

Special Events Committee Meeting
October 22, 2020
Video Conference Call

Member Representatives in Attendance:

Agency	Representatives	Noted in Minutes As
Citizen Representative	Tom Anderson	Citizen Representative
Citizen Representative	Lisa Fraser	Citizen Representative
Department of Construction & Inspections	Anthony Jagow	DCI Noise Abatement
	Jessica McHegg	
Department of Neighborhoods	Angela Rae	DON
Finance and Administrative Services	Brenda Strickland	FAS
King County Metro Transit	Glenn Bartolome	Metro
Mayor's Office	Maritza Riveria	MO
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	SFD
	Lt. Bryan Clenna	SPD
Seattle Public Utilities	Pat Kaufman	SPU
Special Events Office	Chris Swenson	Chair
	Julie Borden	SE
	Meli Darby	SE
	Jonelle Mogi	SE
WA State Liquor & Cannabis Board	<i>Not Present</i>	WSLCB
Special Events Committee		SEC
Special Events Office		SEO

Additional Attendees: Chris Kelley – SPD, Meredith Stone – FAS, Luke Sillonis – DSA, Brady Winsten – SPU

Note: As always, these are “raw minutes notes” based on the discussion of the 10/22/2020 meeting and do not include every word spoken—not a literal transcript—merely a summary of ideas.

Committee Discussion

- Roundtable

Committee Business

Recap of 10/15 Subcommittee Meetings

Chris Swenson, Special Events Committee Chair and Meli Darby, Special Events Office

- Review new State Phase 2 and 3 re-opening guidelines for Outdoor Recreation (running/bicycling, etc.) and Retail Events (craft sales shows, etc.)
 - Governor Inslee announces athletic event guidance on 10/6:
 - Phase 2: Run/Walk/Ride events: 600 participants (200/hour x 3 hours)
 - Phase 3: Run/Walk/Ride events: 900 participants (300/hour x 3 hours), Outdoor Retail Events: 200 attendees (plus vendors/staff)
- 600 participants are a low threshold under normal circumstances for SDOT street use; What does SEC input look like for 600 participants in Parks or trails; SEC will review as multiple agencies will be involved to approve and review
- Understanding that the Seattle takes a stronger abundance of precaution to Governor's guidelines and updates, while 600 participants is allowed, City might not approve 600 participants
- Parks has smaller run/walk events permitted through Parks Use Permit
- Allowance for Outdoor Retail Events for 200 attendees in Phase 3
 - Crossover with SEO in some vendor fairs; Similar to what is being allowed at farmers markets – restricted entry, participants need to be moving, distancing guidelines; SEC can look at Farmer's Market model to see what SEC can incorporate

SDOT – Concern for SDOT to have an arterial street taken up for less than 600 people; Will look at event proposals on a case by case basis; Very hard to approve full closure of roadways and will need to take into account the duration of the run

Chair – If this is limited activity, SEO and City can consider crossing of street or using a portion of the street for event, but event activity would mostly need to be off City right of way; If it requires Traffic control, there are limited resources available

Seattle Center – If event meets terms for State permission, likelihood anything to happen entirely on campus is extremely low; Shutting down roadways for event will block access to others wanting to go to campus; We could look at starting on campus to a park i.e. Using a pedestrian bridge to Myrtle Edwards Park

Chair – If SEC is considering update administrative ban or allowing limited events within State guidelines, we would create a memo from SEC to be delivered to Mayor's Office

Seattle Center – In Phase 2, would like events to be touch free as much as possible, so would like staff as hands free as possible

Parks – Since we don't have staff on site for most events, Parks are requiring event organizers to come up with plans that has as little touch points as possible; Governor approved new guidance, but Parks will need to wait for Mayor's Office approval for updating their guidelines; Longer process to go through chain of command and get approved from Mayor's Office

- Recap run/walk tabletop exercise
 - SEC review of simulated Alki Course and operational plans under Phase 2 guidelines
 - Course Review
 - Start/Finish/Staging Plans
 - Wave timing and pens
 - What are the impacts and viability to accommodate extended street closures for the time needed to run those waves?
- Route proposed

- Based on staffing and resource impacts, wanted to look at a route that minimized street use, resources, and impacts to neighborhoods
- Race uses westbound lanes of Alki Ave for eastbound runners; In past, have used both westbound and eastbound lanes and relied on SPD support escort residences
- Race uses Alki Trail for return runners
- Suggestion to start and finish at two separate locations helps to reduce gatherings
- Proposed route would reduce the number of officers needed; Would need PEO for enforcing no-parking and to help clear the route, but will defer to SPD for staffing; Route includes more volunteers and flaggers
- Timed ticketing for waves
- Intention was to bring representatives from SPD, Parks, SFD, Seattle Center, Metro, and SDOT to go through tabletop exercise
- Event overview was presented by Citizen Representative Tom Anderson and Event Organizer Jared Loranger
- SEO considered taking a look at downtown Seattle Center route, but given the availability and uncertainty of resources, we asked presenters to put together a plan that used minimal resources and street use
- Outcome of tabletop exercise, if SEC were to move forward considering a run/walk application, the event proposed would be possible
- Next steps
 - Tabletop exercise review of route from downtown/Seattle Center course; Seattle Center to Myrtle Edwards using non arterial streets
 - Alignment with Mayor's Office (SEC recs on timeline, permissions, and capacity)

Chair – An important part of this is to understand where Seattle and King County is and feedback from Director Hayes on what is allowed in King County; In order for SEC to consider, we will need to hear from King County and Mayor's Office what additional restrictions will need to be considered; Health involvement in SEC is for temporary food permits at events

Health – In Seattle, haven't allowed temporary events, but when we start to open up and advance in Phases, we will need to look at it; City of Seattle and King County can be stricter than the Governor's orders when it comes to reopening; Will also need to consider the congregating and gathering of people at event

Citizen Representative – To avoid congregating at event, goal is to have everything delivered in advance; No walk-in registration and participants must arrive during their predetermined start time; There will be no programming at the finish to discourage gathering

Chair – In concept sounds like it would work, but reality SEC will need to learn more detail and see how proposals fit into King County recommendations; Specific plan will need to be a part of request i.e. specifics on how will manage the start/end and the congregation of people

SDOT – Mostly volunteers/flaggers used along route, but at the intersections will be staffed by uniformed police officers; Need to identify if it is SPD or off duty officers – will it be allowed as overtime for SPD or will it need to be worked out with a 3rd party?; Parking enforcement is moving from SPD to SDOT

DON – We ask that people do not go out to notify in person, but instead use email, social media, or the phone to do notification due to COVID-19

Chair – SEO will need guidance from King County on larger activity based on guidance from Governor's Office; This will be considered major activity that has not been allowed during COVID; SEO would work with Mayor's Office for alignment; If SEC is interested in proposing or considering guidelines for activity, SEO

would lead the work to put together a memo that would outline guidelines to be reviewed by King County and Mayor's Office

Review Special Event Permit Administrative Decision

Chris Swenson, Special Events Committee Chair

- Timeline:
 - June 11: Decision to suspend permitting through September 7
 - July 23: Updated decision to suspend permitting through November 1
 - August 27: Updated decision to suspend permitting through December 1
 - September 24: Updated decision to suspend permitting through December 31
- By ordinance and process, 90-days required for SEC to review and issue permits; Administrative decision tied as close to possible to 90-day timeline
- Approaching 90-day timeline into January 2021; There are benefits and drawbacks to a monthly consideration
- SEC needs to overlay for new allowance for new or restricted activity under Governor's guidelines in Phase 2 and 3; We can't predict when we will be in Phase 3, but we can project on what we know and presume; Major events are allowed in Phase 4
- If the committee is interested in moving forward the permit restriction, does committee want to include update to permission so allowance may be made to certain type of events that align with City, County and State permissions and allowances?
- Permit ban to January 31 and if committee should consider permissions or allowances for events that meet allowances for city and state
- Chair entertains SEC consider voting on 2-part movement – (1) Extending permit ban until January 31, 2020 (2) SEC create and deliver recommendations per Governor's phased reopening guidelines to Mayor's Office to be vetted by City, State and County
- Seattle Center moves that SEC extend the permit ban to January 31st, with the understanding that we would work toward a recommendation for accommodating state guidance in the coming month SPD seconds
- Voting as followed: In Favor - MO, SFD, SPD, Parks, SDOT, SDCI, FAS, Seattle Center, SPU, Metro, Health, Citizen Representative Anderson; Not Present – CBO, OED, DON, WSLCB, Citizen Representative Fraser, Citizen Representative Little
- Quorum met, in favor; Motion passes without objection
- SEO will follow up with next steps

Seattle Center – We need to respond to these new permissions by the State in a more comprehensive way and not just extend the deadline and since this is an administrative decision, we will need an extended response; Timing of winter months and getting people back to work is a challenge; If opening it up for licensing walks/runs/ride under Governor's guidelines, what does that mean for free speech activity? Will there be any change to the dynamic of what we are permitting? With the new permissions from the State and desire to get people back to work, do we want to try to allow permitting for events in January? Does it feel comfortable to open in a limited basis in January or should we extend ban to end of January?

Chair – Governor's allowances are very specific to a timed and competitive mobile event and are restrictive to a gathering or noncompetitive event; Don't see it crossing over with a gathering; Is this a permit ban or a restrictive permit allowance under new guidance?

SPD – 90 days from February 1st or do we need to start reviewing on February 1st or can have event on February 1st?

Chair – February 1st and beyond

Citizen Representative – Based on guidance and excitement from organizers, pivoting to restricted event guidance will be good and would get some traction for January events

SE – Opportunity to potentially consider or review vendor markets prior to the new year? Is that possible? If

we already made the decision to ban permits to 2020, is there a possibility to look at vendor markets?

Chair – Vendor market permissions are allowed outdoors in Phase 3; we would have to work under the presumption we would be in Phase 3 prior to the holidays; What are the projections from Public Health?

Health – With farmers market, a month ago allowed farmers markets to have to have retail vendors; Wouldn't look at retail markets until Phase 3, but with flu season and people indoors and probably gathered, foresee it as COVID-19 cases going up

SDOT – If we do allow events, who is going to enforce any restrictions on the event organizers?

Chair – How robust is the regulations for farmers markets? Is it all done by organizers? Would that need to be seen in any part of consideration?

Health – Since farmers markets have food, that's why King County Public Health and City is there; Before farmers market can be approved, they must have a COVID plan and show they can follow-through; It is on the organizers to regulate restrictions, and there needs someone who is the COVID supervisor or manager; Organizers must submit weekly reports on what doing and how they are following guidelines; With retail mixed in, there are certain requirements also tied into retail vendors; Consideration of the neighborhood must be considered when looking at a farmers market with vendors since there are restricted entrance and exits, there is no free flow to other businesses

Chair – Understanding that recommendation to return to permission or permitting process from SEC would need to be layered into Public Health, Governor's Office, and in alignment with Mayor's Office safety guidelines, vision, and mission

Chair – Original proposed vote on Extending permit ban through the end of January, with the consideration of adding a clause that speaks to SEC consideration Governor's and Public Health guidelines for specific activated; Proposed by SEC, vetted through Public Health, Governor's Office, and Mayor's Office

Seattle Center – Confirming vote to extend permit ban through January 31 in addition would vote to seek county furthermore guidance from State, County and City starting February 1; Furthermore, will affect events in February, and not events in January

Chair – Indicate to event organizers that there are options outside of SEO; If you can marginalize activity so it doesn't require Special Event permit, then that can be a consideration too

SPD – SPD and resources, longer push out the more clarity would have from department for resource planning; Would second if someone would first for the vote

Citizen Representative – With the Governor's guidance ok now, if a run walk under Governor's guidance would to take place in a park (no SPD, SDOT or Metro) it would be ok with SEC and it would be under Parks to manage permits?

Chair – In theory correct – there are some portions of activity that require Special Event permit; If organizer puts together proposal that doesn't trigger a SEC permit, then it will be upon organizer and department that issues permit; 500 people is a threshold that would trigger a Special Event's permit

Parks – Through this whole process, Parks tend to be more restrictive than Governor's approval level

MO – City has taken positions that are stronger than Governor in certain instances; Recommendation that is provided by SEC will go through pipeline to Mayor's Office, then Mayor's Office will make decision based on her comfort level based on her consultation with Director Patty Hayes with King County; SEC vote will need to go through Mayor's approval; Decision on comfort level and what approving since our population is larger, need to think about what we are reopening and allowing relating to population size and number of COVID cases

Chair – Updated proposal SEC consider voting on 2-part movement – (1) Extending permit ban until January 31, 2020 (2) SEC create and deliver recommendations per Governor's phased reopening guidelines to Mayor's Office to be vetted by City, State and County

Seattle Center – Part 1 is clear; Clarify second part – it is important as SEC puts a stake in the ground to give clarity for event organizers, but would hesitate to put guidelines together and vote on at next committee meeting, since we would eliminate another month for event organizers; Part 2 be more about furthering conditions under which SEC will be able to permit events under Governor's guidance and County/City restrictions

Chair – Process will need to be vetted and brought through the Mayor's Office as any decision SEC makes

will need to align with City's priorities and precautions; Work and engagement digitally will need to be done prior to next meeting

Seattle Center – Is there a mechanism for a digital vote to provide SEC recommendation prior to next committee meeting

SE – Any further discussion needs to happen in a public meeting; Unsure about the vote, but if there is any more discussion then would need to take place in a public meeting

Additional Items

- Remaining agenda items will be moved to next committee meeting