

## February 2008 Meeting Minutes

### 7:00 PM

Steve Hiester called the meeting to order, and we proceeded per the agenda to include the Pledge of Allegiance, Roll Call, and Review and Approval of the agenda. Steve asked if there were any public comments that needed to be added to agenda, and Darrell Westover responded. He said that he would like to discuss the burn ban and had a few questions for Reagan Dunn.

Fire Chief Tim Lemon was then introduced to discuss the burn ban. He said that in July of 2010 residential fires will be gone, and State Legislation is dictating this. He said that concerned citizens should address this at the Legislative level, and his concern is that the Fire Department will become the policing agency. Fire Chief Lemon said that if you're not in agreement then concerned citizens need to show up for public comment, and write your elected officials. Chief Lemon said that he would be happy to send letters for the public.

Chief Lemon also said that Pierce and Snohomish Counties are also affected, and this is being initiated because of the Clear Air Act that was passed by the Legislature 10 years ago. He said that if it is up to us to ensure that the rural area remains exempt. He said that recreation and religious fires will be exempt, however, the fires need to be contained. Steve said that he will draft a letter in relationship to the burn ban. The more we send letters, the better off we will be.

### 7:10 PM

Major Dave Germani updated us on the panel of citizens that was organized last October to hear issues pertinent to the Sheriff's organization. He said the panel was organized to listen to citizen concerns on policing in our community. He said that his plan was to hold quarterly meetings to discuss problems and issues of public safety. He felt that having the panel listen to community concerns will build trust with the Sheriff's department. Gordon asked if the committee was meeting. Major Germani said no, because there have not been any issues. He said that if there was disagreement, then the subcommittee could make a recommendation to look into the citizen complaint further. Major Germani reminded us that the issue we heard last quarter was the issue about logs blocking the Cedar River. He did the research for the concerned citizen, and forwarded the issue to the appropriate department. We were reminded that Bev, Susan, Rob and Warren were members of the panel. Major Germani asked if there were any questions, and Dave brought up an issue in regards to officers not using proper procedures on the radio. Dave said that he had been listening to some of the calls on the scanner, and that they were in the gray area. Major Germani said new procedures and a reminder on protocol were just distributed to members of the Sheriff's department. Major Germani asked Dave to monitor the radio, and let him know if there are any other issues. Peter said that he will make a note to himself on making an announcement for Major Germani every three months in the Voice of the Valley.

### 7:25 PM

Councilmember Reagan Dunn presented Dick Bonewitz with an engraved gavel thanking him for his leadership as Chairperson of the Greater Maple Valley Area Council. Members of the GMVAC reiterated Mr. Dunn's appreciation, and thanked him for his years of service. Mr. Dunn then reminded us that every year at this time that he liked to stop by to give us his State of the County address. He talked about his accomplishment in terms of Transparency in Taxation. He said that in the past citizens did not know where their taxes were going. Because of this change we now know where our property taxes are going. He also spoke about how important it is to have a non-partisan Director of Elections who is involved in counting the ballots. He also spoke about the 22,000 acres that are being preserved around the Pratt River. He said this area is where the Middlefork intersects the Snoqualmie River. Mr. Dunn said that he met with Mr. Reichert, and that Mr. Reichert is writing the Legislation. Mr. Dunn feels that the Legislation will be passed. Mr. Dunn also spoke on DDES reform. He said that fees will be lower by ordinance based on the Tiger Mountain issue. (For example overcharging on permits) We are looking at a flat fee system.

Mr. Dunn said that he would like to see a member of the UAC provide input to DDES, and that three people are interested. One person is from Four Creeks, one person is from our council, and the other is from somewhere else. Members reminded Mr. Dunn that Gordon was very interested, and he wrote down Gordon's name. The purpose of this committee of citizens is to make recommendations that Mr. Dunn can look at when making decisions. He said that it is important for DDES to have rules, and one of the other changes made is that they have to notify property owners before they enter a taxpayer's property. Mr. Dunn reminded us that DDES is not a General Fund department, and that they operate off of fees. Mr. Dunn said that it's not the big developers that he is concerned with. It's the mom and pops, and how they are being treated. He feels this expert review panel is where we can look at reform. He said that in terms of Flood Control we will be assessed 10 cents per \$1000. Mr. Dunn said he would like to have seen 5 cents, but he voted for it. He also reminded us that he is the least likely member to support tax increases. Mr. Dunn then asked for questions.

Dave brought up that in the 30's and 40's the Cedar River was dredged, and the fish seemed to do just fine. Now we have silt build-up. He asked Mr. Dunn why we don't go back to the old technique. The fact that May Creek is filling up with silt was brought up, and that wetlands are being created from the silt build-up. Mr. Dunn said that he wants to be sensitive to killing

salmon. If we can preserve the salmon and dredge, he feels that this is something that maybe we should look into. Mr. Dunn said that he is willing to come out when we have the surface water management team out, and that we need to prioritize the streams. Mr. Dunn also reminded us that 8.5 million dollars were acquired by the county to assist Wonderland Estates. He also said that the Elections department was moved to Renton instead of Seattle, and this saved King County a lot of money.

Mr. Dunn also spoke about the Issaquah/Hobart road, and that he had secured funding to help the road. He said that very little of the 5 billion dollar budget goes into road improvements. Mr. Dunn said that before money is spent that a traffic study will be done, and then the capital funding will be procured. He also said that bus service will be increased on routes 143 and 149. Mr. Dunn said that there has been a lot of discussion on a Deputy of Rural Affairs that will work for Mr. Sims. Mr. Dunn is not sure that creating a department will be feasible, but there might be room for a second Ombudsman. He also said that after our group met with him on Ravensdale Park that a letter was sent by Mr. Phillips and Mr. Dunn asking the Parks Department to address the community concern. Mr. Dunn said that the Donut Hole has been frustrating for him, and that the Executive has not done a good job of working with the city. Mr. Dunn sent a letter to the Executive recommending that the City be involved. Mr. Dunn thinks that ultimately the Donut Hole will probably have houses in it. Mr. Dunn also said that the Comprehensive Plan is a big concern, and spoke to illegal dumping. Mr. Dunn also said that 88,000 people are represented by him, and he would like to see the UAC's expanded. Mr. Dunn then asked for questions.

Darrel Westover mentioned the 1943 dredging that was done on the surrounding rivers, and he feels this should continue. Mr. Dunn was asked about Traffic Concurrency. He said that the Master Builders are involved in this, and will be making suggestions to improve the model. Mr. Dunn was then asked if short platting will be allowed. Mr. Dunn said that he hopes so. He said that this has to pass the Review Panel, then the Council, and then the Executive.

Nancy Anderson had a question on the Four Corners area which is a City of Maple Valley issue, and Kevin addressed it.

King County Rural Permit Coordinator, Joelyn Higgins updated us on her area of responsibility, and said that she has had over 150 contacts. She reminded us that she is always willing to help, and can advocate for the rural land owner. She said that there have been some reduced fees for agricultural buildings, and that people in the agricultural zone will now pay \$70 an hour. This is reduced from \$140 an hour. Ms. Higgins said that there were five people on the Council that she has assisted, and she can be reached at 206-296-7159. She also recommended that King County residents access [www.kingcounty.gov/ddes](http://www.kingcounty.gov/ddes) for more information.

King County Code Enforcement Officer, Holly Sawin reviewed the responsibility of DDES Code Enforcement, and mentioned that she has been responsible for our area for about 3 years. She said that DDES is closing cases faster than in the past, and that they are 100% complaint driven. She said that once they receive a complaint that they send a letter. The citizen is asked to call, and they make arrangements to meet. She said that Code Enforcement also has door holders, which can be left so that citizens can call. Ms. Sawin said that the majority of cases she responds to are building related, and clearing and grading of the land. She also said that King County has made it easier for home based businesses to operate, however, most of these complaints are on noise and they don't regulate this. Ms. Sawin also commented that sometimes low income citizens can't afford to dump, and there needs to be a way to help. She also said that she writes junk vehicle permits to have cars taken away when the title is missing. She said that 15 forty foot containers were removed from one property, and that recycling is helping. She said that the metal recycling businesses will bring out containers.

Ms. Sawin also spoke about the code change that Mr. Dunn talked to us about earlier. She said that they are required to site the code in the letters that they send. This helps because citizens can go online, and research the codes. Ms. Sawin gave us the Hotline number, which is 206-296-6680. She said that Code Enforcement tries to honor confidentiality when a complaint is made, and that they black out the name. Warren commented about how he received help from Joelyn, and that he was referred to Holly. Warren was able to work with Holly so that the issue was resolved. Ms. Sawin said that citizens can appeal through the Hearing Examiners Office.

#### **8:40 PM**

Dick Bonewitz spoke to us about the Community-wide Community Forum adopted through Ordinance 15896, and is proposing two meetings in our area. He said that the purpose of this initiative is to enhance citizen participation, civic engagement, and citizen education in government. Mr. Bonewitz said that he is also working with Four Creeks to have a meeting at their location. Mr. Bonewitz said that the forum will have one topic and the first one is on Transportation, which is considered a top problem. He said that if the local group does a good job defining the issue, the information is funneled back and it makes sense, then the group would get a second topic. Mr. Bonewitz passed out the signup sheet. He echoed what Mr. Dunn said in regards to the 88,000 people that are in the rural area as compared to the 1.7 million in urban areas. He also said that Robert's Rule of order has a tendency, over time to cause the group to become ineffective. The Community wide forums are a way of getting important information to our elected officials.

**8:55 PM**

Steve Hiester gave us an update on the train show. Steve announced that the show was successful, and it's obviously supported by the community. Approximately 1000 people attended the show, and typically we realize a \$500-600 a year profit. Steve emphasized that this is an important community event, and recommended that we make a donation to local non-partisan groups. The Maple Valley Food Bank and the Community Center were suggested as options. We have \$1000 to give after this event, and Steve proposed giving \$500 to each group. Gordon proposed giving money to Vinemaple Place, Les suggested The Den, which is part of the community center, and the Tahoma High PTA was suggested by John. Peter made a recommendation that we have a committee that makes recommendations on who we contribute to. Eric made a comment that he would like to see some figures before a decision is made. Kevin told the council that we have \$5124.34 in our checking account, and a balance of \$11223.14 in our savings account. Kevin said that we have an annual reimbursable drawing account with a limit of \$10,000 with King County. Kevin said that the 2007 liability insurance bill was submitted, but it was rejected. It will be resubmitted, and drawn from the 2008 budget. The County was billed for the train show, and we were reimbursed. Train show profits have not been accounted for separately, and are in the General Fund. Kevin said that we draw five to seven thousand dollars annually when we don't run elections. Last year the expenditures exceeded the limit because of the election and the insurance expense. The train show brings in revenue, and we are reimbursed by King County for our expenses. Rob motioned that we put a committee together. Steve asked us to table it until next month. Steve also asked for a volunteer to take on the Train Show, and John volunteered to be the chair. Warren volunteered to be the co-chair.

**9:20 PM**

Peter Rimbos updated us on the at-large member discussion, and said that he received two email responses both questioning whether the individual should have voting rights. Bev commented that the reason she did not support an ad-hoc member having voting rights is because these individuals were not elected by the people. She also brought up the point that we should consider other individuals who are former councilmember's as there are quality individuals on our current council who do not want to be Chair. We could be excluding a quality person if we consider only former Chairpersons. A question on the Four Creeks UAC came up, and Kevin found the answer for us. They have 15 members. Eleven members are from the area, and four at-large members can be voted for. It was decided that we couldn't really compare ourselves to the Four Creeks UAC. Some members feel that the at-large member needs to come from former Council membership. Warren made the point that we have done this in the past, and he does not favor giving them voting capacity. Rob made the same point, and Steve feels this should be limited to past members. Steve will set up an executive committee meeting to write a job description.

**9:45 PM**

Peter Rimbos updated us on the Comprehensive Plan Draft Review, and comments were made about TDR's. Some members were for TDR's, some were against. It was decided that Flood Control will be tabled. Steve suggested we look at this again because it's not urgent. The discussion on the vacant Ravensdale position was also tabled.

**10:00 PM**

Meeting adjourned.