Urban Park Management Seminar Series

September 29, 2016
The Anatomy of Managing a Large Park Event

Jamie Warren, Director of Operations Management
What is a Special Event?

Special events are those activities where a gathering of 20 or more people is expected over a defined period of time. These can range from small picnics and birthday parties to events as large as the NYC Marathon, which sees over 50,000 participants cross the finish line and thousands of spectators along the way.
Why host events in parks?

Special events can restrict public use and park operations, damage landscapes and infrastructure, and generate excess trash. Are they worth it?

Special Events can also help create an increase in:
- Park usage amongst existing and new park users
- Community and social interaction
- Positive activity

Or a reduction in:
- Crime rates
- Negative park usage
Most Importantly

Events and film shoots offer opportunities to show off park improvements and promote your park to a broader audience, both nationally and internationally.
Special events can be a tool for generating revenue, but should not be used as an incentive for allowing inappropriate or damaging usage of space.

- Choose venues appropriate based on the nature of the event
- Strike a balance between the benefits provided by a special event
  - Long-term sustainability of the park
  - General park usage
- Parkwide operations
  - Your needs come first!
NYC Parks permits roughly 2,500 events in Central Park on an annual basis. That breaks down as follows:

- 95 Running, Walking and Biking Races
- 360 Film, Television and Photography Shoots
- 600 Weddings
- 60 Corporate and School Events
- 10 Parades
- 180 Concerts and Festivals

The remainder are small events such as picnics, birthday parties, and family gatherings.
Types of Special Events in Central Park

Private events: birthday parties, wedding ceremonies, corporate picnics, field days, etc.
Public events: concerts, athletic activities, cultural programs, parades, etc.
Filming and Photography

In conjunction with the Mayor’s Office of Media and Entertainment, the Conservancy manages all filming and photography under guidelines similar to those for other events through our office of Film and Special Events.
Case-Study of a Large Park Event
Global Citizen Festival

Since 2012 Central Park has hosted this annual concert where thousands of “global citizens” gather on the Great Lawn for a day of performances, speeches and political action towards global issues like poverty, disease, sanitation and clean water.

Facts:

• One of seven events allowed to take place on the Great Lawn each year, per the NYC Parks Rules and Regulations
• 60,000 free tickets distributed
• Televised live on MSNBC, YouTube, Google, FUSE TV
• $27 billion in commitments from groups like World Bank, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, and various other government entities
Special Events are “Special”

The process of planning and executing events will likely differ based on your park, location, needs, and the event. However, in general, the following steps are scalable based on each of those factors.

Special Event Application:

• Submitted by event organizer
• Reviewed by NYC Parks and the Central Park Conservancy:
  ▪ Location
  ▪ Date
  ▪ Nature of the event
  ▪ Number of expected attendees
  ▪ Public’s use of space
  ▪ Time of year
  ▪ Construction
Site Visits & Meetings:

- Review proposed set-up (infrastructure, fencing, signage, tenting, etc.)
  - If it touches the ground, speak up!
- Ingress and egress of participants
- Public access to the site
- Vehicle movement in and out of the site
- Security
- Trash
- Merchandise, concessions, water, restrooms
- Medical
- Weather protocols

Repeat!
Citywide Coordination

In order to manage an event of this size it takes the coordination of many city agencies and partners, as well as a thorough review internally and with NYC Parks. The months of planning and review ensure both the integrity of the event, and more importantly the Park, are not sacrificed in any way.

Agencies:
• NYC Parks
• NYPD
• Mayor’s Office – Citywide Event Coordination and Management
• Office of Emergency Management
• FDNY
• MTA
• Department of Environmental Protection
• Department of Sanitation
• Department of Health
• Department of Buildings
Regardless of the size of the event, internal discussion and review are a critical piece both from an administrative and operational standpoint.

**Meet with appropriate staff:**
- Directors, Supervisors, Communications, etc.

**Notifications to:**
- President and Vice Presidents, Chiefs, Associate Vice Presidents

**Staff procedures:**
- Tasks leading up to event and day-of (removal of fencing, painting, turf work)
- Day-of movement around the Park
- Change of day-to-day procedures (i.e. drop spots, garbage cans)
- Area closures
- Staff ID’s and credentials

**Weekly meetings:**
- Directors’ Meeting – Weekly; Monthly with Supervisors
- Operations Meeting – NYC Parks, Parks Enforcement Patrol, NYPD
Best Practices

As the main caretaker for your park, you are the expert when it comes to management and maintenance. What are things you can do to assist with the event set-up, and therefore ensure the landscapes and people are managed in the best way?
Communication
Good Afternoon!

Attached, please find the summary of permitted film and photography projects and events for the week of September 19th through September 25th, 2016. The upcoming week's most notable events are highlighted below:

9/19 Monday
*Global Citizen Festival Load-in at the Great Lawn

9/20 Tuesday
*Global Citizen Festival Load-in at the Great Lawn
*Women's Committee 35th Anniversary Luncheon at the Conservatory Garden
*100 person Film Shoot (overnight into Wednesday) at the Bethesda Fountain

9/21 Wednesday
*Global Citizen Festival Load-in at the Great Lawn
*Imagining Again display at the Bandshell Plaza
*Peace Day Aerial Art at the Great Hill
*Meditation for International Day of Peace at Rumsey Playfield
*Central Park Horse Show at Wollman Rink
# EVENTS IN THE PARK

**MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 19 - SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 25, 2016**


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EVENT</th>
<th>LOCATION</th>
<th>EXPECTED ATTENDANCE</th>
<th>TIME</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>MONDAY 9/19</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TUESDAY 9/20</strong></td>
<td>Women's Committee 35th Anniversary Luncheon</td>
<td>35 pp.</td>
<td>11:30 am-1:30 pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LOCATION</td>
<td>Conservatory Garden</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EXPECTED ATTENDANCE</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TIME</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>WEDNESDAY 9/21</strong></td>
<td>Imagine Again</td>
<td>Peace Day Aerial Art</td>
<td>Meditation for Peace - International Day of Peace</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LOCATION</td>
<td>Bandshell Plaza</td>
<td>The Great Hill</td>
<td>Rumsey Playfield</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TIME</td>
<td>6:00 am-6:00 pm</td>
<td>10:00 am-3:00 pm</td>
<td>5:30 pm-7:00 pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>WEDNESDAY 9/21</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Central Park Horse Show</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LOCATION</td>
<td>Wollman Rink</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EXPECTED ATTENDANCE</td>
<td>1900 pp.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TIME</td>
<td>5:00 pm-10:00 pm</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>THURSDAY 9/22</strong></td>
<td>An Insider’s Look at the Hallett Nature Sanctuary</td>
<td>Central Park Horse Show</td>
<td>Summerstage Presents: Band of Horses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LOCATION</td>
<td>Hallett Nature Sanctuary</td>
<td>Wollman Rink</td>
<td>Rumsey Playfield</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EXPECTED ATTENDANCE</td>
<td>50 pp.</td>
<td>1900 pp.</td>
<td>5000 pp.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TIME</td>
<td>7:00 am-10:00 am</td>
<td>6:30 pm-10:00 pm</td>
<td>6:30 pm-10:00 pm</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Event Physical is a document compiling all pertinent event details regarding things ranging from the date, location and key event contacts, to area closures, event-day timelines, weather contingencies, and needs from each agency/partner.
Event Physical Continued...

Please provide the following:

**CFD/31st Street Yard (Russell Fredericks; Jamie Warren):**
- Assist with supervision of event day-in, day-out
- Assist with set-up of emergency lines and audience evacuation lines on the Great Lawn.
- Assist in supervision/rectification of stage removal.
- Assist in the set-up of water source on basketball/volleyball courts for catering, and water access for service trucks from the West Entry.
- Assist in removal of volleyball nets (removable posts only).
- Assist in notification of vendor groups, handmade carriages, and small events in area.
- Assist in posting park notification signs prior to event as per production signage plan.

**Parks 6th Street Shops (Chief of Operations Raymond Yoon; Supervisor Dennis Byrne):**
- Clear the north Great Lawn path behind stores for vehicle and foot movement as well as placement of dumpster by Sunday, September 26.
- Please clear lower parking area on dates and times reflected in an email dated September 6, 2008.

**Parks FEP (Assistant Commissioner Michael Derricott; Inspector Edwin Rodriguez):**
- Event coverage as per previous years
- FEP Command Center positioning on September 22, 2008 at approximately 85th Street on Central Park West.

**TMA (Jennifer McCarthy; Lt. Kevin O'Connor; 14th Precinct):**
- Assist in feeding of different areas during the day of the event.
- Event coverage per plan.
- Command center positioning on September 20, 2008 at 8 a.m.

**PREP (Richard Kalvar):**
- Please remove/mobile pushcart vendors from the north Great Lawn Oval beginning Monday, September 22, 2008.
- Please remove/mobile pushcart vendors from the Great Lawn area and those carts located along the East and West Drive between 72nd and 80th Street on Saturday, September 26, 2008.
- Please remove/mobile pushcart vendors from 72nd Street & Central Park West and 72nd Street and Fifth Avenue for the day on September 24, 2008.

**FDNY (Fred Williams):**
- Review and approval of final security and emergency services plans.
- Command center positioning on September 24, 2008 on West Drive north of Root (9:00 a.m. entrance, approximately 81st Street).
- Assist with placement of EMS assets on the West 81st Street Entrance Ramp (off Central Park West) and on west side of East Drive between 81st and 84th Street.

**OEM (Frank McCready; Kevin Clark):**
- Command center positioning on September 24, 2008 on West Drive adjacent to Radio Path (about 83rd Street) beginning no earlier than 7:00 a.m.
- Provide a representative from the National Weather Service to be on-site and monitor all weather conditions.
- Provide meeting space for select representatives from the City who will be notified about current and future weather situations and general event information. First meeting to be held at 10:00 a.m. on September 23, 2008.
- Provide weather reports to select individuals beginning Thursday, September 24 at 7:00 a.m.
Communication to the public can be handled in many ways. Social media is a great way to let large groups of people know what’s happening in their backyard, drive traffic to your website and social media outlets, and get information out to a mass group of people quickly. In-park notifications are equally important – particularly for those people who may not look at your website or follow you on social media.
Event Day

The work and coordination leading up to the event can be long and arduous, but it doesn’t stop there. Ensuring that all elements are in place the morning of the event will ensure a safe and fun event for all. And of course, that your operation can continue with as little disruption as possible. Business should function as usual immediately following the event.

CHECK THE WEATHER
CHECK IT AGAIN

Pre-event walk through:
• Security and fencing in place
• Chutes ready to go
• Concessions and merchandise set-up
• Cable ramps in place
• Tents secured
• Staff informed
• Signage up
• Garbage cans out

CHECK THE WEATHER
On-site meeting with key agencies and partners:

- NYPD
- FDNY
- Private security
- Office of Emergency Management
  - National Weather Service
- Event organizers
- Mayor’s Office
- Private Security
- Department of Buildings
- Department of Health

These meetings are held throughout the day based on different factors including weather, lines, timing, etc. NYPD acts as the lead for the day.

Internal communication should be kept throughout the day. This can be done via radio, email and phone call. i.e. when gates open, when concert starts and ends, meal breaks, any on-site needs, and any important items that staff should be aware of.
Trash Management

This can be the most challenging aspect of an event. Proper planning and foresight can ease the burden on the event organizer. Again, you know your park best.

- Designate locations for trash receptacles in advance
- Identify locations to drop bags that will not interfere with crowd movement and will not damage vegetation and trees
- Ensure there are plenty of staff to assist with clean-up; before, during and after
- Remove your existing trash bins and have the organizer provide their own
- Check your perimeter!
Post Event

Once the event is over, the hard work begins. Don’t let things fall through the cracks. Make sure you keep your eyes on things through to the end. This is when things can go wrong.

Conducting a post-event walk through with the event organizer and producer gives way for successes and short falls to be addressed. What worked and what didn’t. Is there damage? What could be done next time to improve?
Damages

Who is held accountable for any damage that occurred? Do your best to approve things that will mitigate damage in advance as much as possible.

- Enkamat
- Equipment on hard surface, or clay. Not on grass where avoidable.
- Flooring
- Plywood laid down where vehicles may have to travel over grass
- Move equipment throughout the load-in and load-out that may suffocate grass, or wait as long as you can to put it out
Recovery

Once the event load-out is complete, in-house work is necessary to restore the landscape. Ballfields are closed for a full week after the show. Raking, seeding, aerating, watering, mowing, repeat!
Thoughtful management of events, pre-planning and discussion, maximizing the public’s use of space, and planning to mitigate damages before they happen, will allow for quick recovery and minimize operational needs on your end.
For more information about Institute programs, please contact:

Maura Lout  
Director, Center for Urban Park Management  
mlout@centralparknyc.org

Chris Cousino  
Associate Director of Urban Park Management  
ccousino@centralparknyc.org

Learn more at: centralparknyc.org/institute | institute@centralparknyc.org | @cpcinstitute