



Wildwood Celebration Commission Minutes

Meeting Date:

- October 5, 2022
- 6:00 p.m.

Commission Members Present:

- Libby Wilson
- Vicki Helfrey
- Sharon Hutson
- Deborah Coleman
- Charlie Siebert
- Kristin Naeger, Staff Liaison

I. Call to Order and Opening Remarks by Co-Chair Wilson

Co-Chair Wilson called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m. and requested roll call be taken.

II. Roll Call

A roll call of members was conducted, and the following individuals were in attendance, both in-person and via the Zoom Webinar Platform:

Commission Members:

Libby Wilson, Chair
Vicki Helfrey
Sharon Hutson
Deborah Coleman
Charlie Siebert
Kristin Naeger, Staff Liaison

Absent Members: Commission Members Joe Garritano, Holly Ferris, and Karen Jehling

Other Officials & City Staff:

Joe Vujnich, Director of Planning and Parks
Stacy Chanski, Recreation Specialist
Sergeant Don Jacquin, Wildwood Precinct

III. Approval of Minutes from the September 7, 2022, Meeting of the Commission

Motion was made by Commissioner Hutson, seconded by Commissioner Helfrey, to approve the meeting minutes of September 7, 2022. A voice vote was taken to approve the motion, with unanimous, affirmative result. The motion was declared approved by Chair Wilson.

IV. Public Comments

There were no public comments.

III. Discussion of the 2022 Celebrate Wildwood Event

a. Overview of the Celebrate Wildwood Event by Department of Planning and Parks

Discussion began by Superintendent Naeger and Recreation Specialist Chanski reviewing the overall positive feedback from the artists, vendors, and parade participants, along with all comments and suggestions being encouraged and helpful in planning for next year. Director Vujnich mentioned this year's parade was the largest at the event so far and that moving the starting line to Schnucks was a great suggestion; St. Louis County Police Department deserves kudos for the great job it did; the social media advertising by Debbie Ward was fabulous and professional; the message board was useful in getting the word out; and Rob Knoll of Benedetto's said that it was the best day the restaurant had in two (2) years.

b. Comments, Opinions, and Observations from Commission Members of the 2022 Celebrate Wildwood Event

Discussion was started by Chair Wilson thanking the Commission and staff for a great event; the band was very good and engaging; the flow of the parade was better this year; and the event was successful. Commissioner Siebert mentioned the planning was done very well, but he was concerned that there are less vendors selling things and more and more service organizations in the booths. He noticed that the vendors over the years have not reappeared and that the mix has changed. Director Vujnich stated this change was known and expected, as the former Art Festival brought in more artists, as it was a two-day event. The setup components of the event make it difficult and less profitable for artists with only a one-day event.

Discussion was held how to draw in more artists; if we can financially incentivize the artists without them thinking it is not a quality show; and if having a second day might bring the artists back. Other feedback included: reminding parade participants to save candy for kids at the end of the parade; perhaps changing the date to not conflict with the St. Alban Roe picnic and the Lafayette Battle of the Bands; mixing juried artists with crafting/vendors; doing a Survey Monkey to the residents for their feedback regarding the variety in vendors, the option of a two-day event or moving the event to a different weekend; and the possibility of a drone show. Attendance estimates were in the 4,000 – 5,000 range. Sergeant Jacquin noted that the Police Department values their relationship with the City, and Parks and Planning, and looks forward to working together on the future events. Director Vujnich thanked the Commission for its input, time, and feedback. He also mentioned the event should be in the same location next year.

c. Discussion of Budget Process for 2023 Event

Director Vujnich began the discussion regarding the budget being required to be provided to the City Council before October 31; the Department has always provided a summary of the expenditures at the first meeting, after the event; the 2022 event was a little over budget at approximately \$109,000-\$110,000, offset by the revenues (sponsorships, booth fees, etc.); and the overage was caused primarily by two factors, the bistro lighting (may be on a permanent basis) and inflation. Almost every vendor raised prices – some with fuel surcharges, but the Commission exercised good control over the budget, and everyone did their best to adhere to it. For 2023, the budget needs to be conservative at \$100,000. Each year, there is a mid-year budget adjustment, if necessary, so we can try to adjust mid-year. Commissioner Siebert asks that, if most costs are fixed, can there be a contingent budget for a two-day event and compare against the one-day event? Director Vujnich will discuss with the City Administrator to see if that is possible and, if so, will bring to the Planning and Parks Committee. The revenue stream

for this event needs to be increased, with the goal to increase the \$13,000 number from this year and aim for \$30,000 in revenues next year. The Department will compare booth fees from Manchester, Ballwin, Des Peres, and Eureka to those of Celebrate Wildwood, and provide it to the Commission next month. Director Vujnich stated with the costs of the stage, electrician, tents, tables and chairs, it is already a large portion of the budget.

A motion was made by Commissioner Helfrey, seconded by Commissioner Siebert, to approve the budget, with the suggestion of the option of a two-day event. Having no further business to discuss, and hearing no objections, a voice vote was taken to approve the motion, with unanimous, affirmative result. The motion was declared approved by Chair Wilson.

IV. Discussion of Memorial Program for Event – Not Ready for Action

Director Vujnich advised there was not much time to focus on this item and hopes to provide something to the Commission in November.

V. Next Meeting Date – Wednesday, November 2, 2022

The Commission was reminded the next meeting date will be Wednesday, November 2, 2022, at 6:00 p.m., in person or Zoom (hybrid), at Wildwood City Hall.

VIII. Adjournment

A motion was made by Commissioner Coleman, seconded by Commissioner Hutson, to adjourn the meeting. Having no further business to discuss, and hearing no objections, a voice vote was taken to approve the motion, with unanimous, affirmative result. The motion was declared approved by Chair Wilson. The meeting concluded at 6:45 p.m.