



**CITY OF FORT LAUDERDALE
City Commission Agenda Memo
REGULAR MEETING**

#25-0965

TO: Honorable Mayor & Members of the
Fort Lauderdale City Commission

FROM: Rickelle Williams, City Manager

DATE: November 4, 2025

TITLE: Motion Approving a One (1)-Year Agreement with a One (1)-Year Renewal Option, Request for Road Closures, Road Closures, Request for Road Closures Beyond 10:00 am on the Barrier Island, Request for Music Exemption, and Noise Control on the Public Waterways Exemption with Winterfest, Inc. for The Seminole Hard Rock Winterfest Boat Parade, with the 2025 Event to be Held on Saturday, December 13, 2025 - **(Commission Districts 1, 2, 3 and 4)**

Recommendation

Staff recommends the City Commission approve a one (1)-year outdoor event agreement with a one (1)-year renewal option, request for road closures, request for road closures beyond 10:00 am on the barrier island, request for amplified music exemption, and noise control on the public waterways exemption with Winterfest, Inc., in substantially the form attached, and authorize execution of the agreement by the City Manager or the City Manager's designee.

Background

The inaugural Seminole Hard Rock Winterfest Boat Parade was held in 1971 and is celebrating its 54th year in 2025. The event is a major holiday water parade that features a variety of decorated boats, yachts, and showboats sailing along a twelve (12)-mile route. Annually, the event attracts over a million spectators along the entire parade route.

On May 29, 2025, Winterfest, Inc. submitted an outdoor event application for the 2025 Seminole Hard Rock Winterfest Boat Parade to be held on Saturday, December 13, 2025, from 4:30 p.m. – 11:00 p.m. The application was submitted prior to the ninety (90)-day application deadline; therefore, the outdoor event application fee is \$200. The proposed agreement includes a one (1)-year term that commences on November 4, 2025, and expires on November 3, 2026. The agreement provides a one (1)-year renewal option if the parties mutually agree in a writing. If renewed, the future event dates are subject to and conditioned upon being approved by the City Manager and shared with the City Commission.

The event application identified three (3) separate activation sites, including:

- The New River and Intracoastal Waterways with event impacts on Saturday, December 13, 2025;
- Tunnel Top Park/Laura Ward Plaza/Riverwalk from Salt 7 to the Riverside Hotel. The event impacts begin on Wednesday, December 10, 2025, and concludes on Monday, December 15, 2025; and
- Las Olas Intracoastal Promenade Park with event impacts beginning on Wednesday, December 10, 2025, and concluding on Sunday, December 14, 2025.

The event organizer attended the August 13, 2025, outdoor events meeting to review the event details with City staff, including the Parks & Recreation Department, Transportation and Mobility Department, Police Department, and Fire Department. The outdoor events meetings focus on operational logistics, cross departmental coordination, and event organizer requirements.

Memorandum No. 19-076 (Exhibit 1) provides that all outdoor events that block streets anywhere on the Barrier Island must have all streets open no later than 10:00 a.m. In addition, the memorandum states that special events are not allowed to have amplified music after 9:00 p.m. (Sunday – Thursday) or after 10:00 p.m. (Friday and Saturday).

The event organizer is requesting the following special permissions that require City Commission approval for the December 2025 Event period:

- Road Closures – the event organizer is requesting an exemption to allow road closures at:
 - SE 4 Street between SE 6 Avenue to SE 8 Avenue
 - Las Olas Circle surrounding the Las Olas Intracoastal Promenade Park
- Amplified Music Exemption – The event organizer is requesting an exemption to allow amplified music to be played for one (1) additional hour on Saturday, December 13, 2025.
- Noise Control – The event organizer is requesting an exemption to Section 17-7 of the Code of Ordinances of the City of Fort Lauderdale to allow plainly audible sound from a motorboat or any watercraft being operated, docked, moored or tied to land, docks, piers or wharves in the City's public waterways.

During the Seminole Hard Rock Winterfest Boat Parade, music and other audible sound will be heard beyond the event area. On June 30, 2025, the City Commission adopted the Ordinance No. C-25-27 (Exhibit 2), amending Chapter 17 entitled "Noise Control" of the City's Code of Ordinances to establish restrictions for audible noise control on the public waterways. The ordinance prohibits plainly audible sound from a motorboat or any watercraft being operated, docked, moored or tied to land, docks, piers or wharves in the

City's public waterways. In addition, existing City regulations prohibit non-amplified sound in residential areas for a period of one (1) minute or longer between the hours of 10:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m. daily from a distance of twenty-five (25) feet or more when measured from the source property line. Consequently, Winterfest is requesting an exemption from the noise restrictions on the public waterways and source property line as prescribed in Section 17-7 of the Code of Ordinances of the City of Fort Lauderdale, as amended, for the entire term of this Agreement.

City staff invited the surrounding civic associations to the outdoor events meeting as well as shared a copy of the application and site plan. Upon approval, the City's online events calendar will be updated to reflect this event.

The event agreement defines the responsibilities of the event organizer such as covering the associated event expenses and the required certificates of insurance. The event organizer will also secure all other necessary permits and licenses that are required from other agencies. Authorization for the execution of the event agreement is contingent upon the City Attorney's Office reviewing and approving as to form all documents prior to execution by the City Manager or designee.

Resource Impact

Revenue related to these agreements is included in the FY 2026 operating budget in the account listed below.

<i>Funds available as of October 1, 2025</i>					
ACCOUNT NUMBER	COST CENTER NAME (Program)	ACCOUNT / ACTIVITY NAME	AMENDED BUDGET (Character)	AMOUNT RECEIVED (Character)	AMOUNT
10-001-6025-574-347-200-PKR029	Community Events	Charges for Service/ Nonsponsor Charges – Spec Event Fees	\$30,000	\$0	\$200
TOTAL AMOUNT ►					\$200

Strategic Connections

This item supports the 2029 Strategic Plan, specifically advancing:

- The Public Places Focus Area, Goal 5: Build a beautiful and welcoming community.

This item advances the Fast Forward Fort Lauderdale 2035 Vision Plan: We are Here.

This item supports the Advance Fort Lauderdale 2040 Comprehensive Place specifically advancing:

- The Public Places Focus Area
- The Parks, Recreation & Open Spaces Area
- Goal 2: Be a community with high quality parks and recreational facilities that highlight the character of our city.

Attachments

Exhibit 1 – Memorandum 19-076

Exhibit 2 – Ordinance No. C-25-27

Exhibit 3 – Seminole Hard Rock Winterfest Boat Parade Event Agreement

Prepared by: Carolyn Bean, Assistant to the Director, Parks and Recreation

Department Director: Carl Williams, Parks and Recreation