

Special Events Committee Meeting Minutes

January 13, 2022

Via Video Conference

Member and Partner Representatives in Attendance:

Agency	Representatives	Noted in Minutes As
Department of Construction & Inspections	Anthony Jagow	DCI Noise Abatement
Department of Neighborhoods	Ed Pottharst	DON
Finance and Administrative Services	Brenda Strickland	FAS
King County Metro Transit	Chris Hanson	Metro
Parks and Recreation	Carl Bergquist	Parks
Seattle-King County Health Department	Rosemary Byrne (joined post-vote)	Health
Seattle Center	Gretchen Lenihan	Seattle Center
Seattle Department of Transportation	Mike Shea	SDOT
Seattle Fire Department	Lt. Chris Cornett	SFD
Seattle Police Department	Sgt. Nate Shopay	SPD Operations
Seattle Public Utilities	Pat Kaufman (joined post-vote)	SPU
Special Events Office	Chris Swenson	Chair
	Randy Wiger	SE
	Julie Borden	SE
WA State Liquor & Cannabis Board	Beth Lehman	WSLCB
	Victor Hopkins	WSLCB

Note: As always, these are "raw minutes notes" based on the discussion of the 1/13/22 meeting and do not include every word spoken - not a literal transcript - merely a summary of ideas.

Martin Luther King Jr Day Marches and Rallies

- In a typical year, we permit about 6-8 marches
- This year, we have received communication from the march held on the Monday holiday
- Organizers stated they will not share the march route due to security concerns, but will begin at Garfield High School and end at City Hall
- Rally begins at 11:00AM and march begins at 12:30PM
- Special Events Office is continuing to communicate with organizers on details and issues
- Organizers are planning to use their own staffing and have requested SPD not be present
- Metro will provide shuttles between endpoint and Garfield High School for end of march
- It is expected that the attendance may be lower this year due to COVID safety concerns and possible bad weather

Post-Event Evaluations/Comments:

DATE	EVENT
Dec 11	Equinox Studios Very Open House <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No concerns from SFD

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SEO staff went to event and observed the organizers were performing vaccination verifications
Dec 12	<p>Jingle Bell Run</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First time at Green Lake Park • No issues reported to Parks
Dec 17-18	December Night Market
Dec 31	Seattle Tennis Club NYE
Dec 31	<p>New Year's at the Needle</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seattle Center pleased with advanced communication • Estimation of peak of 3,000 people on campus • Seattle Center commends SPD on handling of closures and control • SPD notes that overall went well, only "problem" was last-minute addition of show at Climate Pledge Arena as it stretched officers more thinly than ideal • SFD reports no issues

Meeting Minute Approval

- Vote to approve December 2021 minutes
- No changes or edits to the minutes
- Meeting minutes approved; All in favor, none opposed

Vaccination Verification Plans

Reviewed in subcommittee

- Magnolia Little League Season Kickoff
 - Recommendation: Deny (Special Events Office staff will follow up to help improve plan and resubmit)
- LLS Firefighter
 - Recommendation: Approve
- Big Climb
 - Recommendation: Approve
- Tenacious Ten
 - Recommendation: Deny (Special Events Office staff will follow up to help improve plan and resubmit)

Administrative Review

- Polar Plunge Seattle
- Green Strip
- Madrona May Fair
- Seattle Opera's Big Opera Party
 - All events will be held outdoors and are expected to have fewer than 500 attendees
 - Recommendation: Exempt

New Plans

- February Night Market
- March Night Market
- April Night Market
- May Night Market

- All events and plans are identical to each other and to the December plan that was approved
- Recommendation: Approve

Committee vote: Approve above recommendations as presented and discussed

Roll call vote: 10 yea; 0 nay

Approved unanimously

Applications Review / Discussion

Event: Seattle Opera's Big Opera Party
Date(s): Friday, May 13, 2022
Location: Adjacent to McCaw Hall
Organizer(s): Liz Sexton [Tolo Events]

Event Notes:

- Largest annual fundraiser for the opera
- Usually held on McCaw Hall stage, but given COVID concerns would like to move portion of event outdoors
- Event would begin inside with cocktails, then to the tent for dinner, then back inside for dancing and celebration
- Ideally would like to have tent on 4th Ave for dinner
 - Tent is too wide to allow for the required 20' fire lane
 - There is no room to place the tents on sidewalks, next to building due to existing traffic signs
 - Tent will be in place for 4-5 days
- Coordinating with neighboring orgs and businesses for access needs
 - Soccer tournament needs access to/from Republican St
 - Seattle Center has requested access be maintained to/from Republican to support operations, planned events, KCTS, and others
- Maximum guests expected is 400, but may be considerably fewer
- Will have wine service with dinner and may have bars in tent
- Issuing RFP for caterer for event, so not yet secured
- Currently no stadium events scheduled during requested closure days

Committee Discussion:

- WSLCB – Need to follow up to discuss specifics of alcohol licensing and sales
- SDOT – Republican St is normally one-way, request is to have limited access two ways;
- Recommends 2 UPOs for traffic control on Republican St during event, possibly flaggers for other days
- SFD – The 20' fire lane is a firm requirement, might be possible to safely work around tent depending on exact location; must be able to get ladder truck on corner of 4th Ave and Mercer, optimally 100' would be kept clear from Mercer St to the south on 4th Ave; need further discussion and revision to plan in consultation with Seattle Center and McCaw Hall
- Chair – Organizer continue two conversations: (1) SFD and Seattle Center re moving the tent and other items to allow for ladder truck to the north; (2) SDOT and SPD regarding officer or other staffing to support the two-way traffic on Republican

Event: Walk to Harbor Memorial
Date(s): Saturday, February 12, 2022
Location: Hing Hay Park to Ferry Terminal and return

Organizer(s): Not present, internal discussion

Event Notes:

- Hing Hay Park to harbor and return
- Requested route: Hing Hay Park, west on Main St to ferry terminal, return to Hing Hay going east on Jackson St
- Concern for impacts to ferry terminal operations, may create congestion
- Some parts of Main St are one-way, requested route would be counterflow

Committee Discussion:

- SDOT – S Jackson is both streetcar and major bus routes; also concerned about impacts to ferry terminal – map seems to indicate they plan to go into the terminal; waiting to hear back from construction hub coordinator on any conflicts
- Metro – Would need to reroute buses that use Jackson St (biggest concern 2nd Ave to 5th Ave), could do rolling slow-downs for cross streets
- Parks – DSA will be doing a load-out on that day from Occidental Park, need to check in to make sure no conflicts
- Special Events Office – Will follow up with organizer to discuss route concerns, goals of event and route, and plans at the ferry terminal; will report back to committee and potentially schedule a meeting to discuss

Public Health Update on COVID-19 and Omicron Variant

Introduction

- We have invited Becky Reitzes, a representative from Public Health, to give us an update on COVID-19
- Understanding at this time that there is not a change to guidelines, but Public Health is re-emphasizing recommendations to use face coverings (upgraded as available), limit large gatherings, get vaccinated
- Presenter Becky Reitzes is Program Manager for King County’s COVID-19 and Health Equity Training and Capacity Building Program, Office of Equity and Community Partnerships, Director’s Office, Public Health - Seattle & King County

Background

- Ms. Reitzes is a 20-year veteran of Public Health and has been focused on the pandemic since March of 2020
- Basically, nothing has changed with regards to Public Health guidelines, including for special events
- King County requires proof of vaccination or negative test to attend indoor and larger outdoor events
- Vaccines are available for those 5 and older but vaccine verification order is still for those 12 and older
- Public Health will continue to monitor vaccination and infection rates and will revise plans and requirements as needed
- Face masks are required for everyone, vaccinated or not, ages 5 and older
- Washington State Safe Start website has a template of standard operating procedures for businesses that have been recently updated <https://kingcounty.gov/depts/health/covid-19/current-guidance.aspx>
- There have been some very recent updates to the CDC guidelines for isolation and quarantine
- There are vaccination and mask signs available on website for download
- Have received requests for de-escalation training related to mask enforcement by businesses
- “Fully” vaccinated wording has changed to “up-to-date”

- Up-to-date means vaccination plus recommended boosters
- At this time, Public Health recommends the Pfizer or Moderna vaccines and boosters and discourages the Johnson & Johnson vaccination as it is less effective
- Businesses/organizers can choose to require additional steps for mitigation, such as enforcing the 6-foot distancing
- There are no required signs for events, but it is strongly recommended; Public Health website versions may be appropriate and are available in multiple languages
- Omicron is extremely contagious and even with the many people in Seattle who are vaccinated, the infection rate is quite high; it is a concerning and uncertain time with situation changing rapidly

Discussion

Seattle Center – Biggest challenge to event producers is that there are so many related gray areas; it is a struggle to understand and implement guidelines for many types of public events; it would be helpful if there were some more overall guidelines and metrics, such as were used during the reopening phases

- These metrics and accompanying guidelines are produced by the State, there have not been recent updates