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"PUBLIC AGENDA"

**TO:** His Worship Don Atchison, Chairperson  
Board of Police Commissioners

**FROM:** Clive Weighill  
Office of the Chief

**DATE:** 2014 April 07

**SUBJECT:** Special Events and Police Special Duty

**FILE #:** 2,012

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**ISSUE:**

To provide background and information on special events and the use of police special duty at these events.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

That the following report be received as information.

**BACKGROUND:**

Since 2010 the number of event bookings in Saskatoon Parks has increased by 83%. In 2013, there were 527 authorized in Saskatoon Parks. These events range from small community gatherings to large commercial events with thousands of people attending.

In 2011, the Saskatoon Police Service worked with the City, EMO and the Fire Department to develop policy for emergency planning and coordination of civically sanctioned events. An Emergency Event Planning process was developed. This tool is designed to help evaluate the risk associated with a single event or the cumulative risk of a number of unrelated events happening at the same time.

All applications for special events held in City of Saskatoon parks are reviewed in late December and early January by a Special Event Adjudication Committee made up of representatives from the Saskatoon Police Service, Saskatoon Fire and Protective Services Emergency Measures Operations (EMO), Leisure Services, Infrastructure Services – Parks, Infrastructure Services – Facilities, Infrastructure Services – Transportation, Saskatoon Transit, and the Saskatchewan Liquor and Gaming Authority.

The Special Events Adjudication Committee determines what further information is required to assess the event, if there are any concerns from previous years, what administrative conditions are required and if a meeting between the special event organizers and the Special Event Adjudication Committee is required. Meetings are held at City Hall several times a week,

generally from January to April of each year.

Many of the events such as fun days in the park, weddings, community gatherings and soccer tournaments have very few, if any, additional administrative conditions and don't require a meeting with the committee. Larger festivals such as Saskatchewan Marathon, Taste of Saskatchewan and the SaskTel Jazz Festival require additional administrative conditions. Some such conditions like additional liability insurance, liquor licensing through Saskatchewan Liquor and Gaming Authority, road closures, and Police assistance require the applicant to meet and allow each committee member to evaluate the event based on their respective area of expertise.

The Saskatoon Police member delegated to participate on the Special Events Adjudication Committee is the Special Teams Sergeant and she often works in collaboration with a Saskatoon Police Service Traffic Unit Sergeant. Saskatoon Police Service evaluates an event with the primary objective of public safety.

### **DISCUSSION:**

Of the 527 authorized in Saskatoon Parks in 2013 there were 7 events where Police Special Duty was involved due to “beer garden” alcohol sales. These events were:

- Taste of Saskatchewan
- The Fringe
- The Jazz Festival
- Mogathon
- Red Bull Hometown Tour
- Ribfest
- The Saskatoon Exhibition

There are three ways that the Saskatoon Police Service may become involved in an event.

- **On Duty Assigned Special Event Resources** such as the Community Response Unit for community activism, demonstrations, festivals and celebrations. The Traffic Unit is often tasked to coordinate and conduct operations such as road closures and traffic control for parades and marathons. The Public Order Unit may be assigned for crowd management at large events.
- **Special Duty Policing** is required when sufficient on duty resources are not available or are not appropriate given the circumstances. Special duty cost will be charged for situations where police assistance is required in relation to the operation of a business entity, for example traffic control at a concert, bank or entrance fee related to attending the event and/or if the event has a liquor vending component.
- **Calls for Service** is where the Police Service is in a reactive mode and responding to the situation rather than being proactive as in the first two examples. Our response to calls for Service are prioritized and our response time and response capacity are very dependent on what is else is happening in the city.

## **“PUBLIC AGENDA”**

Decisions regarding what is the most appropriate delegation of police resources and how many police may be required is guided by public safety and determined by:

- reviewing the circumstances surrounding the event;
- the number of people expected;
- past history of the event;
- alcohol sales and usage;
- coinciding major events;
- officer safety, and
- Saskatoon Police Service Policy and Procedure.

Police Administration has an obligation to ensure public safety at special events. This does not apply solely to the location of the event itself but also to the surrounding community. The uniform presence of the Police at these events has an impact on both the event and on criminal behavior in the surrounding area.

- An anecdotal example of this was when the Police Service reduced its uniform presence at the Fringe Festival in 2006. This change was due to the lack of problems in the previous years and an attempt to have a larger plainclothes presence. There were several reported incidents within the first two days of the Fringe that happened in the surrounding area that created a public perception that the event was not safe to attend. Increasing the Uniform Police presence changed both the public perception and the criminal behavior within a couple of days.

### **Private Security, Special Duty Police, On Duty Police**

#### **Private Security**

Private security is used at many of the special events that take place in the City of Saskatoon now. They may be mandated by the SLGA as a condition of obtaining a license to sell alcohol. They have some training and equipment but in cases of criminal activity and arrests they need to call in the police to deal with the arrest. If there are no special duty personnel present the call is taken by our dispatchers and prioritized based on what is happening in the rest of the city. There may be a delay in the police response to this call based on what is happening elsewhere.

#### **Special Duty Police**

Special duty police officers are off duty members who are authorized to carry their issue equipment and wear their uniforms while performing the special duty function. Their authority to enforce the law and maintain public safety is the same as on duty police officers. If special duty police officers are assigned to an event they are dedicated to that event and will not be pulled away by other policing issues. They would be available to assist event security with their specialized equipment, police authority and powers of arrest.

#### **On Duty Police Officers**

Police Officers on duty are often assigned to attend to major events in addition to the private security and special duty officers. They may have special functions such as traffic control or public order. These officers may be called away if required to deal with public safety in the rest

of Saskatoon.

The Police Administration believes that for certain major events the best solution is all three of the above groups working together to ensure public safety. The Saskatoon Police Service has provided special duty and on duty police officers to work with private security at events like Taste of Saskatchewan, Ribfest and the Saskatoon Exhibition.

**CONCLUSION:**

The administration of the Saskatoon Police Service believes that the policing of large events in the parks of the city, especially those involving the sale of alcohol, requires a multi-level response to ensure public safety for both the event and surrounding neighbourhoods.

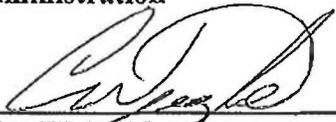
Private security should be supplemented with police resources dedicated to the event. Special duty police are the only resources that can be guaranteed not to be pulled away from an event if there are policing issues elsewhere.

The Police Service complements special duty resources at large events with a larger number of on duty officers which consist of uniform and plainclothes members. These on duty officers while assigned to the event may be pulled away if there is a need elsewhere in the city.

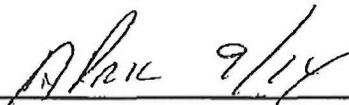
Written &  
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Dated:

  
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