



MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor and City Council Members

FROM: Nuria Rivera-Vandermyde, Deputy City Manager *YPR*
Rodney Gonzales, Assistant City Manager *Rodney*

DATE: October 14, 2020

SUBJECT: Austin Center for Events Reorganization & Special Events Task Force Update

The purpose of this memo is to provide you with an update on the Austin Center for Events (ACE) reporting structure, the Special Events Ordinance, and the Special Events Task Force (SETF).

Austin Center for Events Reorganization

The FY2020-21 budget included several department reorganizations intended to improve operational effectiveness across various departments. Consistent with the Adopted FY2020-2021 Budget, five positions within ACE transferred to Development Services Department (DSD) beginning October 1, 2020, including two positions from Corporate Special Events and three positions from Economic Development's Music and Entertainment Services Group. ACE oversees the permitting and planning for temporary special events and festivals in the City of Austin. Several units in DSD, including Building Inspections, Sound Permitting and Temporary Use Permitting, collaborate in this work. Aligning ACE with DSD will allow for further streamlining of the event permitting process, and, as lead department for the City's permitting software, DSD is committing additional resources to automating and enhancing the process for both staff and event organizers.

Special Events Task Force

Per Ordinance No. 20180510-018, the Task Force is required to report back to Council with any recommended changes to the Ordinance by September 2020. The SETF has been unable to meet or achieve its objectives due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Logistically, it has been challenging to convene meetings of the task force members. Additionally, since events have effectively been suspended due to the pandemic, some SETF members are focused on recovery efforts and have participated in the Experience Sector COVID-19 Economic Recovery Meetings to help gather input for recovery recommendations for indoor and outdoor events, venues, nightlife and associated tourism and hospitality sectors.

SETF members, including 22 community members and staff, have agreed to postpone meetings of the full Task Force for the remainder of the calendar year and will work to reconvene in January 2021, pending public health conditions. In January 2021, the SETF will assess the availability of existing Task Force members and add or change members as needed. When the SETF is able to convene again, the group will begin with a status summary report of progress to date and what is outstanding. The Task

Force will then resume the work to compile a report with Special Event Ordinance changes for City Council, taking into consideration the conditions of the event industry post COVID-19. The timeline for this Task Force to complete the objectives will need to be recalibrated based on when we are able to assemble due to the impacts of COVID-19.

Because amendments to the Ordinance will impact the permitting process, Brydan McNeely, Consumer Services Manager with DSD will serve as the liaison to the SETF.

Please contact Denise Lucas at denise.lucas@austintexas.gov if you have any questions regarding the Austin Center for Events or Brydan McNeely at brydan.mcneely@austintexas.gov regarding the Special Events Task Force.

Cc: Spencer Cronk, City Manager
Denise Lucas, Director, Development Services Department
William Manno, ACE Corporate Program Manager, DSD
James Russell, SETF Co-Chair Mayor's Office Appointee
Jeff Smith, SETF Co-Chair, District 5 Appointee
Bobby Garza, SETF Member, District 2 Appointee
Laurel White, SETF Member, District 3 Appointee
Shelley Phillips, SETF Member, District 4 Appointee
Heath Riddles, SETF Member, District 6 Appointee
Mandi Thomas, SETF Member, District 7 Appointee
Dan Carroll, SETF Member, District 8 Appointee
Ingrid Weigand, SETF Member, District 9 Appointee
Frances Thompson, SETF Member, District 10 Appointee