



Special Events Committee Meeting Minutes

November 13 2025

Via Teams Meeting

Member and Partner Representatives in Attendance:

Agency	Representatives	Noted in Minutes As
Department of Neighborhoods	Najma Sheikh	DON
Finance and Administrative Services Licensing	Toner Eren	FAS
King County Metro Transit	Camilo Penuela	METRO
Mayor's Office	N/A	MAYOR
Parks and Recreation	Carl Bergquist	PARKS
Seattle Center	Gretchen Lenihan	SC
Seattle Fire Department	Lt. Deborah Williams	SFD
Seattle Fire Department	Lt. Jamie Scott	SFD
Seattle Police Department	Lt. James Sather	SPD
Seattle Dept of Construction & Inspection/Structures	Dean Greenleaf	SDCI Structures
Seattle Dept. of Construction & Inspection/Noise Abatement	James Dasher	SDCI Noise
Seattle Department of Transportation	Jack Bighorse	SDOT
Seattle Department of Transportation	Hannah Tyo	SDOT
Seattle & King County Public Health	Tony Bui Michael Simpson	SKCPH
Seattle Public Utilities	Pat Kaufman	SPU
WA State Liquor & Cannabis Board	Lt Robert Rieder	WSLCB
WA State Liquor & Cannabis Board	Beth Lehman	WSLCB
Special Events Office	Kiah Patzkowsky	CHAIR
Special Events Permit Specialist	Sarah Ly	SE

Additional Attendees:

- Bob Greenspun – Lake City Summer Fest and Parade
- Claire Pinger – Downtown Seattle Association
- David Wells
- Emily Cantrell – Seafair
- Josh Wilkens – Seafair

- Phil Megenhardt - Bold Hat Productions
- David Doxtater – co-chair of ASSET
- Tyler Pedersen
- Wesley Ziegler – Fremont Fair
- Michael Simpson – DPH
- Floretta Woart – Downtown Seattle Association

Public Comment

- Wesley Ziegler – Fremont Fair (Vendor Manager, Bold Hat Productions): Have concerns about vendor fees and their impacts to artisans, entrepreneurs, and small businesses. Ask Committee to consider the impact of fees to micro-sized businesses. Fremont Fair: 66% of our vendors are BIPOC, LGBTQ, or women-owned businesses. Please make a positive value judgement as you consider fees. Consider lowering fees where possible for micro-sized businesses. Lowering fees and burdens would demonstrate value of what they bring to the City.
- Phil Megenhardt (President, Creative Director, Bold Hat Productions): I'm representing Seattle's locally produced festivals and nonprofit fundraising events. Have concerns about Seattle Police staffing fees. Currently \$88/hr, last year went up 10%. If fees went up 10% this year, \$97/hr. Most events have multiple officers, equating to thousands of dollars for event. Cost comes straight out of mission of local causes and programs for community events like charity runs. Cost of producing events is higher and higher and higher. Ask to keep fees at 2025 current rate.
- Bob Greenspun (Director of Lake City Summer Fest and Parade): Mission of our festival is to keep it free and fun for everyone, trying to create legacy event that people rally around. As a nonprofit group, must be fiscally responsible and can't lose money on producing free events, including massive parade that is expensive to produce. Fees increasing across the board (barricades, trash, portable toilets going up 20% or more). Aim to have local artisan vendors. When we raise vendor fees, vendors have to raise their cost of items they sell, and economics of spending money on locally produced goods becomes more onerous to members of Lake City neighborhood. I believe the City has a commitment to give good access to local shopping. I ask the committee to keep the fees where they're at or even reduce them where possible.
- Josh Wilkens - Seafair: Wanted to echo many of the things already shared. Seafair represents 23 smaller community events which are impacted by fee increases. As non-profits, we are trying to get through a difficult climate. Need to also consider impact World Cup could have on smaller local events that could be event-ed out. Encourage fees to remain the same so we can get through another year.
- David Doxtater (The Workshop, Co-Chair of ASSET): Concerned that fee increase will significantly impact small events, and events in general. The economy is in turmoil, event producers concerned about unemployment, cost of living and inflation impacting costs everywhere. West Seattle Summerfest lost money for first time in 2025 due to increasing costs. Urge Committee to freeze permit fees and costs. FIFA may be a negative for events happening during the FIFA window as costs will escalate for resources. Cost increases occurring across the board with other municipal entities in the region and State, including SB5814 sales tax increases that affect hired private security. All adding an additional burden to events.

- CHAIR: Phil shared in the chat request to freeze the alcohol service area fee from 2025 rates to 2026.
- PHIL: Are administrative fees subject to increase as well?
- CHAIR: Yes. Fee structure context - per the Seattle Municipal Code that established current fee structure and committee structure, street use fees by code have to be adjusted based on consumer price index (CPI) percentage as measured from January to June of the previous year. For 2026 fees, CPI from 2025 measures 2.7%. Administrative fees such as permit application fee or vendor fee can also be adjusted. Fee increases cannot be more than 10% from the previous year's fees. Per code, administrative fees don't have to be adjusted. From 2016, when the fee structure that we're currently under was established through 2022, fees were not increased outside of mandatory CPI adjustment for street closure fees. Current fee structure was never intended to be full cost recovery.
- SC: There was a freeze of fee increases for a long time. City sees challenging circumstances event producers are facing, and Committee is now working to navigate a fee adjustment gap based on fees being frozen for quite some time. Committee is working to strike a balance without overwhelmingly burdening everyone.
- CHAIR: Thank you to everyone. Really appreciate you taking the time today to share your perspectives.

Note: As always, these are "raw minutes notes" based on the discussion of the ___/___2025 meeting and do not include every word spoken - not a literal transcript - merely a summary of ideas.

Roundtable/Announcements

- CHAIR: We are going to launch Eproval, our new online permitting software, on Monday, 11/17/25. You can expect more correspondence on that and website updates.

Review Previous Meeting Minutes

- CHAIR: Do we have a quorum?
- SE: Yes

Meeting Minute Approval

- Vote to approve October 9 Meeting Minutes.
- Seattle Ctr moves to approve minutes, SDOT seconds.
- Meeting minutes approved; All in favor, none opposed

Special Events Fee Adjustment Discussion & Vote

- CHAIR: Per previous subcommittee meeting to workshop fee adjustment scenarios, subcommittee members propose 2.7% CPI increase for street closures and 2.7% CPI increase rounded to the nearest even dollar for administrative fees. Subcommittee also recommends considering 10% increase on the hourly fee for SPD labor rounded to nearest even dollar. We've also just heard from several community members asking for freezes to fees and not increasing fees where fees don't have to increase per the code. Does Committee want to consider freezing any fees? All Street/Bridge/Waterway Use, Arterials Intersected require 2.7% increase. Other administrative fees and police fees are up to the Committee to either maintain or adjust. All fees collected by the Special Events Office

deposited into General Fund. Fee adjustment history: Current fee structure updated in 2016. Previously, event fees were based on attendance. SPD fees are paid by events categorized as Commercial or Athletic, where ticket or registration fees are charged. Also note that new SB5814 imposes 10% tax on some services – per discussion with event organizer, peer/private security providers are likely to pass on tax to event organizer for peer security services at events.

- SDCI: Funding and support resources for community events and event safety?
- CHAIR: Special Events Office doesn't have funding resources to provide to event organizers. There are some grants through ARTS. Washington Festivals & Events Association (WFEA) shares grant opportunities to event organizers.
- SC: I think a lot of those funding resources have likely gotten smaller, especially as federal funding for other things has dried up significantly.
- CHAIR: Lack of sponsorships have also affected events.
- SDOT: With the rounding, please note that it is rounded down. We are trying to keep it in favor of lower fees.
- CHAIR: Thank you for sharing that.
- SDOT: From our perspective, we still stand by the 2.7% increase for fees other than the SPD fees.
- SC: Is there a singular fee that is uniformly impactful for our small event producers?
- CHAIR: Hearing from event organizers that SPD and vendor fees are most impactful. Consider that vendors represent opportunity and vibrancy at events.
- SDOT: From the earlier public comments, seems to be SPD staffing. Vendor fees are an increase to the vendor, rather than the event organizer.
- CHAIR: Clarity for vendor fees – event organizer pays fees to Special Events Office, and event organizer can decide whether to pass fee on to vendors. SPD fees impactful, especially if increased by 10%, especially considering SPD fees have increased 10% for a few years in a row.
- PHIL: By not raising vendor fees last year, we were able to maintain our occupancy of vendors. Main concern was vendors dipping. By the time a vendor buys their booth space, they have spent at least \$100 with the City of Seattle. We haven't raised our booth fees in years. We do pass the vendor fees to the vendors. The Police fees have been going up 10% for the last few years and it would be nice to have a breather this year.
- CHAIR: Thank you. For real-world comparison, an athletic event with SPD fees with 45 officers at 3 hrs, total for 2025 is \$11,830. Increase of 10% for 2026, \$12,960. Increase of just over \$1,000. That is not insignificant. Can impact cost to participants if event organizer raises registration fees to cover cost increase.
- FAS: B&O (Business & Occupation) tax passed to increase threshold to \$2 million. Big difference to businesses within that bracket where they are not going to owe and B&O tax. However, event organizations could face increase in licensing fees.
- PARKS: What would it cost the City to pay the staff – SPD, to be at event? What is the current rate for SPD officers?
- SPD: Depends on rank and longevity. Typically one or two lieutenants and a couple sergeants should do the work. If new contract gets approved by City Council, they will be paying drastically more than what they're asking community to pay.
- PARKS: A lot of event coverage is overtime for SPD?
- SPD: That is correct.

- CHAIR: These fees are not meant to be full cost recovery. They are meant to subsidize some of the costs. If we did full cost recovery, we would not have events. We do not want to lose events as they are economic drivers and create opportunities for people to come together.
- SDOT: As costs go up, what the City is paying/subsidizing is also going up. Money may come out of another City program to cover costs.
- CHAIR: Interest in holding vendor fees and not increasing them? Reconsider SPD fees?
- SC: We are open to it. The SPD 10% increase for the past few years has been significant.
- SDOT: We are open to reconsidering the SPD 10% increase. We believe the CPI increase of 2.7% is reasonable for all other fees.
- CHAIR: Consider rounded 5% increase for SPD fees?
- SPD: Fine with 5% SPD increase and 2.7% increases, rounded down.
- CHAIR: Street Use at 2.7% increase. Administrative fees (excluding SPD fees) 2.7% increase rounded to nearest dollar. SPD Fees, rounded 5% increase. Motion to approve fee structure?
- SDOT: Move to approve.
- SPD: Seconded.
- Roll call vote. 9 Approved, 2 abstained. Fee adjustments approved.

House Bill 1515 Impacts to Alcohol Service

- CHAIR: Presentation on how this changes alcohol service to events.
- WSLCB: HB 1515 expands outdoor alcohol service options. Local governments may request authorization for special events through 12/31/27, allows licensees within the approved local jurisdiction to share an already established outside service area with other licensees as well as other businesses that do not engage in the sale or service of alcohol. Local governments must submit a request through the LCB portal, public engagement review due by 09/01/26. Licensees: submit added activity app in LCB portal, choose boundary option (options available will be determined by Local Govt), employee with Mandatory Alcohol Server Training (MAST) is assigned to area when patrons are present or subject to mitigation of violation, submit joint operating plan and site map, accept joint responsibility for any violation or enforcement issue. Applications opened 08/2025. LCB working on guides for 1515 applications. Any change requests to applications must be submitted to LCB. Rulemaking Activity is currently being tracked on LCB site. Civic Campus Events at Seattle Center. World Cup Fan Zones/Host city: Bellingham, Bremerton, Everett, Olympia, Spokane, Yakima.
lcb.wa.gov/expanded-alcohol-services. Expandedalcoholservices@lcb.wa.gov
- CHAIR: Does 1515 allow for alcohol service in established service areas, like sidewalk cafes in a line?
- SC: In general, the rules do not change for us in terms of standards of safety. What these do is create specific situations to expand. SC is working through a Civic Campus application for the Armory. Normal rules still apply and have not changed.

Eproval Updates

- CHAIR: We are launching on Monday. Procedural documents in the works. Intent is to keep some test applications after launch to continue practicing with Eproval. SE will also set up a weekly office hour for assistance.

- **Review Recent Events**

Events for Review 10/9/2025 - 11/12/2025

Name of Event	Permit No	Event Start Date
Water Lantern Festival: CHAIR: There are known impacts. We tried No Parking on one side of the narrow roadways to allow two-way traffic. Heard from community that it did not work. Residents unable to park at their residences. Also, vehicles traveled faster as a result of wider roadway. SDOT: Evaluating this event and with similar, we believe this event does not work for this location (Green Lake Park). Peak activity is for an hour or so at sunset, driving attendance at one time. SFD: Between 3-4pm, traffic was horrible. Parking lot taken up by food vendors. Some unpermitted. Needs some assistance for future. PARKS: SPD onsite with any traffic control? That was one of my requests. If not at Green Lake, not seeing how this event can happen at Seattle. CHAIR: Any insight from SPD? SPD: Not sure. Can ask the precinct. PARKS: Issue: intersection that accesses the residential road with the reconfiguration of the bike lane is problematic. SDOT: We did have an officer at that location on the TCP. PARKS: Neighborhood flow is a challenge with this event, especially with legal double parking on streets. SDOT: We tried to mitigate double parking making streets one lane and attempted to make a two-way street to help with traffic congestion.	S25OC009	10/11/2025
Mercer Island Sausage Pull: PARKS: Harbor not here but, curious if last minute change was successful. Resources were moved due to Mt. Baker fire and event moved to Stan Sayres.	S25OC180	10/11/2025
Puget Sound Heart and Stroke Walk	S25OC227	10/11/2025
Making Strides Against Breast Cancer of Seattle	S25OC317	10/11/2025
BRS X Elysian Brewery - Capitol Hill (10.12)	S25OC161	10/12/2025
2025 Indigenous Peoples Day	S25OC386	10/13/2025
Metro League Cross Country Post Season Races	S25OC380	10/15/2025
Seize the Moment City Hall Fan Rally	S25OC396	10/16/2025
Snowvana	S25OC335	10/17/2025
BRS X Elysian Brewing - Fields (10.18)	S25OC162	10/18/2025
Ian Cox Memorial Dick's-A-Thon	S25OC341	10/18/2025

Seattle Waterfront 10k (10.18)	S25OC378	10/18/2025
Seattle No Kings 2.0 - Capitol Hill: CHAIR: Issued permit for march from Capitol Hill to Seattle Center. We did not issue a permit for the march that started at Seattle Center. There were several logistical meetings for this event, which ended up being unpermitted. A lot of feedback so curious if committee wants to have a separate meeting to discuss. SDOT: Would like further discussion regarding the two No Kings events. SC: If we sidebar, would like to join discussion.	S25OC395	10/18/2025
I Can And I Will Run!	S25OC346	10/19/2025
Ballard Dia de Los Muertos Parade: CHAIR: New event, new event organizer. Any comments? SDOT: We did three revisions to their TCP to support their goals. Curious of perspective from attendees. SFD: Did a walkthrough before event. Looked organized, couple of vendors did not have permits. CHAIR: Will reach out to SPD – North Precinct for feedback. LCB: There was confusion about the alcohol service. The Matador extended alcohol service into their parking lot.	S25OC337	10/25/2025
T'Challoween — A Tribute to our Heroes: SDOT: Did we receive negative feedback on this one? CHAIR: We did receive some social media feedback. Because of high attendance (800), traffic control devices were required and due to cost, the event pivoted to sidewalk use. SDOT: We are running into confusion with PSM's Trick or Treat Streets. We are working with PSM to provide guidance and unified policies. PARKS: Event did apply for a parks permit then cancelled.	S25OC342	10/25/2025
Harvest Fest	S25OC351	10/26/2025
Fremont Evening Market	S25OC374	10/30/2025
Trolloween SFD: There was fire performance. Read the Brazilian dance troupe and drummers were part of that, which is a huge thing that happens at Luminata. PARKS: Luminata needs a discussion. CHAIR: Will reach out to SPD for feedback.	S25OC051	10/31/2025
Magnolia Village Trick or Treat	S25OC301	10/31/2025
Trick-or-Treat Streets and the Pumpkins and Paws Parade	S25OC366	10/31/2025
Head of the Lake	S25NO348	11/2/2025
Summon the Snow: CHAIR: SE attended and hopes it becomes an annual event. SDOT: The TCP was easy to do.	S25NO349	11/8/2025

SFD: Event well-run. Walkthrough, vendors, and beer garden looked fine before event.		
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Anything Else

- CHAIR: Procedural documentation for Eproval will be out late this week or early next week. We're also going to hold space every week for an hour for drop in office hours via Teams for committee members.

ADJOURNED