



Staff Report

City Council

Item No. {{section.number}}.{{item.number}}

Meeting Date: May 28, 2025

From: Ryan Hunt, Communications & Events Manager

Title: Special Use Permit – Battle in the Desert 2025

RECOMMENDATION:

To approve Special Use Permit for the 2025 Battle in the Desert to be held on Saturday, October 11, 2025, in the Cathedral City Community Amphitheater.

BACKGROUND:

Produced by Jesus Gonzalez, an officer with the Cathedral City Police Department, the "Coachella Valley Battle in the Desert" is an annual amateur boxing tournament geared towards those who work in the public safety profession. The boxing event has occurred over the last six plus years and attracted hundreds of attendees in recent years in the amphitheater. Mr. Gonzalez would like to conduct the boxing event again on Saturday, October 11, 2025, from 5:00 pm to 11:00 pm. The event is sanctioned by USA Boxing, and it encourages law enforcement officers and public safety personnel to compete in the sport of boxing. Some of the proceeds generated go to local charities. The event will take place at the Community Amphitheater in Downtown Cathedral City.

DISCUSSION:

The boxing event is open to the public with paid admission. Food, non-alcoholic and alcoholic beverages will be sold. Proceeds of the admission and concessions will benefit the organizer and the Cathedral City Police Explorer Program, which is designed to assist young adults through training, education and preparing them for a career in law enforcement. The organizer is asking the City Council to sponsor the Special Use Permit application fee of \$618, which he has already paid.

Suggested conditions of the SUP would be the organizer show proof of a City business license, secure event insurance naming the City as an additional insured, allow the City attorney to review and make edits to liability waivers that must be signed by all boxing participants, and the organizer must show proof of all health permits for food and beverages as well as permits from the Alcohol Beverage Commission for alcohol sales. The organizer plans to request a restroom trailer or offer portable toilets in front of the parking garage. The amphitheater is fenced for alcohol and crowd control.

Although the permit states the event running until 11:00 p.m., the likelihood of it going past 10:00 p.m. is slim based on the previous years' end times. The first bout typically starts after 6:00 pm. All sound is geared to face inward towards the boxing ring which dramatically reduces noise issues. If the organizer decides to use the City's sound and lighting equipment, then he would need to contract and pay the associated costs with the City's preferred sound, light and stage operator who has exclusive control over city equipment.

The organizer would begin setting up for the event on Friday, October 10 and tear down would occur around midnight on Saturday, October 11, 2025. All equipment must be removed by Sunday, October 12, 2025. The SUP application indicates attendance of 500 but the organizer has said he hopes to attract 1,000 attendees. Security will be handled by either CCPD officers, private security guards, or both.

FISCAL IMPACT:

Since this has become an annual city sponsored event, there is no rental fee charge to use the amphitheater. With it being in the amphitheater, much of the in-kind support provided by staff will be minimized with no need to use the city's metal crowd control barriers. The organizer has previously done a great job cleaning up after the event.

Last year, the Battle in the Desert donated about \$5,500-\$6,000 combined to several nonprofit organizations including the Cathedral City Police Explorer Program, USA Boxing, Adrian Cordova Foundation, and Diaz Brothers Training Camp.

FIVE-YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN:

This action supports Goal F-3: Promote additional community events and celebrations.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. 2025 Battle in the Desert Memo
2. 2025 Battle in the Desert SUP