

From: **"Levitt, Karen"**
To: **"Direct to Mayor and Council - DL"**
Date: 3/21/2024 5:10:04 PM
Subject: Members of Vancouver's First-Ever Special Event Advisory Task Force Announcement
(March 22, 2024)

EMBARGOED TIL FRIDAY MARCH 22, 2024 @ 10 AM

Dear Mayor and Council,

I am writing to inform you that the City will be issuing the below news release regarding the announcement of the selected members for the City's first ever Special Event Advisory Task Force.

Maria will reply to this email with the relevant Vancouver.ca link and social media links, once these are live.

Best,
Karen

City of Vancouver
News release
March 22, 2024

Members of Vancouver's first ever Special Event Advisory Task Force announced *Task force aims to make it easier to host festivals and events in Vancouver*

In November 2023, the City of Vancouver issued a call for applications for a new Special Event Advisory Task Force. The Special Event Advisory Task Force will help identify key challenges and opportunities within the City's existing permitting processes, and work alongside City staff to make it easier to host festivals and events in Vancouver.

"We're excited to introduce the members of Vancouver's first ever Special Event Advisory Task Force," said Mayor Ken Sim. "A thriving events industry is essential for our city's vibrancy and connectivity. This task force is made up of top-notch industry professionals, and I'm eager to hear their recommendations on how we can make it easier to host festivals and events in Vancouver."

The inaugural Special Event Advisory Task Force is comprised of 14 community members, who will meet for the first time early this spring.

The City received 155 applications for membership from a wide variety of people involved in Vancouver's events industry. Applications were reviewed by a third party where evaluators considered the type and complexity of events produced and the diversity of task members. The selection committee expresses its appreciation to all applicants.

After careful consideration, the following 14 community members have been selected:

- Julie Ali, Axe Capoeira Productions
- Billi Jo Aasen, The Festival Company
- Eric Chene, RUNVAN
- David C Jones, DCJ Productions
- Ariel Martz-Oberlander, Kickstart Disability Arts and Culture
- Miriam Esquitín, Vancouver Mural Festival
- Dominic Lai, Canadian International Dragon Boat Festival Society/Dragon Boat BC
- Eduardo Ottoni, EventLAB Inc, Jazz Festival, VSO, Pride
- Patrick Onukwulu, Festival African Heritage Music and Dance Society
- Yathu Radhakrishnan, West End Seniors Network

- Paul Runnals, BRANDLIVE Management Group
- Ayobami Suara, Black Block Association (Black Block Party)
- Winki Tam, Downtown Vancouver Business Improvement Association
- Elise Yurkowski, Gastown Business Improvement Society

The Task Force includes support and representation from the following City staff:

- Saadi D'hoore, Social Planner I – ACT music Planner
- Sarah Hicks, Chief Licence Inspector
- Jodie Shebib, Acting Branch Manager, Film and Special Events
- Octavio Silva, Manager of Business Development (Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation)

Special events, festivals, and cultural celebrations have a significant and positive impact on Vancouver. They bring vibrancy into Vancouver's many communities, help support our local economy and play an integral role in enhancing quality of life.

Through the Special Event Advisory Task Force, the City remains committed to updating its processes and creating policies to enhance and support the success of the events industry.

View the Special Event Advisory Task Force [webpage here](#). (URL will go live March 22 at 10 am)

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