

DATE: June 13, 1996

SUBJECT: HEMP B.C. SPECIAL EVENT

CONSIDERATION

THAT the Board consider the request of Hemp B.C. to stage an event called Cannabis Day on Monday, July 1, 1996, on Sunset Beach Park from 4:00 P.M. to 6:00 P.M. with all conditions, including those noted in this report, subject to the approval of the General Manager.

POLICY

The Board requires that all complex events not included on the annually approved Special Event Calendar, and all events outside the norm of events regularly approved by the Board, come to the Board for special approval.

The Board asks organizations to apply for approval for special events at least three months in advance of the event.

The Board requires that organizations and residents who will be impacted by activities on a local park be informed in advance and notified of their opportunity to appear as a delegation before the Board.

BACKGROUND

Hemp B.C. has applied to the Board to stage an event on Sunset Beach Park on July 1, 1996, at the end of their march from the steps of the Art Gallery. The purpose of the event is "to draw attention to the injustice of cannabis prohibition". They are requesting that the event be permitted from 4:00 P.M. to midnight, with a stage and amplified sound, featuring speakers, live folk music and rock and roll. They are also requesting permission to sell event related objects and materials.

Hemp B.C. has an event history with the Board. In 1994 the Board did not deal with the organizer's request to stage an event on Sunset Beach in April because they applied at the last minute and they had not appeared before the FEST Committee to permit their Walk. They did, in fact, hold their event anyway and there was an overt use of illegal substance. In 1995 they did not apply for a permit but set up at Sunset Beach on July 1. City and Park Board staff had no advance notice of their intentions. The Board received numerous complaints from local residents about the nature and length of the event and the level of amplification.

The organizers have not yet been to the FEST Committee for approval to conduct their march. There has been no consultation with the community.

DISCUSSION

New groups applying to use Sunset Beach are being encouraged to use other venues because of the high level of activity permitted in the West End, particularly on the beaches. Given this group's insistence to use this location, if the Board chooses to permit the event, staff would recommend a rally limited to two hours. This is the normal time for any event of this nature, like for instance, the Peace March and the Pride Parade.

A major issue for consideration is the response of the neighbourhood to this event, particularly in the face of the history of the last two years. As per the policy of the Board, the immediate neighbourhood will be informed of this request and the date of the Board's review.

Other issues related to this request, include the groups ability and/or willingness to comply with permit conditions. The Board is in a difficult position if it permits an event when it may expect that many participants will attend the event in order to join others in a display of the use of an illegal substance. The Board can permit an event if its' purpose is to demonstrate against the existence of a particular law. The Board should not permit the event if knows its participants are likely to be breaking the law during the event.

The other major issues appear to be the level of amplified sound, the length of the event, and the willingness of the organizers to pay the special event fee. The lack of time to review the set up and activities with the organizers continues to be a problem. A late application is often an indication of the level of organization and a lack of knowledge of city regulations.

Staff would recommend that if the Board permits this event, it does so only under the conditions attached in Appendix A. These conditions are the norm for any event and relate to the need to respect the local residents, other park users and the park itself and to meet City regulations related to health, safety and the law.

CONCLUSION

In order to respect the concerns of the immediate neighbourhood and other park users and to comply with the by law regulations of the City and the Board it is necessary to establish some conditions of use for permitted organizers of special events on parkland.

Prepared by:
Recreation Division
Vancouver Board of Parks & Recreation

APPENDIX A

CONDITIONS OF USE

The organizers must obtain Comprehensive General Liability Insurance protecting the City of Vancouver, the Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation and the Vancouver Police Board against liability for bodily injury, death or property damage, arising out of the activity. The minimum limit is \$2,000,000 inclusive per occurrence, maximum deductible \$500 per occurrence, with a cross liability clause. Acceptable proof of insurance must be received by the Board prior to the use of any facilities covered under this permit.

The event will be limited in duration to two hours and the site clean up will begin immediately following.

The level of sound will be limited to that designated by the City Noise By Law and be directed toward the water. The choice of music will respect the family nature of Sunset Beach park, particularly on a statutory holiday.

The sale of goods will be limited to those items which are event related and legal.

The organizers will meet the City's requirement for all set ups, ie. stage, sound, toilets, etc

Only event related vehicles permitted in advance will be able to drive onto parkland.

Any property damage which occurs during the permitted activity, set up, or take down, will be the responsibility of the organizer and payable to the Park Board

The organizer will leave the area clean or the Board will clean the area and bill the organizer

The organizer will be responsible for ensuring that the assigned area is appropriate for the activity; the activity is conducted in a safe, orderly and legal manner; the activity is restricted to the assigned area; the event/activities do not interfere with other park users and are not intrusive to the neighbourhood

The organizer must have a permit and pay the permit fee of \$200.

The organizer will in future years make application for such an event four months in advance of the event date.

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