



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

Wednesday, April 20, 2022

Permitting and Development Center – First Floor, Room 1401

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

Taskforce Members in Attendance: James Russell, Jeff Smith, Mandi Thomas, Laurel White, Ingrid Weigand, Shelley Phillips, Frances Thompson, Dan Carroll

Staff in Attendance: Sara Henry (ACE), Mike Jones (APD), Quentin Prior (AFD), Bill Manno (ACE), Brydan Summers (ACE), Brian Block (DSD), Frances Hargrove (ATD), Jason Maurer (PAR), Kevin Parker (EMS), Quentin Prior (AFD), Iby Setzer (ARR), Tara Long (DSD), Robert Alvarado (Code)

Task Force Members Joining Virtually: Heath Riddles-Sanchez

CALL TO ORDER: Co-Chair Russell called the task force to order at 2:03 p.m.

1. PUBLIC COMMUNICATION: No public communication

2. APPROVAL OF NOVEMBER MINUTES: The task force unanimously approved the meeting minutes for February 2022.

3. STAFF PRESENTATIONS

A. ACE Reporting Capabilities

Brydan Summers gave a presentation on ACE's current reporting capabilities and limitations, as well as what information is available from Austin 311 for special event complaints.

Member Weigand emphasized the usefulness of getting event set up and take down times and attendance numbers after events to better understand the impact multiple events can have. The Task Force decided they would craft a recommendation that staff provide reporting on the items identified in the subcommittee report for Tiers 3 and 4. An item will be placed on the May agenda to review this proposal and vote.

Staff confirmed they review the consolidated list of 311 complaints for events and use that information to request modifications in plans for subsequent years.

B. The Denial and Appeals Process

Brydan Summers gave a presentation on how the denial and appeals process is administrated. Member White asked if an application is submitted on the deadline date would the appeal be taking place close to the actual event date? The answer is yes, and it's incumbent on the applicant to submit before, or at least by, the application deadline. Staff reported that there have been denials over the past few years but no requests for appeals, staff typically work with organizers to address concerns to either give approval or be clear about why an event can not be approved.

The Task Force discussed the concept of an expedited review process, where applicants could pay an additional fee for faster reviews. Mr. Summers explained that it would require staff from each partner



department to be available for each requested customer meeting which may would be expensive and difficult for staff to coordinate. Staff also would not be able to speed up the inspections process that typically happens the day before an event. Staff will continue to explore this idea administratively.

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 number of applications that were denied and the reasons.

Staff clarified they intend to create a fee for late applications, which will be charged if staff have the capacity to do the review after the application deadline, in the next budget cycle.

3. OLD BUSINESS

A. Review Permit Denial, Appeals Process, and Revocation Process (City Staffing)

The Task Force continued the discussion of ensuring City staffing was adequate to process approvals or denials in a timely manner. The Task Force asked that the recommendations that were identified in the February meeting related to public safety staffing be placed on the May agenda so they can be voted on. They also asked for an agenda item that allows for a broader discussion on overall City staffing for special event reviews and staffing, not just for public safety.

B. Review Permit Denial, Appeals Process, and Revocation Process (Event Date Conflicts)

Member Carroll brought up concerns with approvals under 4-20-34 C, which states that the oldest events get to pick their event dates each year. Member Carroll asked that we revisit this language in the May meeting to determine if a recommendation should be made. Suggested a starting point of "Legacy events are permitted to submit event dates on a rolling five-year basis..."

C. Update from Organizers Currently Planning Events

Member Carroll reported that the Austin Marathon and the Cap 10k were both held recently. This was the first use of parking enforcement officers in low conflict intersections to perform traffic control instead of APD. There were around 20 enforcement officers that all had City radios, uniforms, and vehicles with lights, and it seemed to work well. This change helps APD and potentially lowers costs to event organizers. City staff concurred that it worked well and could be utilized more in the future.

Member Carroll reported on how the notification requirement effected these events. He went on to offer that if an event has taken place at least five years it has been accepted by the City and is financially solvent, so perhaps notifications should not be necessary every year. The notifications put a cost and time burden on the organizer and staff and gives a false impression to citizens that the event may be altered. Member Carroll noted that there was a .03% disapproval rate the last time notifications were sent and the Task Force should look at changing the requirement from 10 years to 5 when notifications is on the SETF agenda.

Member Carroll noted that there is not enough private sector capacity, or City resources, to develop traffic control plans for special events. This results in plans not being submitted or accepted until close to the event date, creating a burden to implement them on time.



3. NEW BUSINESS

A. Review Sound (§4-20-43)

Brian Block introduced Sound, stating 4-20-43 is simple and works well, its built on a foundation of 20 years of permitting outdoor sound. It lays out that special events need approval for outdoor sound and provides a framework for maximum days and hours allowable. It also requires a review and sound impact plan; the rules lay out the criteria we used when reviewing those plans.

Mr. Block brings forth two recommendations for consideration. Both were approved unanimously by the Task Force. Proposed change #1 was amended by unanimous consent to include the words “if it falls on a Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, or Wednesday” The adopted recommendations are:

Change #1: 4-20-43 (G) (2):

(G) Unless Subsections (F) or (G) apply, ACE may approve the use of sound equipment between 10:00 a.m. and:

(1) 10:30 p.m. Sunday through Wednesday; or

(2) 11:00 p.m. on Thursday or Independence Day if it falls on a Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, or Wednesday; or

(3) 12:00 midnight on:

(a) Friday,

(b) Saturday, or

(c) the night before New Years' Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, or Labor Day.

Change #2: 4-20-43 (J) & (K)

(J) ACE may approve the use of sound equipment for no more than four consecutive days or non-consecutive days during a 30-day period.

(K) A premises may be the subject of only one approval to use sound equipment at a special event during a 30-day period, which begins the day after the approval associated with the premises expires.

Revise to combined J & K: ACE may approve the use of sound equipment for no more than four consecutive days or non-consecutive days during a 30-day period, the initial 30-day period begins on the 1st day approved for the use of sound equipment associated with the premises and the next 30-day period begins 31 days later.



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Permitting and Development Center
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(L) The City will only allow a premises to be the subject of an approval to use sound equipment at a special event for up to 19 days per calendar year.

There was additional discussion on modifying the allowable time for Thursdays, the Task Force asked for additional data on how many events this would have impacted. Mr. Block committed to bringing historical data at the upcoming meeting.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

- The two recommendations related to public safety staffing identified in the February meeting for a vote by the Task Force
- City staffing for special events, non-public safety
- Special event reporting
- Date conflicts
- Sound, including an update on special events with amplified sound on Thursdays
- SEO performance during Spring Festival Season
- Notifications

ADJOURNMENT: The meeting adjourned at 3:57 p.m. on unanimous consent.

Future Meetings:

The next meeting is scheduled for May 18, 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.