



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

**#26-0714**

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

**FROM:** Christopher Cooper, Acting City Manager

**DATE:** August 18, 2026

**TITLE:** Motion Approving a Three (3)-Year Agreement with Two (2) One (1)-Year  
Renewal Options, Request for Road Closures (Including Some Beyond  
10:00 a.m. on the Barrier Island), Request for Amplified Music Exemption,  
and Request for Noise Control on the Public Waterways Exemption with  
Winterfest, Inc. for The Seminole Hard Rock Winterfest Boat Parade, with  
the 2026 Event to be Held on Saturday, December 12, 2026 - **(Commission  
Districts 1, 2, 3 and 4)**

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**Recommendation**

Staff recommends the City Commission approve a three (3)-year outdoor event agreement with two (2) one (1)-year renewal options, request for road closures (including some beyond 10:00 a.m. on the barrier island), request for amplified music exemption, and request for 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 fifty-fifth (55<sup>th</sup>) year in 2026. 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 June 5, 2026, Winterfest, Inc. submitted an outdoor event application for the 2026 Seminole Hard Rock Winterfest Boat Parade to be held on Saturday, December 12, 2026, from 5:30 p.m. – 11:59 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 three (3)-year term that commences on August 18, 2026, and expires on August 17, 2029. Future event dates are subject to City Manager approval and will be shared with the City Commission.

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

1. The Parade will take place on The New River and Intracoastal Waterways with event impacts limited to Saturday, December 12, 2026;
2. VIP and Media Viewing will be held at Laura Ward Plaza/Riverwalk from Icon Las Olas to the Riverside Hotel. The event impacts begin on Wednesday, December 9, 2026, and conclude on Monday, December 14, 2026; and
3. Public Viewing will be held at Las Olas Intracoastal Promenade Park with event impacts beginning on Wednesday, December 9, 2026, and concluding on Sunday, December 13, 2026.

The event organizer attended the July 8, 2026, outdoor events meeting to review event details with City staff, including Parks & Recreation, Transportation and Mobility, Police, and Fire. The meeting focused on operational logistics, interdepartmental coordination, and event requirements.

Memorandum No. 19-076 (Exhibit 1) requires that all streets blocked by outdoor events on the Barrier Island reopen by 10:00 a.m. and prohibits amplified music after 9:00 p.m. (Sunday–Thursday) or 10:00 p.m. (Friday–Saturday).

The event organizer is requesting the following special permissions, which require City Commission approval, for the December 2026 Event period:

- Road Closures for VIP Viewing Area
  - SE 4 Street between SE 6 Avenue and SE 8 Avenue
- Road Closures for Public Viewing Area:
  - Las Olas Circle, surrounding Las Olas Promenade Park. The organizer is requesting an exemption from the 10:00 a.m. reopening requirement to maintain the closure until 11:30 p.m. on Saturday, December 12, 2026.

| Request for Road Closures   |            |                |
|-----------------------------|------------|----------------|
| Date                        | Time Limit | Requested Time |
| Saturday, December 12, 2026 | 10:00 a.m. | 11:30 p.m.     |

- The organizer is requesting one additional hour of amplified music on Saturday, December 12, 2026, beyond the standard 10:00 p.m. Friday/Saturday curfew:

| Amplified Music Exemption   |            |                            |
|-----------------------------|------------|----------------------------|
| Date                        | Time Limit | Special Permission Request |
| Saturday, December 12, 2026 | 10:00 p.m. | 11:00 p.m.                 |

**Noise Control:** On June 30, 2025, the City Commission adopted Ordinance No. C-25-27 (Exhibit 2), amending Chapter 17 ("Noise Control") to prohibit plainly audible sound from a motorboat or other watercraft operated, docked, moored, or tied to land, docks, piers, or wharves in the City's public waterways; existing regulations separately prohibit non-amplified sound lasting one minute or longer in residential areas. Because the Boat Parade's music and sound will be heard beyond the event area, Winterfest is requesting an exemption from these restrictions under Section 17-7, 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. No representatives from the surrounding or affected civic associations were present at the meeting. 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 Fiscal Year (FY) 2026 operating budget in the account listed below.

| <b>Funds available as of July 7, 2026</b> |                                   |                                                           |                                   |                                    |               |
|-------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------|---------------|
| <b>ACCOUNT NUMBER</b>                     | <b>COST CENTER NAME (Program)</b> | <b>ACCOUNT / ACTIVITY NAME</b>                            | <b>AMENDED BUDGET (Character)</b> | <b>AMOUNT RECEIVED (Character)</b> | <b>AMOUNT</b> |
| 10-001-6025-574-347-200-PKR029            | Community Events                  | Charges for Service/ Nonsponsor Charges – Spec Event Fees | \$30,000                          | \$51,953.50                        | \$200         |
| <b>TOTAL AMOUNT ►</b>                     |                                   |                                                           |                                   |                                    | <b>\$200</b>  |

### **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 Plan specifically advancing:

- The Public Places Focus Area
- The Parks, Recreation & Open Spaces Element

- 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

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Prepared by: Brittany Henry, Senior Administrative Assistant, Parks and Recreation

Department Director: Carl Williams, Parks and Recreation