

Special Events Committee Meeting Minutes

May 14, 2026

Via Microsoft Teams Meeting

Member and Partner Representatives in Attendance:

Agency	Representatives	Noted in Minutes As
Citizen Representatives	TBD	Citizen
Department of Neighborhoods I	Israel Rios	DON
Finance and Administrative Services / Consumer Protection Division	N/A	FAS / CPD
Finance and Administrative Services	N/A	FAS
Finance and Administrative Services Licensing	Toner Eren	FAS
King County Metro Transit	Camilo Penuela Mya Camarillo	METRO
Mayor's Office	N/A	MAYOR
Parks and Recreation	Carl Bergquist	PARKS
Seattle Center	Gretchen Lenihan	SC
Seattle Fire Department	Lt. Jamie Scott Lt. Deborah Williams D/Chief Melissa Kennedy	FIRE / SFD
Seattle Police Department	Sgt. Shane Burditt Sgt. Matthew Didier	POLICE / SPD
Seattle Police Department/Traffic	Lt. Bryan Clenna Lt. Brandon James	SPD Traffic
Seattle Dept of Construc & Inspect/Structures	Dean Greenleaf	SDCI Structures
Seattle Dept. of Construc & Inspect / Noise Abatement	James Dasher	SDCI Noise
Seattle Department of Transportation	Jack Bighorse Hannah Tyo	SDOT
Seattle & King County Public Health	N/A	SKCPH
Seattle Public Utilities	Pat Kaufman Gwen Bartholomay	SPU
WA State Liquor & Cannabis Board	Kalynn Gubbe	WSLCB
Office of Economic Development	N/A	OED

Special Events Office	Kiah Patzkowsky	CHAIR
Special Events Permit Specialist	Alex Mielcarek Sarah Ly	SE
Special Events Permit Admin	Hana Peoples	SE

Additional Attendees:

- Stephanie Byington, (Visit Seattle); Cassandra McCarthy (Sky Elements); Claire Pinger & Floretta Woart (Downtown Seattle Association); Tiffani Melake & Michael Johnson (Waterfront); Rosie Courtney & Marie Ellingson & Gerri Poor (Port of Seattle) Bonnie Lackey (Alexander Party Rentals), Christy Vaught, Katherine Claeys, Michael Johnson

Public Comment

- N/A

Roundtable/Announcements

- CHAIR: For major festivals at Seattle Center (i.e. Folklife, Bite of Seattle, Bumbershoot), a reminder these events come through SEO for curb use only. Apologies for the confusion and for Folklife, our office will only send out applications for review only for Curb Use.
- SDCI: Please send any structure related questions you get to us.
- FAS: I think there was confusion between applicants. Do you prefer them to submit their FAS related materials via email or thru Eproval?
- SC: Anything that is happening on the Seattle Center campus, please keep us copied.
- CHAIR: Because NW Folklife is already loading in, if there have been conversations in Eproval keep them there and in the future, we'll use Eproval for curb/street use only.
- CHAIR: Meeting cadence during FIFA World Cup - will keep the June 11 full committee meeting. Will keep sub-committee meeting on June 18 as a placeholder for discussions after the first match as needed. Will discuss on June 11 whether to use July 2 as Pride Weekend recap.
- SC: I like the idea of using placeholders and we decide closer to the date.
- SDOT: Agreed.
- SDCI: Post FIFA meeting would be late July?
- CHAIR: Yes, we plan to hold a Post FIFA meeting.
- CHAIR: June 4: We will discuss Seafair events (4th of July, Torchlight and Seafair Parade).

Review Previous Meeting Minutes

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

Meeting Minute Approval

- Vote to approve **April** minutes.
- SC motioned, SDOT second, all in favor, none opposed. **Approved.**

Other Committee Discussions

- CHAIR: Resources regarding June-July Events at a glance have been sent to Committee. If you are a non-city of Seattle partner, we can assist in helping you to get access. The spreadsheet includes in on lead permitting agency, if SPD will be there, if there will be alcohol services and more. Reminder

of Internal Special Events Calendar in Eproval as reference for Special Event tracking and major venue tracking.

- SC: If we have updated events, do you want us to add in any data entry into the June-July events spreadsheet?
- SE: You can directly enter or you can email me directly.
- SC: What was the threshold to add an event?
- CHAIR: It is 2,000 for Seattle Center.
- EVENT (Visit Seattle): Would like to work together to share activations via Visit Seattle resources.
- CHAIR: I will chat offline with you to discuss the best way to share event details.
- CHAIR: I want to point out Juneteenth weekend; there are many events layered in with FIFA matches, Solstice Weekend and Pride activations.
- CHAIR: Pride weekend at the end of June looks to be the busiest Pride weekend we've ever seen. Thank you committee members for your time and effort to get through these applications.
- CHAIR: The first weekend of July, we start seeing Seafair activations and the last FIFA events. Post World Cup, the weekend of July 11 is very busy.
- CHAIR: To our agency partners, please make sure to work within your agency to share out FIFA related information to your team who are involved with FIFA planning who are not a part of the Special Events Committee. If you need us to add any people onto Eproval, let us know.

Visit Seattle World Cup Drone Shows

- EVENT (Visit Seattle): We are working on a series of six drone shows, one on each Seattle match day, at Pier 66, overlooking the Waterfront. Show will include a scoreboard in the sky and World Cup imagery. We will be ramping up our PR for international and domestic press.
- EVENT (Sky Elements): We are contracted by Visit Seattle to produce drone shows after every Seattle match. Shows are scheduled to last for 15 minutes.
- CHAIR: Be aware of temporary flight restriction which we currently understand to be a 3-nautical mile radius around the stadium, expected to last through about 2 hours after the match. That could change with discussion with the FAA.
- EVENT (Visit Seattle): We are working with the LOC to see if we can execute the shows during our proposed time with waivers.
- WATERFRONT: Will people be gathering at the barge and on the Pier? Our park closes at 10:00 PM.
- EVENT (Visit Seattle): We need to confirm this with the Seattle Sounders.
- WATERFRONT: Event needs to contact Seattle Aquarium related to disturbance to animals.
- CHAIR: Our office can facilitate communication between Waterfront, Friends of the Waterfront, Visit Seattle and the Aquarium. As the Waterfront mentioned, with the park closing at 10:00 PM, there will need to be discussion around extending park hours and supplementing security.
- PORT: We have been working closely with Visit Seattle and Sky Elements, and they have been flexible with our constraints. We will provide Visit Seattle with physical barriers. We will close the Bell Harbor rooftop at 21:00. The other consideration is the cruise schedules. We don't know the impact FIFA will have on ship departures on match days. We won't sign off until Coast Guard signs off.
- SPD HARBOR: What communications have you had with the Coast Guard? Our Harbor unit will be patrolling 2-3 hours prior to match start and about 1-2 hours after match end. We also have

many other events happening on the water so looking for collaboration with Coast Guard and Port Police.

- CHAIR: Depending on capacity, can private entities provide extra support?
- SPD HARBOR: Coast Guard will be the determining agency on this. King County will also be out there to help. There might be a possibility to shoulder our load with these agencies.
- CHAIR: SEO can facilitate meeting between Visit Seattle & Sky Elements and Harbor Patrol.
- SPD TRAFFIC: How are people getting off and on the marina? Just the boats and the slips?
- PORT: The marina customers will be alerted that during that 15-minute window, they are not allowed to move their vessel or leave the marina.
- SPD TRAFFIC: Is entry and exit through that building?
- PORT: The restriction is only when the drone show is happening.
- SDCI NOISE: What is the noise amplification plan?
- EVENT (Sky Elements): The drones do not have noise.
- PORT: Our Port police will not be available during the event; they will be at Pier 91.
- CHAIR: Would they like to be involved in the water patrol conversations?
- PORT: Yes, thank you.
- SPD TRAFFIC: How many people do you expect to come to the shows?
- EVENT (Visit Seattle): First show might have fewer attendance than the following shows. We are working on a PR and marketing plan to get the word out especially via social channels.
- CHAIR: The capacity of the Pier is about 1000 people, and we will begin to see people stacking on the promenade. The barge will be about 500 people. The Seattle Art Museum (Olympic Sculpture Park) should also be contacted.
- SDOT: I have concerns regarding the streets in this area. How are we going to manage distractions and traffic on Western and Elliott, for folks who might stop and watch the show from there.
- EVENT (Visit Seattle): Have you seen successful ways this has been mitigated?
- SDOT: Closing the roads and we do not endorse that for this event.
- CHAIR: There is a history of drone shows happening at Seattle Center.
- EVENT (Visit Seattle): If this falls apart on the waterfront, we can pivot there.
- SPD TRAFFIC: On the 19th, there is a Mariners game that evening, the egress will be right around the time you plan to start the show.
- EVENT (Visit Seattle): We need to think quickly with Sky Elements on this.
- WATERFRONT: In addition to the public safety piece, if the park is staying open later, that is an entire operations team needed, and we would need to work out those details.
- CHAIR: When Drone shows have happened at Seattle Center, how have crowds been?
- SC: It has depended on the event and advanced publicity. The Seahawks one, we saw about 3-4k people.
- CHAIR: To summarize, we will plan for a broader port meeting with Visit Seattle/Sky Elements, Coast Guard plus Harbor Patrol. We also need to dig into exclusion zone management on the water as well.
- WATERFRONT: It will be good to bring in the larger Waterfront stakeholders' group.
- CHAIR: Thanks, I will make sure to bring them in.
- EVENT (Visit Seattle): Thank you for all of the connection and willingness to facilitate. We will have to make the decision today to pivot quickly.
- CHAIR: Please discuss by the end of the day on your final decision.
- SPD TRAFFIC: I would like to know Police and Fire; will we have a staffing issue?

- SPD: In short, yes. Staffing will be difficult, but at the same time, I don't think it's going to take much police staff based on what I am hearing so far. I also want to remind the temporary flight restrictions in place.
- CHAIR: I will hold off on moving forward until we hear from Visit Seattle and Sky Elements.

Fremont Solstice Parade Citywide Fee Discussion & Vote

- CHAIR: We will now discuss Fremont Solstice Parade Citywide fees. For a history of fees. Pre-pandemic, they were hovering 15-20% of what their actual fees would be if we charged regular Special Events fees for street use and SPD labor. During and immediately after the pandemic, to help Fremont Arts Council to get back on the feet, we only charged them the minimum administrative fee. In 2025, we started doing work toward getting fees back to pre-pandemic percentages (15-20%). In talking with Fremont Solstice, they asked us to keep the 2025 fees for 2026. The labor associated with street closures and uniformed police will be covered by Seattle's Finest because SPD does not have the resources to cover the parade this year. SPD fees this year would have been over \$23,000 and with third-party uniformed police, it will be around, \$31,000. The Special Events Office will pay out of a budget that we've got for scenarios such as this. A 5% increase in 2026 will land them at \$2,250.15 and 10% increase around \$2,357. If we wanted to get the fees back into the 16% area, it would be over \$4,000 in fees.
- CHAIR: A reminder that when the committee voted on fee adjustments from 2025 to 2026 for our fees, generally we use the 2.7% CPI for most of our fee adjustments rounded as needed to make the numbers round for our administrative fees.
- SC: How is the organization doing? Are they able to cover this?
- CHAIR: They shared with me challenges with collecting donations and recruiting volunteers. They have done fundraising events and did receive a grant from ARTS to incorporate FIFA related elements. I know Fremont Arts Council asked for us to keep the fees from last year, but we need to discuss a 5-10% increase so we can get back to pre-pandemic levels.
- SPD: Motion to do a 10% increase.
- SDOT: Second.
- CHAIR: **VOTE Passed** to increase Fremont Solstice Parade fees by increase 10%. **All voted in favor; WSLCB abstained.**

Review Recent Events

Name of Event	Permit No	Event Start Date
Seattle Cherry Blossom Run PARKS: We got a rare compliment from businesses and residents that parking was no issue. SDOT: We did not receive any complaints.	S2510476	4/17-4/18
Seattle Tempest vs Oregon Soar	S2610494	4/18
Rat City Roller Derby Champs 2026	S2610492	4/18
Top Pot Doughnut Dash 5K Run/Walk FIRE: I put it on my list to attend in the future. CHAIR: There were some complications around the bike lane circumflecting the lake. I want to discuss having a	S2610495	4/19

route discussion for Lake Union and Green Lake as we have seen an increase in 5 and 10Ks SDOT: Agreed		
March to Save Ballard Light Rail	S2610497	4/19
Emerald City Bicycle Ride CHAIR: We did not receive any complaints.	S2610479	4/25
PanCAN Purplestride 2026 Puget Sound	S2610499	4/25
Walk MS: Seattle	S2510507	4/26
Carry the Load's Memorial May	S2610526	4/30
UW Twilight Sprints	S2610513	5/1
Opening Day of Boating Season Parade SPD TRAFFIC: Same thing happened as in 2025 that the Montlake Bridge team did not know about the event. CHAIR: Who do the bridge tenders work for? SDOT: WSDOT. I can get the info for that team.	S2610532	5/2
Opening Day, Windemere Cup Regatta	S2610516	5/2
Seattle Cascades Games FIRE: Thank you to PARKS with the ongoing process of dealing with parking and exiting. Situation has improved.		5/2 + 5/9
Fogón Cinco De Mayo Fiesta	S2510533	5/2-5/3
Beat the Bridge SPD TRAFFIC: There is a long portion between Montlake and the University Bridge, in the past it required more staffing. There are staffing holes that need to be filled. CHAIR: I think they would prefer volunteer staffing due to the cost.	S2610538	5/9
Beacon Arts Street Fair	S2510529	5/9
West Seattle Junction & Rhodies FC	S2510545	5/10
Save Graham Street Station: Transit Justice for South Seattle	S2610521	5/11

Anything Else

- SPD: For anything related to May Day, the behavior of brigades was reckless. SPD will not support marches that share they plan to use car/bike brigades and request support from SEO communicating to events that brigades are illegal and dangerous
- SPD TRAFFIC: Arrests were made of brigade members. It was motorcycle brigades.
- CHAIR: If there is anything that we as a committee can facilitate to communicate these issues and concerns, in any events saying they are using brigades. Still gives us a line to discuss.
- SDOT: I did elevate this as well. SDOT's position that Motorcycle brigades are not a legal way to facilitate traffic control.

ADJOURNED