

## NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETING

In accord with the Statutes of the State of Illinois and the Ordinances of the City of Highland Park, a meeting of the Ravinia Festival Community Relations Commission of the City of Highland Park is scheduled to be held at the hour of 6:30 P.M., on Tuesday, March 12, 2013 in the Highland Park City Hall, 1707 St. Johns Avenue, Highland Park, Illinois, during which meeting it is anticipated that there will be a discussion of the following agenda:

City of Highland Park  
Ravinia Festival Community Relations Commission  
**Tuesday, March 12, 2013**  
City Hall, 1707 St. Johns Avenue  
**6:30 P.M.**

### AGENDA

- I. Call to Order
- II. Roll Call
- III. Review and Approval of Minutes: October 16, 2012
- IV. Scheduled Business
  - A. Welcome Note from the Chair
  - B. Introduction of New Student Commissioners
  - C. Business from the Public
  - D. Committee Reports
    1. Ravinia Festival
    2. Transit
    3. Public Safety
    4. Parking Issues
- V. Other Business
- VI. Adjournment

Posted at City Hall before 5:00 p.m. on March 4, 2013

**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF  
RAVINIA FESTIVAL COMMUNITY RELATIONS COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF  
HIGHLAND PARK, ILLINOIS**

**MEETING DATE:** Tuesday, October 16, 2012

**MEETING LOCATION:** Pre-Session Room, City Hall 1707 St. Johns Avenue, Highland Park, IL

**CALL TO ORDER**

At 6:03 p.m. the Chair Romo called the meeting to order and asked the Staff Liaison to call the roll.

**ROLL CALL**

**Members Present:** Borden, Froy, Newman, Sanders, Schmitz, Kaufman, Romo, and Kraus (Arrived Late)

**Members Absent:** Choos

The Staff Liaison declared that a quorum was present.

**Staff Present:** Police Chief Paul Shafer, Commander Gerald (Gerry) Cameron, Ravinia Transit Supervisor Erwin Post and Staff Liaisons Andrea West and Lee Smith, Mayor Nancy R. Rotering (Attended First Half of the Meeting)

**NOTE:**

At the start of the meeting Chairman Romo requested that *D. Other Business* be moved to the front of the agenda to allow the items that the Chair requested the Mayor's presence for to be discussed first due to the Mayor's scheduled appearance at a second meeting. The commission did not formally make a motion, but all agreed.

**D. OTHER BUSINESS**

Chair Romo summarized the issues with police coverage and traffic flow that were discussed in earlier Ravinia Festival Commission meetings and Neighborhood Meetings held during the fall which included the Mayor; it was for these reasons that he felt the Mayor should be in attendance at this meeting and to participate in this portion of the agenda. In response to various issues the Highland Park police had recommended more patrol coverage, signage, and traffic control on roads surrounding the Festival grounds.

Chairman Romo felt that on several of the busiest concerts nights in the second half of the season the agreed upon procedures, specifically increased police presence, were not followed and stated that Sergeant O'Neill of the Highland Park Police Department had informed

him of a shortage in man-power during these events for unnamed reasons.

Commissioner Sanders stated that the man-power decisions are up to the police, not Ravinia. Ravinia alerts the police in the event that a concert will possibly attract a large crowd. The police are solely in charge of filling the number of police officer positions needed based on the projected attendance of the event, not the Ravinia security budget.

Commander Gerry Cameron explained the procedure for staffing large Ravinia events between 2:18 and 3:51 on the meeting recording. Commander Cameron explained that these procedures were in place all of the nights where concerts were expected to attract over 1,500 people.

Commander Cameron began to discuss the traffic issues on the date of the Anita Baker Concert, the night in question by Chair Romo about police presence at Ravinia events. Cameron explained that on the previous evening IDOT road work had created a “perfect storm.” Two lanes of the Edens Expressway were removed in both directions with no warning to the City of Highland Park and surrounding jurisdictions. On the same evening ‘The Taste of Highland Park’ and the ‘Highland Park Arts Festival’ occurred. As early as 10:30 a.m., the Eden’s Expressway was backed up to Old Orchard Road. Ravinia over-flow parking was opened to help move traffic searching for parking off of the roads quickly. The number of parking spots was satisfactory but the limits on the flow of traffic caused the back-ups and confusion. Commander Cameron also later noted that in addition to the Eden’s surfacing several other construction projects were taking place. (3:51 to 6:02)

Commissioner Sanders noted that the previous enforcement plans were successful from their perspective, but the combination of events caused more of the issue than the Anita Baker concert. Green Bay Road was grid-locked creating much of the mess within residential communities. Early in the afternoon Clavey Road was backed up onto the highway due to the grid-lock on Green Bay from those avoiding the Eden’s. (6:02 – 6:42)

Vice Chair Borden posed the question about solutions to this sort of congestion problems. Mayor Rotering confirmed that IDOT did not notify Highland Park, and no notices were placed on the IDOT website to indicate that construction of this nature would be taking place so no pre-planning was done. Mayor Rotering noted that she is working with the State to address this problem; IDOT has not been sharing information.

Commissioner Sanders added that this construction event was not mentioned in a pre-season planning meeting with State transportation officials. The Glencoe Water Main project was addressed in advance and the grid lock was prevented with additional police and parking facilities. (6:58 – 8:50)

The Mayor and Police representatives stated that from the evening’s discussion it appears that the plan for increased police presence was still in order; Chairman Romo agreed and stated that he wanted to ensure that proper funding was in place. (8:50 – 9:00)

Commissioner Sanders reiterated that Ravinia pays for these services as requested by the police, and the police provide additional man-power whenever needed without restriction from Ravinia. The police presence and transportation services are all voluntary and afterhours work, not mandated shifts. Next year a bigger pool of buses and drivers are

desirable, Erwin is working towards this. (9:00 – 10:55)

The consensus was summarized by Commander Cameron; the systems put in place for controlling traffic and other congestion issues are generally working. (10:55 – 12:14)

Vice Chair Borden asked if it was legal for residents to rent out their private driveways to Ravinia guests for parking. Commander Cameron stated that it is not legal. Vice Chair Borden requested that this issue be addressed with a note in the spring edition of The Highlander. (12:14 – 13:29)

The Mayor asked Ravinia staff if the Anita Baker concert was a sell-out night, possibly over-sold. Commissioner Sanders stated that they did not over-sell; they opted to stop selling lawn tickets early in the evening. The concert attracted more donors with concert passes and lower capacity cars than a typical Ravinia concert. Commissioner Sanders noted that the 'Taste of Highland Park' limits the Ravinia traffic through the city exacerbating typical parking issues. More buses were required, but picked up less people. The Mayor requested suggestions on how to reach out to new visitors to provide instructions on Ravinia parking and transportation. (14:03 – 17:50)

Commissioner Sanders felt that many new visitors follow signs and maps better than those familiar with the community and are less likely to attempt to find other routes to parking lots and the Festival. Ravinia opened parking two-to-three hours early when the gridlock was observed but the traffic was related to other events and construction. Commander Cameron noted that it is impossible to identify the origin of traffic, so it is hard to predict where to station intervention. (17:50 – 20:53)

All commissioners spoke to the continuing issue of drop-off's in residential neighborhoods contributing to traffic congestion. Chair Romo mentioned the on-pole signs, and the blue saw-horse signs. The saw-horse signs have been more successful in deterring illegal drop off's at concerts and requested more signage. In addition, Chair Romo thought that the CPA's were also of assistance on this matter. (20:53 – 24:00)

Councilman Kaufman mentioned that a complaint has been made about difficulty surrounding traffic at the Braeside Station related to Ravinia traffic, most significantly speeding. Commander Cameron discussed moving officers to that spot later in the evening if needed. (24:00 – 25:14)

Vice Chair Borden questioned if handing out flyers with directions was possible, and what the average the amount of time people need to stop and ask is. Commander Cameron stated that "flyering" had previously been done, but pre-education via websites is probably better. (25:14 – 27:18)

At the conclusion of this agenda item Mayor Rotering left the hearing. (27:18)

## **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

### **A. REGULAR MEETING OF THE RAVINIA FESTIVAL COMMUNITY RELATIONS COMMISSION – JULY 10, 2012**

Chair Romo moved for approval of the minutes of the regular meeting of the Ravinia Festival Community Relations Commission held on July 10, 2012, as presented. Vice-Chair Borden moved to approve the minutes and Commissioner Sanders seconded the motion.

On a voice vote, the Chair declared that the motion passed unanimously, 7-0.

## **SCHEDULED BUSINESS**

### A. BUSINESS FROM THE PUBLIC

(Start 27:49)

Lawrence Dunlap of 221 Blackhawk Lane brought several issues to the commission: buses idling, the security of the site and unlocked gates, and the use of gravel on the west parking lot.

Ravinia representatives stated that bus and truck drivers were instructed when caught to turn off all generators and engines. On days where temperatures were seasonally higher, this issue was more prevalent. Mr. Dunlap was not in agreement, and stated that he observed multiple violations of this agreement. Mr. Dunlap requested that by March, the next meeting, that Ravinia supply a plan including enforcement and signage to curb the buses idling issues in the west parking lot. Mr. Dunlap stated that his preference is for signage on the property stating that idling is not permitted and for staff to call police when needed instead of him. (36:20)

After some discussion, Commissioner Schmitz agreed to staff additional security personnel at the parking lot to instruct buses to not idle on the property and call the police when needed. Commissioner Sanders requested the language from the ordinance in order to create additional signage within the park related to idling of buses; Commander Cameron noted to provide her that information and complete an agreement necessary to enforce this ordinance on private property. Commander Cameron will also be shifting an officer to the west lot, the primary lot in question. (36:20 – 41:55)

Mr. Dunlap stated that people have been remaining on the property past the time visitors supposed to leave, specifically the night of the Anita Baker concert, and observed the north gate unlocked at times. Commissioner Schmitz stated that the gates are only left open to avoid damage to the gates when a patron leaves a vehicle. Dunlap stated that this is a security threat to not only the Ravinia Festival, but the surrounding property owners. Unknown requested that if the gate is left open that the police can be notified. Commissioner Froy noted that when Mr. Dunlap observed the gate being left open from the interior of the property, he was also trespassing and has no more right to be on the Festival property. Mr. Dunlap disagreed with this interpretation. (41:55 – 47:26)

Finally, Mr. Dunlap requested that Ravinia repair a muddy area near the underpass, as approved by the Plan Commission. Commissioner Schmitz explained that the area was damaged by construction of the underpass, the area has been seeded several times, and parking may have prevented the growth. The area will continue to be seeded. (47:26 – 50:54)

Vice Chair Borden noted that she finds the public comment useful and that she feels the

communication between neighbors and Ravinia has improved, in addition to the coordination between the Festival and the police department. She generally enjoys living adjacent to the Festival and hopes other residents can look past the minor flaws of the site. Mr. Dunlop responded by stating his concern for impervious surfaces, and that each time gravel or other materials replace pervious surface it adds to storm run-off and flooding.

Commissioner Froy asked if there was new flooding. Mr. Dunlop explained that flooding occurred after minor rain on the south side of the property. Engineering and Planning are working with the neighbors on this issue. Commissioner Sanders noted that this was discussed with the Plan Commission in the PUD discussion. Commissioner Schmitz noted that more water is pumped north, instead of running south. (52:08 – 55:20)

## B. COMMITTEE REPORTS

### 1. Ravinia Festival

Commissioner Sanders reported that season was generally good; the weather was hot and dry but there were few issues besides the Anita Baker night. The first cancellation of a sold-out show, Duran Duran, took place over the summer due to artist illness. Thanks to social media and other electronic means, only 35 people showed up to the park.

The symphony has been booked and everything is looking good for next season. (56:00 – 57:22)

### 2. Transit

Transit Supervisor Edwin Post reported that a goal this year is include 2 more drivers. The current bus fleet comes from PACE's contingency fleet, more buses may come available. More of these buses may have air conditioning and have the same capacity as existing buses. The buses have been maintained well by PACE staff. The police have helped improve safety and relived congestion with coordination. Mr. Post also reiterated the experiences of other Commission members as related to the Anita Baker night. (57:22 – 01:02:02)

### 3. Public Safety- Traffic Control, Crowd Control, Police Protection and Parking Updates

Commander Cameron provided a summary of the season broken down into traffic, crowd, and parking control. The partnership between the citizens, Ravinia, the City and law enforcement got over 500,000 people in and out of the area safely; except for one night, all concert goers' got to Ravinia before the start of the concert (the exception being Anita Baker).

The Early Start program works and is effective. Based on comments from this meeting, they will ensure that the transition of CPA's from Groveland/Lambert Tree area to around Lincolnwood and address more signage specifically stating no drop-offs. Ravinia staff does a good job of placing and removing barricades before and after shows. Drop-off and pick-up's continue to be an issue. It is enforced with local cab companies that drop-offs are not permitted on residential streets and signage was installed on Lambert Tree; feedback has been generally positive to enforcement.

Crowd control: A smoking area was reestablished on the Opus lot after patrons were seen exiting and reentering the property. One arrest was made for disorderly conduct; rowdy patrons are removed Ravinia request (with entire party) and if they refused to leave they are arrested. Several other arrests were made for minors in possession of alcohol and possession of cannabis.

To further protect pedestrian the Blackstone entrance, limiting in-bound traffic 30 minutes before and out-bound after the show to protect pedestrians. Over 200 parking permit violations were issued for: no permit, no permit address, and parking outside of address proximity. A letter is sent to all residents with the 4 parking permits; they are asked to write their address on each permit and to use the permits for guests and family. Sometimes friends and guests use these permits for Ravinia parking and go outside of the proximity of the residence to park closer to Ravinia.

Police Chief Shafer added the following about residential parking permits: The Police Department did not intend for the permits to be used for Ravinia events. Chief Shafer requested consensus from the Ravinia Festival Commission to make two substantial changes to the ordinance in order to address the deficiencies of the current one.

First, the ordinance which authorizes the residential parking permit system is not strong enough as written to enforce parking within a specific proximity to the permit holder's home; combined with the "address write-in" system currently used, this allows for abuse and unintended confusion. In the amended ordinance parking permits would be printed with each address and restricted to the proximity around ones home. Chief Shafer wanted to ensure that the [Ravinia area] resident's intent for the parking permit system was the same as the Council intent. If this was the case, Chief Shafer requested consensus from the Ravinia Festival Commission to move forward with these changes through the Council.

After hearing this proposal, the Commission gave an informal agreement that a change. Unknown speaker noted that some people were not aware of these rules and that address printing would solve the problem; unknown speaker also noted that some residents do not have parking directly adjacent to their property and need to be accommodated within the ordinance; Chief Schafer agreed.

Second, because of early staging by concert goers' on residential streets, the Police Department would like to require permits to be displayed on parked vehicles at 3:00 pm, instead of 5:00 pm as currently required.

The Commission gave an informal agreement this change.

Vice Chair Borden noted that residents can request additional one-day passes if having more than four guests. (01:02:02 – 01:11:32)

Chair Romo discussed several more points related to public safety and enforcement: Car staging and drop-off's on Lambert Tree still takes place, sometimes on private property. On one occasion Chair Romo witnessed a woman using the neighboring empty property as a restroom; garbage is also an issue. These were some of his reasons for requesting an update on the police coverage of Ravinia events.

Commander Cameron asked what signage in the area. The verbiage was changed on the white and red signs, but Chair Romo stated that the blue and white signs were more effective when they were installed at the corner of Lambert Tree. Romo requested more between that corner and Lincolnwood in addition to saw-horses. Commander Cameron stated that language can be added to existing location on bigger signs.

Vice Chair Borden requested that Ravinia add more information about appropriate drop-off's locations on the website.

A discussion took place about the visual cues given by illegal parking on Groveland, and how improvements to eliminate illegal parking may help these issues.

Councilman Kauffman thanked the group for their cooperation in improving the conditions around the Ravinia Festival. (01:02:02 – 01:20:47)

**MEETING RESOLUTION**

Vice Chair motioned to approve next year's meeting dates of March 12<sup>th</sup>, July 9<sup>th</sup> and October 8<sup>th</sup>. Unknown seconded the motion.

On a voice vote, the Chair declared that the motion passed unanimously, 7-0.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Chairman Romo entertained a motion to adjourn the meeting. Vice Chair Borden moved to adjourn. Commissioner Sanders seconded the motion.

On a voice vote, the Vice Chair declared that the motion passed unanimously.

The Commission adjourned its meeting at 7:25 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Andrea West  
Staff Liaison to the Commission

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*THE FOLLOWING IS TO BE COMPLETED AFTER THE MINUTES ARE APPROVED:*

MINUTES APPROVED BY THE RAVINIA FESTIVAL COMMUNITY RELATIONS COMMISSION  
ON \_\_\_\_\_

- WITH NO CORRECTIONS \_\_\_\_\_
- WITH CORRECTIONS \_\_\_\_\_  
(SEE MINUTES OF [ \_\_\_\_\_ ] MEETING FOR CORRECTIONS)