

Special Events Committee Meeting
01/14/2021
Video Conference Call

Member Representatives in Attendance:

Agency	Representatives	Noted in Minutes As
Citizen Representative	Tom Anderson	Citizen Representative
Department of Construction & Inspections	James Dasher	DCI Noise Abatement
Department of Neighborhoods	Angela Rae	DON
Finance and Administrative Services	Brenda Strickland	FAS
King County Metro Transit	Glenn Bartolome	Metro
Mayor's Office	Domonique Stephens	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	Not Present	SPU
Special Events Office	Chris Swenson	Chair
	Julie Borden	SE
	Meli Darby	SE
	Jonelle Mogi	SE
WA State Liquor & Cannabis Board	Victor Hopkins	WSLCB
Special Events Committee		SEC
Special Events Office		SEO

Additional Attendees: Meredith Stone – FAS

Note: As always, these are “raw minutes notes” based on the discussion of the 1/14/2021 meeting and do not include every word spoken—not a literal transcript—merely a summary of ideas.

Committee Discussion

- Roundtable
- Meeting Minute Review and Vote
 - 11/12/2020
 - No edits received by email and no additional edits
 - Chair entertains a movement to approve minutes from 11/12/2020; Gretchen with Seattle Center makes a motion to approve, Lt. Heun with SFD seconds
 - With no Special Events Committee (SEC) objections; Meeting minutes are approved and will

be distributed and posted to Special Event website; Motion passes with quorum

- 2020 Year End Review
 - In a typical year, the Special Events Office issues permits for about 540 events. In 2020, we issued 44, which is a 92% drop from 2019.
 - In a typical year, permitted major events have about 2.4 million attendees. In 2020, an estimated 58,000 people attended events, 2% of the normal annual attendance.
 - In comparison to 2019, 2020 special event permit fee revenue was down 90%. Seattle's SPD and SFD staffing support for permitted special events, which is not fully refunded through permit fees, was accordingly lower. For 2020 projected permitted special events, the net permit fee vs resource assignment savings to the City was \$4.9 million.

Committee Business

Review Special Event Permit Administrative Decision

Chris Swenson, Special Events Committee Chair

- Review and discuss SEC permit suspension extension; Current administrative decision is set to expire on January 31
- Extension timeline
 - June 11, 2020: Decision to suspend permitting through September 7
 - July 23, 2020: Updated decision to suspend permitting through November 1
 - August 27, 2020: Updated decision to suspend permitting through December 1
 - September 24, 2020: Updated decision to suspend permitting through December 31
 - October 22, 2020: Updated decision to suspend permitting through January 31, 2021
- SEC began working on Memo in November/December
- Currently there is no good guideline or timeline to point to events reopening; Vaccine has started in Washington; According to Dr. Andrew Fauci, Concerts could resume in the fall of this year—as long as we do a few very important things right
- State has provided some guidance on smaller events or run/walk rides, but nothing for larger special events
- Chair proposes to discuss and consider an extension of the current SEC Permit Administration from to the end of April; Chair would like SEC to discuss if or how language should be added to give guidance for permitted activity based on State guidelines prior to proposed extension date
- Seattle Center – Make sure we incorporate language into this next decision, for SEC to take a look back at administrative decision based on guidance given from the State
- Chair – Tabling conversation until after Healthy Washington State Recovery Plan presentation by Meli and Rosemary
- Special Event Permit Administrative Decision
 - *Vote to extend the administrative decision for 90 days (end of April), excepting that we will consider applications that meet current State, Region, and City conditions for Phase 1 of Healthy Washington Recovery Plan*
 - *Gretchen with Seattle Center makes a motion; Lt. Clenna with SPD seconds*
 - *Vote: SPD, Seattle Center, KC Metro, Mayor's Office, WSLCB, SFD, DON, SDCl, SDOT, Parks, Health, and Citizen Representative – in favor; None opposed or abstained*
 - *Quorum met, vote passes; SEO will provide language to SEC prior to approving*
 - Discuss and vote on extension to end of April; Current suspension all point to State and Health guidelines, limitations, and how they move in a general way
 - Propose and discuss how we can include language that is specific to current allowances to consider Special Event permits; Think how we want to pose as a way for SEC to consider permit applications
 - Seattle Center – SEC will consider applications for outdoor events that meet Healthy

Washington Phase 1 requirements provided that those events do not require street closures, ROW, SPD resource assistance, etc. Due to the number of participants allowed in Phase 1, that number does not meet requirements for ROW closures; Example – St. Patrick’s Day event happening in timed waves and can be contained in the Park, event has no street use or closures, race held in a location without impacts to ROW or SPD resources – SEC may need permit in some capacity

- SDOT – Isn’t that where we are right now? SEC isn’t issuing permits, but Parks is issuing Parks Use Permits
- Chair – Another example is the Montlake Turkey Trot; Permitted since using side street or parking lane that doesn’t need SPD assistance, but could be a portion of the course
- Chair – Development caveat framed on language that Gretchen provided; Presuming with the assumptions we stated; Run/walk organizers are creative and can think of new ways to fit into guidance; Do not be so specific for language, but can be more general as Gretchen provided; Then will be a case by case basis and review
- SE – Feedback received this week from organizers, is that this administrative decision would benefit and support organizers based on contracts with vendors, course marshals, etc.; A more definitive answer from the City has been helpful for some organizers to make decision to hold events or not

Review New “Healthy Washington” State Recovery Plan

Meli Darby, Special Events Office and Rosemary Byrne, King County Public Health

- New Washington “Healthy Washington” state recovery plan was announced last week; Went into effect on 1/11
- Healthy Washington Roadmap to Recovery
 - State is divided into 8 regions; King County is in the Puget Sound Region with Pierce and Snohomish Counties
 - All of the regions since Monday (1/11) is in Phase 1; How we do as a region depends on how we do with our neighboring counties
- Regions must meet all 4 metrics to move to Phase 2:
 - 1. 10% decreasing trend in COVID-19 case rates
 - 2. 10% decrease in Coronavirus hospitalization admission rate
 - 3. ICU occupancy that’s less than 90%
 - 4. Test positivity rates less than 10%
 - A region will move back to Phase 1 if only 2 metrics are met; All metrics need to be met if want to move to Phase 2; Once in Phase 2, 3 of the metrics need to be met if want to stay in Phase 2; Counties will go back to Phase 1 if the region only meets 2 metrics
 - Metrics come out from KC Public Health on Mondays
 - Last data received was from January 2, 2021, since then cases have been increasing and data doesn’t consider the holidays, traveling, etc.
 - Puget Sound region meets 3 out of the 4 metrics
- Washington’s COVID 19 Vaccine Phases
 - Currently in A1A2 phase which includes high risk health care workers in health care settings, high risk first responders, long term care facility residents, all other workers at risk in health care settings
 - Phases are laid out by months
- Department of Health “Phase Finder”
 - Check COVID-19 vaccine eligibility at findyourphaseWA.org
 - Complete questionnaire to find out:
 - What phase you are in?
 - Where can you get the vaccine?
 - You will be notified when eligible

- Healthy Washington Roadmap to Recovery Guidelines
 - Film production guidance is still applicable under Phase 1 of Healthy Washington; Expected that guidance for different industries will be updated to reflect the language of the new plan
 - State rolling out guidance and how it applies to specific sectors
 - SEO submitted questions to Governor’s office relating to events
 - Miscellaneous Venues
 - Does current guidance stand under Phase 1 of the new plan, or are there changes? Sectors that fall under this guidance are trainings/testing that cannot be conducted remotely; meetings; and retail events like consumer or trade shows.
 - Construction
 - Are there any changes or does current guidance stand?
 - Outdoor Recreation / Public Parks & Right of Ways
 - Do current Phase 2 guidelines still apply for run/walk/rides under the new Phase 1 of the plan?
 - Do the new athletic guidelines apply to outdoor tennis courts and such?
 - Seattle Parks current allows <5 for picnics and ceremonies (weddings & funerals), does City approve up to 30 per State guidelines?
 - More outdoor fitness options and what is allowable in those spaces outlined in Phase 1 guidance; SEO expecting more inquiries relating to outdoor fitness
 - Phase 1: Indoor/Outdoor Performing Arts
 - Indoor:
 - Private rentals/tours/performances for individual households <6.
 - Maximum capacity is 25% of the venue or space.
 - Face coverings required
 - Outdoor:
 - Ticketed events only.
 - Groups <10 permitted, two households limit per group.
 - 6-foot separation from other groups, face coverings required
 - Minimum 20 feet required between artists/performers and the audience.
 - Maximum 75 individuals including artists, crew, and audience members
 - Two-hour time limit on all performances/events.
 - SDOT – Indoor guidance, understanding it is a total of 6 people or groups of 6 up to 25% capacity
 - SE – Maximum of 6 people for individual households at a time
 - Chair – Example: Indoor venue that is 100 people capacity, if 25% would be 25 people; Could 4 different 6 party families be allowed? Chair interprets that multiple households can be in the same space as long as it is under the maximum capacity of 25%
 - SDOT – Maximum of 6 people instead of 25%
 - Health – Why is the 25% in there? If 25% of the venue space is 4 people, then would it only be 4 people?
 - SE – Differences between indoor and outdoor; seeing maximum of 6 people at a time vs. groups; SEO will look for clarity from the State
 - Phase 2: Indoor/Outdoor Performing Arts
 - Indoor:
 - Maximum capacity is 25% of the venue/space or 200 people, whichever is less.
 - Groups with a maximum of six people are permitted.
 - 6-foot separation from other groups, face coverings required

- Minimum 20 feet required between artists/performers and the audience.
- 2-hour time limit on all performances/events.
- Outdoor:
 - Groups of up to 15 people permitted, two household limit per group.
 - 6-foot separation from other groups, face coverings required.
 - Minimum 20 feet required between artists/performers and the audience.
 - Maximum 200 individuals including artists, crew, and audience.
 - 3-hour time limit on all performances/events.
- Chair – SEC can expect, as restrictions lessen or numbers of cases decrease, the of participants allowed would increase; Do the guidelines for Phase 1 and 2 for Performing Arts supersede any of the current administrative bans?
- Seattle Center – Clarity is if this is something Mayor will be onboard and if there are any restrictions for the City; We will need to see if event organizers will want to rent the space for a performance for 75 people? Miscellaneous venues guidance will make a difference for Seattle Center
- New guidelines Racing non-motorized and motorized COVID-19 Requirements
 - Included Here: Races, bicycle tours and rides, runs, cross country skiing races, biathlons, canoe and kayak races, marathons, cross country running competitions, triathlons, and multi-sport competitions with more than 12 participants
 - Not included here: - Sporting activities and outdoor group fitness classes. Also not included under these guidelines are “fun runs” without participant timing or “charity walks.” Except as otherwise specified in this guidance, indoor competitive sporting activities or races, such as professional, amateur, or organized team sports should follow the guidance for Professional Sports and Other Sporting Activities.
 - Phase 1
 - Starting waves of 10 participants or less must be used with no more than one wave starting every minute and no more than 200 total participants starting per hour. No more than 3 consecutive hours of starting waves allowed per day.
 - Spectators are not allowed.
 - No congregation of more than 5 people allowed at hydration and nutrition stations at any one time.
 - No congregation allowed at the activity start or finish area.
 - Phase 2
 - Starting waves of 30 participants or less must be used with no more than one wave started every minute and no more than 500 total participants started per hour. No more than 3 consecutive hours of starting waves allowed per day.
 - Spectators limited to groups of 15 from no more than 2 households and total spectators limited to a maximum of 200 at either start or finish areas
 - Chair – Healthy Washington Phase 1 still very similar to Safe Start Phase 2 requirements; Healthy Washington Phase 2 guidelines opens things up a little more up
 - SDOT – What we discussed last meeting, ROW use would not be considered in a large sense based on the low number of participants; What is considered fun runs or charity walks
 - SDOT – fun runs/charity walks – same as original guidance; does not apply to fun runs or
 - Parks – Clarity on qualifier on fun runs or charity-based walks; Parks can require charity runs to have timing, so then it would not be considered a charity walk?
 - Seattle Center – Qualifier makes a big difference potentially for event producers; If just adding timing allows event producers to move forward with event, there could be more inquiries; For competitive or timed events, then wouldn't have many people congregating; Can manage the flow a little bit better and draw some sort of distinction how participants view experience

- Parks – If it is the competition-based event, then brings up the SPD budget and the ability to close streets for a competitive race
- Chair – SEO need explanation from State why distinguishing this way; Assumption is looking on how event activity is controlled i.e. controlled running pace, registration, etc.; Currently participant numbers will not allow ROW use to be considered; SPD resources not available to support ROW use then may hinder how City approves
- Parks – Where can someone have a competitive event that would not require SPD resources? Fun runs from Gas Works is no problem, competitive run at Gas Works would need someone to monitor the exiting
- Seattle Center – Where in the City are facilities that don't involve SPD to do a competitive race? Can someone hold a 5K in the City? If feasible for someone to have a competitive race at City facilities without requiring street closures, then we should be reviewing applications; if it is just not realistic, do we save the time and say we are closed?
- Parks – There are a number of parks that could host a 5K; Currently, can't think of a 5K that wouldn't be considered a charity or fun run; St. Patrick's Day event would be consider a fun run; Historically it was a timed event outside of the Park, now since moving inside the Park, requiring parks to have a reservations
- Citizen Representative – Example of a virtual event in October which had a timed start, 10 min intervals start, timed run around Green Lake; Based on guidance it is a timed and competitive event since racing the clock around Green Lake
- SDOT – Is there a definition of a timed event?
- Citizen Representative – Timed event within timeframe, if having clock out or providing results then it is time
- SPD – Most of run/walks have a timed component; Charity races there are people who want to be timed and others are leisure, what is the distinguishing? Most people walk in groups
- Chair – Reading through, would like to eliminate the latter - having groups congregate; Seeing that would want it to be more controlled
- Citizen Representative – For a timed run, we can accept people who walk, but require some messaging that says if you are planning to arrive towards the end of window, there is closure at 10am per State guidance; Making sure that messaging is out there to promote urgency for non-gathering
- Seattle Center – Timed participation and competitive and can assign waves, as it pertains to our decision, it would be good to clarify if a historical fun run is now timed and meets term for walks/runs could open up to that consideration based on some parameters?

Recommendations for Phase Reopening of Events Memo

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

- External review now (ASSET, Film Task Force)
- Final review (1/21/21 subcommittee, digital)
- Memo submitted by 1/31/21

2021 Special Events Look Ahead

Meli Darby, Special Events Office

- Tracking 2021 event cancellations / reschedules
 - Hearing from event organizers on event status; SEO received notification that NW Folk Life will have a virtual event and Pride Parade will not be hosting an event in 2021
 - Inquiries from other for dates/keeping historical dates
 - SEO is tracking event cancellations and reschedules as they come in, so SEC can track open dates that come in the future
- SEO receiving inquiries from larger events requesting contingency dates
 - Rock n' Roll Marathon - Summer

- Pride – Fall
- Soft moratorium considering new run/walk/rides
 - Soft moratorium in place in consideration of neighborhood impacts and ‘Period of Maximum Constraints’ of ROW and construction projects
 - SDOT – Getting back into construction coordination, there are projects happening such as Waterfront project, Battery Street Tunnel, surface streets, paving projects, WSDOT projects on I-5; Would need to look at other considerations in addition to equity
 - Seattle Center – Would be willing to look at new events, but realistically not able to fit anything in the fall; Availability and scheduling key to Seattle Center; Realistically could we have event on campus without surface streets will depend on timing and scheduling
 - SPD – How would athletic events at Climate Pledge Arena affect campus events already approved?
 - Seattle Center – What we historically found with arena and campus events is that because most races/walks/runs are morning events and arena events are evening there isn’t much of a conflict; Looking to avoid conflict if there are 2 events simultaneously happening
 - Parks – Ability to look at new runs/walks; There are more parks to look at depending on weekend, parks use and current guidelines
- SPD – Too far ahead to make a comment if can support or not; Events will go through the regular application process with SPD; Collective group besides traffic section to make a decision if can support event or not; Event support that has a lot of moving parts in department, including Parking Enforcement Officers (PEO) moving out of SPD, SPD will have no control over PEO
- SDOT – Scheduling currently, things are open, but what other events will want to go back to their regular dates in the fall? Where will the stadium events be? Sporting events? Resources will be a big deal as well as schedule
- SFD – Fire and Medics will be a part of administrating vaccines, currently not sure who would be available from a Medics standpoint; Medics may not have availability to participate in anything either
- SDOT – Rock ‘n’ Roll half marathon is better, but with routes and the time it take to plan and review new routes could be an issue; It took months to plan and review last route, so if route is brand new, then expect it would take some time to approve
- SE– If Rock ‘n’ Roll would to or any major event were to apply today or tomorrow, are we in a position to look and consider routes at this time?
- SDOT – No, due to budgetary reasons around Special Events at SDOT
- SE – When do we get back to a place where we are able to consider applications and events that were not able to go forward with their historical dates earlier this year, when we look at a contingency date how do we look through an equity and community lens when considering new events
- Hearing feedback that departmentally, SEC is not in a place to review major routes, courses, or event plans for summer event at this time; Goal is to work it out to get there

Upcoming Meetings

- 1/21/21 – Subcommittee Meeting to review Memo
- 2/4/21 - Subcommittee Meeting
- 2/11/21 - Special Events Committee Meeting
- 2/18/21 - Subcommittee Meeting
- Reminder: 2021 meeting schedule
 - 1st Thursdays: Subcommittee Meeting (50 minutes)
 - 2nd Thursdays: Special Events Committee Meeting (120 minutes)
 - 3rd Thursdays: Subcommittee Meeting (50 minutes)