



Date: December 6, 2002

TO: Board Members - Parks and Recreation
FROM: General Manager - Parks and Recreation
SUBJECT: 2003 SPECIAL EVENTS

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the Board approve the special events as outlined in Table 1 with all arrangements to the satisfaction of the General Manager.

THAT the Board receive the 2003 Calendar of Major Events (see Appendix B) as information.

THAT the Board undertake a review of the policies, guidelines and the administrative process for special events accommodated on parks.

POLICY

Major events which are at variance with one or more Park Board by-laws and/or Board approved guidelines (see Appendix A) require Board approval.

BACKGROUND

Civic open spaces such as parks are traditional sites for civic entertainment and celebrations and these events are very popular with Vancouver residents. These activities fall within the Board's mandate of providing a wide variety of leisure opportunities to enhance the well being of individuals and communities. Such activities include multi-cultural festivals, cultural events, sporting tournaments and various celebrations.

DISCUSSION

The Park Board defines special events as those activities which require the designation of exclusive use of an area and/or require the approval of conditions of use as outlined under a Park Control by-law. The Board works in partnership with event organizers and societies to facilitate a diverse level of programming in parks and beaches. Most of the City's special events are sponsored by non profit societies who organize and conduct these activities. The Board's role in the provision of special events is primarily limited to that of host - accommodating the events and activities in parks. Since the Board does not directly provide celebrations or entertainment, it

requires a mechanism to delegate the control of a site to an event organizer/sponsor. This is accomplished through the special event permit approval process.

In 2001, the Park Board issued 320 permits for special events, runs and walks. Events ranged from small neighbourhood park concerts of 50 people to city wide celebrations such the Celebration of Light, with nightly attendance of 400,000. Fees collected from these events were approximately \$26,000 plus the recovery of \$ 9,000 in event supervisory costs. In addition to special events, the Board also issues permits for sporting activities, filming, and picnics.

Park Board's Role in Special Events

The Park Board manages special events activities so as to achieve the following objectives:

- promote a diverse range of activities and opportunities;
- ensure fair and equitable access to parks;
- balance needs of regular park users, event participants and park neighbours;
- ensure efficient and effective use of park space while at the same time protecting and preserving park environments;
- ensure adherence to Parks Control by-laws;
- ensure events are conducted in a safe and responsible manner.

It is recognized that these objectives are often at odds with one another. The key to successfully managing special events is balancing these potential conflicting interests. These conflicts can be greatly reduced through the scheduling of events in the appropriate spaces and at appropriate frequencies.

The Board is granted the authority to manage park activities through the Vancouver Charter and subsequently through the Parks Control By-law. The Board has also approved various policies/guidelines which ensure system wide application and compliance of various regulations and conditions of use (e.g., Appendix A). In addition, staff follow various practices (site monitoring, specific conditions of use, etc.) which are designed to ensure special events are in compliance with guidelines/policy.

It is important to note that this system of governance for special events is flexible as the Board has strived to balance the adherence to rules with common sense. Historically, flexibility has been included in the special event approval process to reflect the unique nature of both events and the ability of parks to accommodate them. This flexibility has resulted in the vast and diverse level of special events in parks. Most events and parks have differing features and requirements thus what is appropriate in one park may not be appropriate in another. While balancing the adherence to rules with common sense introduces subjectivity into the decision making process, it also recognizes that a strict "cookie cutter" approach for event approval would not result in a satisfactory provision of events and activities.

Park Permit Agreements - Application and Allocation

Organizers of special events are granted permission to conduct their event through a Park Permit Agreement. This agreement includes the specific conditions of use for the event. Depending on the requirements for exclusive use, the impact the event has on other park users/neighbours and the approval of conditions of use restricted under Park Board by-laws, the following approval process is followed:

No permit required:	under 50 people, shared space, no special requirements (no set-up, structures, public address system, etc.).
Permit required - Staff approval:	up to 500 people, exclusive use, minimal impact on other park users, neighbours, e.g., picnics, tournaments, "small scale" events, etc.
Permit required - Board approval :	over 500 people and/or events which significantly impact on regular park users and neighbours, have extensive set- up/take down or events which are in variance with one or more Park Board's policies or approved event guidelines (Appendix A, etc.): charging of an admission fee, selling of goods other than event related items, requesting a liquor licence which does not meet the Board's policy, etc.

All event organizers are required to apply annually to the Board to hold their event on parkland. Staff process these applications by:

- evaluating the compatibility of the event with the Park Board's mandate - to provide, preserve and advocate for parks, open space and leisure services to enhance the well being of individuals and communities;
- determining the suitability of a site to accommodate the event;
- consulting with various park stakeholders and Park Board staff;
- obtaining Board approval as per guidelines;
- establishing conditions which govern set-up and event activities;
- charging and collecting applicable fees including staff time;
- ensuring clean-up and repair;
- debriefing with event organizers after the event.

Large scale events which impact more than just parkland are also forwarded to the City's FEST Committee for consideration. The FEST Committee consists of representatives from various civic departments including Engineering, Police, Fire, Health, Permits and Licences, Transit and Parks. The FEST Committee also reports to City Council with an annual calendar of major events. Examples of "FEST" events include the Celebration of Light (Fireworks), Pride Parade, Sun Fun Run, etc.

Board Approval Process for Special Events

As of November 2001, Board approval is required for major special events only for the first three years of an event's operation. After three years, the event is automatically included in the Calendar of Events and no longer requires the Board's annual approval. However, any significant changes to and/or unresolved problems with existing events are forwarded to the Board for consideration.

The 2003 Calendar of Special Events has been included for the Board's information. The Calendar is compiled based on the requests from event organizers received by staff at this time (see Appendix B). The Calendar also includes events which are approved by Park Board staff to provide an overview of the nature and scope of the activities permitted on City parks.

Applications for major events which do not meet the deadline for the Calendar of Special Events are forwarded to the Board for consideration as they are received. Applications for new major special events must be submitted in writing to the Board six months prior to the requested date. This ensures adequate time for community consultation as well as the overall consideration of the event request.

EVENTS FOR 2003

No new major special event requests have been received by staff for 2003. Table 1 outlines previously approved special events, which under the Board approved guidelines described in Appendix A, require Board approval.

TABLE 1

Park	Dates	Sponsor and Description of the Event
Spanish Banks	May 4	<p>Walk for Kids - Kids Help Phone Society Attendance: 1000</p> <p>This is the 2nd year for this event. This event's initial year was very well-organized and raised over \$ 100,000 for the organization. The event entails a family orientated walk from Spanish Banks to Jericho Park and back. Pledges and donations raised through this walk supports the Kid's Help Phone.</p>
Stanley Park	June 15	<p>Brockton Criterium - North Vancouver Healthmasters Society Attendance: 200</p> <p>This is the 3rd year for this event. During this past year, the number of participants increased by 30%. This event is well received and extremely well-organized. This event is a 2.7 km bike road race around the Brockton Point area. Event requires a limited road closure in Stanley Park to 10 a.m.</p>
Jericho Park	July 16 - 20	<p>Vancouver Folk Music Festival - Additional Evening Concert Attendance: 3500</p> <p>This is the 3rd year for this request. Organizers would like to include an additional evening concert preceding the regular Friday night opening performance. The purpose of this additional concert is to raise funds to off set operating debts. Whether or not the concert will be held is dependent on a number of factors but the organizers would like to proceed with the planning of the event. There is no change to the Festival's set up (11 days prior) or take down (5 days following) requirements.</p> <p>The Festival Society has in the past been given permission by the Board to hold an additional evening concerts and concerts were held in 1995 and 2001. Neither of these concerts generated any specific concerns from either park users or park neighbours. The Vancouver Folk Music Festival has become a very popular event in the City. The Society is entering its 25th season.</p>

Stanley Park	September 1	Triathlon - Multisports Canada Attendance: 500 This is the 2 nd year for this event. This event was extremely well received by participants. Registration was slightly lower than what organizers had anticipated for the event. Advance event information and notification is required for stakeholders and will be addressed for next year. This is a standard distance triathlon which is 1.5 km swim, 40 km Bike and a 10km run. There will be a limit of 500 participants. The event is a fundraiser for the MS Society. The 2002 event raised a total of \$ 5,000. The event starts, transitions and finishes at Ceperley meadow area, swim off Second Beach , bike on Park Drive and run on the Seawall. Event requires a full road closure in Stanley Park to 10 a.m.
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Stanley Park - S Curve Reconstruction

A number of the annual runs/walks in Stanley Park will again be re-routed in 2003 due to the re-alignment of the causeway at the Georgia Street entrance to Stanley Park. Existing alternate routes for events such as the Vancouver Sun Run and Vancouver Marathon will be used again for 2003. Staff will work closely with event organizers and Park stakeholders in advance of the events to minimize the impact to the Park visitors and stakeholders.

Special Event Review

Staff are proposing that the Board undertake a review of the policies, guidelines and the administrative process for special events accommodated on parks. The majority of the guidelines/policies were approved over 10 years ago. The objectives for this review are to update and consolidate special event policies and guidelines which will both guide and direct Board/staff decisions with regards to special events as well as clarify the rationale behind the decision making process for event organizers and the various park stakeholders (other users, park neighbours, public, etc.). This review will be done in consultation with the various special event stakeholders (i.e., event sponsors, event organizer, community groups, general public, etc.) It is proposed that this review be completed by the summer of 2003.

CONCLUSION

All of the events outlined in Table 1 have the support of staff for inclusion in the 2003 Calendar of Special Events. If approved by the Board, the event is subject to further consultation and arrangements agreeable to the General Manager.

Special events are of great value to the City. These events contribute to the cultural richness and milieu of the City and are highly attended and well received by Vancouver residents. A number of these events also have significant economic benefit through increased tourism and many events also serve as major fund raisers for various non-profit societies. Given the importance of special events to City, it is appropriate that the Board review and update its special event policies and guidelines.

Prepared by:

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