Would the attendance benchmark come into that?
  - **Chair** – for the purpose of the committee, it should be anything permitted by the committed; There is a number in the code but it is not a hard and fast rule; For SEC consideration, the size is not the only consideration; Advise that this stays broad in terms in what the committee should/shouldn't consider; Benefits both committee and organizers that are trying to do their due diligence to comply with Public Health guidelines
  - **Special Events Office** – In general, 500 attendees and above require a Special Event Permit; Exceptions include any event that needs to close an arterial and events that use waterways that require harbor patrol assistance; Full list defined on Special Events Website
- Additional Comments on the Documents
  - **SDOT** – Fighting how to plan and coordinate any event that needs to be rescheduled, if we are basing off of Governor approach after end of phase 4; We don't know when that date will be; Not sure how organizers are determining their new rescheduled date in their application, if we don't have a date that they can hold events
  - **Chair** – Procedures and policy needs to reflect what we know now and for now we know May 31<sup>st</sup>; until we hear more about reassurance of another date; policy that needs to be established with updates internally and externally
- Regional Approach to Special Events
  - Regional Municipality group established last spring which put together several regional cities to talk best practices; Seattle Special Events Office went to the group and talked with what other municipalities are doing
    - Auburn – Restrictions through 7/15/2020; No City of public events permitted through the end of July
    - Bothell – Restrictions through 8/31/2020; No longer accepting new 2020 event

permit applications. Applications already received will be reviewed and issued two weeks prior to event date IF restrictions are lifted prior to event. Application process to reopen once events of 100 or more are allowed. All City-organized events canceled through Aug. 31 (due to both public health concern and budget impacts).

- Everett – Restrictions through 8/31/2020; Accepting special event applications, but not issuing permits, permitted farmers market through right of way permit. 4th of July cancelled. Planning first City
  - King County – Restrictions through 5/31/2020; Following Gov. Inslee order
  - Redmond – Restrictions through 8/31/2020; No City or public events permitted until September 2020.
  - Seattle – Restrictions through 5/31/2020; No public events permits allowed through 5/31/2020
  - Tacoma – Restrictions until further notice; Cancelled 4<sup>th</sup> of July 2020
  - Bellingham – Restrictions until 8/30/2020; All City and private events forbidden
- Committee comments represent your work coordinating events and this process, but not whole agency
  - Seafair Summer 4<sup>th</sup> since the restriction of City of Seattle end on May 31<sup>st</sup> at this time, it is the decision on event organizers to host or not host their prospective events; Put it on the organizers including Seafair; No additional information to share
  - **SDOT** – Hypothetically, the end of August looks like a good time from what hearing from organizers; Nothing new until September, most organizers looking at the end of August and beyond to reschedule events
  - **SPD (Clenna)** – Might correlate with the 90-day rescheduling time period we are putting on for the events
  - **SPD (Hirjak)** – SPD while we like to support events, but need to consider creating situations where we create resurgence of the virus and exposing our resources at events such as parades; We want to give time for things to settle down; Other resources that needs support and traffic control from SPD including food banks and testing sites; A lot of resources will be re-allocated elsewhere, but in full support that any recommendations from the committee go to the executive; Prevent large gatherings until we hear more and have a grasp on this; Unfair for event organizers to get something scheduled by September 1, no way SPD can provide resources for all rescheduled events from spring and summer
  - **SDCI** – Tacoma and Bellevue both cancelled their July 4<sup>th</sup> events
  - **Chair** – Not hearing objection to a consideration of working with a regional municipalities; Would like to share with folks as needed; City of Seattle is considering a regional approach to address assurance of major events though the summer, this work is happening now, work from Committee will be shared
  - **SPD (Clenna)** – Is there a way the committee can communicate with the MO for 4<sup>th</sup> of July; 4<sup>th</sup> of July is big for the whole city; We should be able to know if 4<sup>th</sup> of July is happening or not
  - **Chair** – Committee can do if they want, is to emphasize the July 4<sup>th</sup> date is the date that major events can happen, and that decision should be made immediately
  - **SPD (Hirjak)** – Other cities are talking about large firework displays with no public gathering, with the situation with the parks this past weekend and the large crowds, large fireworks with no public gathering could create problems with social distancing and traveling; Create potential serious issues on I-5, Eastlake, Aurora, etc. it would be more problematic to try an approach like that
  - **Parks** – Would agree with it as well, in addition to the 2 permitted park, every park with green space that can see it is also impacted; The overlook over I-5 is extremely popular, a lot of spaces like that people tend to crowd
  - **SDOT** – Defer to Public Health and SPD; National Barricade provides all signage and barricades for that event, so planning is needed for SDOT, but for safety and staffing will defer to Public Health and

SPD

- **Citizen Representative** – Should be said from an equity standpoint for example, people in apartment buildings, if having a firework show and you can't see it from your apartment, then you can't watch the fireworks; Making it harder for SPD to enforce

### *Special Events Committee and Subcommittee Meeting Schedule*

#### *Chris Swenson – Chair Special Events Committee*

- SEC as a whole historically has had a monthly meeting focused on overview of previous month activities as well as presentations of event organizers to help prepare and plan for their events coming up, with uncertainty of major events at this time, talking internally of changing monthly meeting to a weekly 1-hour meeting to address more immediate issues that evolve for public gatherings
- 10am Thursday weekly meeting for the committee to meet; Important that a quorum is met, if the agenda item does not need your agency input, it is important we have half the committee present since they are public and official meetings
- Agreement by the committee: Begin 90-minute SEC meeting on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Thursdays; First meeting will be scheduled for Thursday on 5/28; Scheduled through end of September; Additionally, subcommittee meetings will be held the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursdays for 60-mins
- **Health** – Will the agenda be sent out so we can look at it ahead to see what will be discussed? A lot of other meetings coming up and will need to schedule
- **Chair** – Asking committee how far in advance should have agenda; Planning to release agenda on Monday
- **SPD (Kelley)** – Bi-weekly works better for them; Provide a week to align with our weekly dept meetings
- **Seattle Center** – Would the intention to go back to monthly meeting once we have event traffic? Yes, this is short term for COVID response
- **Citizen Representative** – Bi-weekly works great, could have a weekly meeting and schedule SPD items for the meetings that they are able to attend; A weekly meeting to check in as things develop and get things on the record
- **Chair** – Full committee meeting bi-weekly, intermediate week between as a subcommittee meeting smaller to discuss some issues that don't need to be discussed with the whole committee could work; Priority of the first meeting could be conversation of the reschedules and reviewing rescheduled applications
- **Special Events Office** – Change to meet twice a month since some months with 5 weeks; Email confirming then calendar invites today or tomorrow

#### *Agency Updates and Comments*

- While to SEC is considering major events, there is an overlay of smaller activity; SDOT closed lots of neighborhood streets to vehicles with the intent to increase foot traffic; Unsure what the intent is from SDOT but presume that there could be smaller events happening within those closures or in Parks
- **SDOT** – Stay Healthy Streets 20 miles of that will be permanent which means local access only through these streets; If asking if planning or holding events there, have not heard anything, but if we allow anything then will be following Gov. Inslee dictation on how large events could be; Probably would want to do something but haven't heard anything yet
- **Chair** – We know that there is a desire for public gatherings, but any type of public gatherings need to be approved by Public Health and State to follow guidelines
- **Citizen Representative** – Could we request from KC Health a looking ahead plan to plan for social distancing, handwashing, sanitation, etc. that they could be requiring in the future; There are a lot of

ideas out there that could start to activate if we have some general requirements; Work on an updated Public Safety plan for requirements for Public Health

- **Chair** – Some of the requests for rescheduling events include proposals for social distancing; All needs to go through Public Health; The City will not approve anything unless Public Health approved and then it is on a short-term basis
- **Citizen Representative** – Document from Event Safety Alliance had pretty good general guide that could be good for sharing with clients and looking forward that what might be required
- **Chair** – PSEMP was developed by the FMO to report how to manage emergencies; Will need to start the conversations with Public Health to see if this can be updated or if there should be an additional document; This documents should be directed by Public Health
- **FAS** – Have there been any discussion regarding Hempfest or Seafair Weekend
- **Chair** – No specific conversations, but Hempfest requested a preliminary permit; Seafair help produces some of the other 4<sup>th</sup> of July events, and have not received any updated information yet
- **Parks** – Parks moving forward trying to get a contract for Seafair Weekend