



Lifting the Moratorium on New Commercial Initiatives in Vancouver Parks

Excerpted from Minutes December 5, 2022

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MOVED by Commissioner Bastovanszky
SECONDED by Commissioner Howard

WHEREAS:

1. Large scale special events in Vancouver parks, plazas and facilities activate public spaces, foster community connectedness, enhance the vibrancy of our city, and provide enriching cultural experiences; <https://parkboardmeetings.vancouver.ca/2022/20220411/REPORT-SpecialEventsCalendar2022-MajorEvents-20220411.pdf>
2. In accordance with the Vancouver Charter, the Park Board has exclusive jurisdiction and control over park land use in the City of Vancouver, including any events, activities, programs, fees, structures, and improvements that occur within designated parks; <https://parkboardmeetings.vancouver.ca/2019/20190513/REPORT-SpecialEventGuidelines-ProposedUpdateInterimDirection-20190513.pdf>
3. The Park Board's role in supporting special events is primarily that of a host, issuing over 1,300 permits annually for special events and activities across its open space network and facilities. The Park Board's Special Event Guidelines provide the framework for delegating access to event organizers, operationalizing event initiatives, and supporting the event community; <https://parkboardmeetings.vancouver.ca/2022/20220411/REPORT-SpecialEventsCalendar2022-MajorEvents-20220411.pdf> & <https://parkboardmeetings.vancouver.ca/2019/20190513/REPORT-SpecialEventGuidelines-ProposedUpdateInterimDirection-20190513.pdf>
4. On January 23, 2017, the Park Board unanimously approved a motion titled Permits and Special Events, which directed staff to review its permitting process and to consult with community groups, interested individuals, stakeholders, and partners on actions that can be taken to address community concerns; <https://parkboardmeetings.vancouver.ca/2019/20190513/REPORT-SpecialEventGuidelines-ProposedUpdateInterimDirection-20190513.pdf> & <https://parkboardmeetings.vancouver.ca/2017/20170123/MOTION-PermitsAndSpecialEvents-20170123.pdf>
5. On March 12, 2018, the Park Board unanimously approved a motion titled Safety at Concerts and Major Events, which directed staff to consult with interested groups and to implement a policy requiring that safety measures for women and other at risk groups be included in future contracts with music festival and concert organizers, and to encourage organizers of already approved events to adopt such measures voluntarily; <https://parkboardmeetings.vancouver.ca/2019/20190513/REPORT-SpecialEventGuidelines-ProposedUpdateInterimDirection-20190513.pdf>
6. At the May 13, 2019, Regular Park Board Committee meeting, Commissioners received and considered a report and presentation from staff entitled "Special Event Guidelines – Proposed Update and Interim Direction" which noted that the Park Board's Special Event Guidelines were last updated and approved in 2003;



7. On May 13, 2019, following the aforementioned Park Board staff report and presentation, the Board directed staff to update the Board's Special Event Guidelines to address current issues and ensure alignment with the values and principles of the Park Board, and to better support Vancouver's event community, as well as interim direction to staff to maintain and support the existing Park Board portfolio of commercial events and activities, but to also issue a moratorium on the introduction of any new commercial initiatives until after the Special Event Guidelines have been updated and approved by the Board; https://parkboardmeetings.vancouver.ca/2019/20190513/MINUTES_PB-20190513.pdf
8. As of the current date, Park Board staff have not reported back to the Board with updated Special Event Guidelines;
9. In 2018, prior to the moratorium on new commercial events, fifteen commercial events took place in Vancouver parks, making up about one per cent of the total number of events that take place in parks annually. This one per cent of events reportedly brought in 44 per cent of the Park Board's revenue generated by hosting events in 2018 — \$238,500 in revenue; <https://www.vancouverisawesome.com/courier-archive/news/vancouver-park-board-puts-moratorium-on-hosting-new-commercial-events-3099905>
10. The moratorium on the introduction of any new commercial initiatives in Vancouver parks precludes events that could activate public spaces, foster community connectedness, enhance the vibrancy of our city, and provide enriching cultural experiences. Without parks as possible venue options, many events struggle to find a home in the city; <https://www.vancouverisawesome.com/courier-archive/news/vancouver-park-board-puts-moratorium-on-hosting-new-commercial-events-3099905>

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Board of Parks and Recreation direct staff to lift the current moratorium on the introduction of new commercial event initiatives in Vancouver parks, and communicate to the public and the festivals & events community that the Board will now entertain applications for new commercial events and initiatives in Vancouver parks, and

FURTHER THAT the Board direct staff to report back by the end of January 2023 regarding the current status of the Special Event Guidelines, including a timeline for presentation of updated Special Event Guidelines to the Board for the Board's review and consideration.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY