



**Special Events Task Force  
February 2022 Meeting Minutes**

Wednesday, February 16, 2022

Permitting and Development Center – First Floor, Room 1401

2: 00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.

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**Taskforce Members in Attendance:** James Russell, Jeff Smith, Cindy Lo, Mandi Thomas, Laurel White  
**Staff in Attendance:** Sara Henry, Mike Jones (APD), Quentin Prior (AFD), Bill Manno (ACE), Brydan Summers (ACE)  
**Task Force Members Joining Virtually:** Bobby Garza, Heath Riddles-Sanchez, Frances Thompson  
**Staff Joining Virtually:** Iby Setzer (ARR), Kevin Parker (ATCEMS), Jason Maurer (PARD). Frances Hargrove (ATD)  
**Guests:**

**CALL TO ORDER:** Co-Chair Russell called the task force to order at 2:07 p.m.

**1. APPROVAL OF NOVEMBER MINUTES:** The task force unanimously approved the meeting minutes for November 2021.

**2. OLD BUSINESS**

**A. Discussion on Public Safety Sections of the Special Events Ordinance**

Austin Police Department (APD)

APD Special Event Sergeant Mike Jones briefed the Task Force on an [item on the February 17, 2022 council agenda](#) that would allow APD to contract with [Code4](#), a third party vendor, to hire other public safety agencies to help staff city and city-sponsored special events.

Following several questions from Chair Russell on the matter, Sergeant Jones clarified that these agencies will follow their respective policies and protocols, but APD would ultimately retain overall authority as the lead agency and would coordinate with the supervisors from other agencies. He added that private events can currently contract with Code4.

Austin Fire Department (AFD)

Chair Russell inquired whether a third-party agreement might be feasible for AFD. Chief Prior responded that the current AFD staffing level does not require supplementation because they have significantly fewer individuals on site at special events compared to APD, but did raise the issue of needing additional special event review personnel in the future.

Austin-Travis County EMS (ATCEMS)

Chair Russel asked whether staffing is a concern for ATCEMS. Commander Parker explained that ATCEMS has a history of partnering with outside healthcare providers. He acknowledged that the organization is mindful of current staffing shortages and the agency has recently made some salary adjustments that they hope will act as an incentive.



Chair Russell asked all three public safety agencies whether there are elements of the Special Event Ordinance (SEO) That are onerous to them? Chief Prior suggested that the ordinance could be revised to allow AFD to enter into third-party agreements.

The Task Force asked Mr. Summers to record two recommendations for future consideration.

- 1) Council should authorize APD to enter into agreements for third party services, as considered by Council on the February 17<sup>th</sup> agenda, as needed in perpetuity.
- 2) Study what barriers in the Austin Fire Department contract language or otherwise may keep AFD from entering similar agreements if needed.

### **B. Update from Organizers Currently Planning Events**

Chair Russell discussed his experience with the kite festival application process. He described it as unorthodox due to the public health element, but otherwise no issues.

Ms. White mentioned having received duplicate emails and said the volume and content are not always helpful and can be confusing to organizers who are working on multiple events. She also found that much of the content on automated emails contain typos and outdated information. Ms. White said outside of that, the review process is working well.

### **C. Review of Administrative Rules in Conflict with the SEO**

Mr. Summers was directed to highlight pertinent sections of the rules and SEO for the predetermined meeting topics and send those out in advance, as well as provide an overview in upcoming meetings. The Task Force discussed the method for alerting the City to rules they think should be updated, which is to include that feedback in their final report for the consideration of the City manager and City staff.

Chair Russell suggested the task force independently study rules to take them up at future meetings. Ms. White concurred but urged that there be subject matter experts available at meetings to provide briefings.

## **3. NEW BUSINESS**

### **A. Subcommittee Report on Post-Event Evaluations**

Chair Smith summarized a subcommittee meeting that occurred in January in which members formed a matrix of post-event data that they would like to see collected. Mr. Summers confirmed that staff could pull some data points from applications, but quantitative data would require additional staff time and resources. Mr. Summers and Mr. Manno both addressed the backlog resulting from the AMANDA system code freeze. There was further discussion between task force members and city staff about the current capabilities of the AMANDA system to practices for entering ad hoc data into the system.

Mr. Summers committed to coming back to the task force with potential options for post-event evaluation criteria.

Mr. Maurer explained that there is already a robust post-event evaluation for events that occur on city



park land, but a more formal process should be automated using a system like AMANDA rather than data points that are manually compiled by staff.

Chair Smith requested to hear from Austin 311 about how they handle event-related complaints. Mr. Summers confirmed that he would follow up on that request for a future meeting.

### **B. Review Permit Denial, Appeals Process, and Revocation Process**

Mr. Summers provided an overview of the denial and appeal process as it is outlined in the SEO. Mr. Manno provided cursory numbers on the amount of applications that were denied and the reasons.

### **FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

- Tasks for Staff Liaison:
  - Mr. Summers will send the task force the consolidated list of rules and SEO differences identified by City staff thus far and brief the task force on post-event evaluation metrics at a future meeting
- April 2022 Agenda
  - Continue the discussion on permit denials, appeals, and revocations
  - Comprehensive review of sound permits to include a discussion with Brian Block
  - Determine a policy for handling media inquiries when reporters contact SETF members directly

**ADJOURNMENT:** The meeting adjourned at 4:10 p.m. after receiving unanimous consent to extend the meeting past 4:00pm.

*Future Meetings: No SETF meeting will be held in March 2022.*

*The next meeting is scheduled for April 20, 2022 from 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. at the Permitting and Development Center, Room 1401.*

*For questions contact Brydan Summers at [brydan.summers@austintexas.gov](mailto:brydan.summers@austintexas.gov).*