

February 2009 Meeting Minutes

7:00 PM

Call to order
Pledge of Allegiance
Roll call
Review and approve agenda
Approval of minutes

7:20 PM

Reagan Dunn introduced Bridgette Elliott, who is new to his staff. Bridgette will be working on land-use issues and other activities, and will be attending our meetings monthly. Bridgett replaced Viet Nguyen. Prior to our meeting, Mr. Dunn spent several hours touring the flood area in Maple Valley. He mentioned that the Cedar River normally flows at 650 cubic ft. per second, and peaked at 11,300 CFS. One of the concerns from the flood is that the City of Seattle let water go late at night when people did not know what was going on. Mr. Dunn is pushing for more adequate warning, as many citizens were not aware that their homes were in danger. The Cedar River Council meeting had more than 100 people show up, and they were not happy. Mr. Dunn is already working on forums, and one of the topics is the strategic placement of sandbags. They are currently up in the Renton Highlands, and Mr. Dunn feels they could be more strategically placed. Larry Phillips will be sponsoring a motion urging the City of Seattle to let people know what is going on, and they are currently working with the Army Corps of Engineers. One of the things that came up is that the City of Renton was required to do some dredging along Boeing Field, and they took the gravel and dumped it up at Landsburg. Fisheries is the agency that is requiring them to do this.

Mr. Dunn then spoke about the King County budget. The King County Council last year adopted a \$4.9 billion budget with a general fund of \$627.8 million. He said that King County raided our reserve funds in good economic times, and now we don't have the money in the budget for the future. We have raised taxes nine times since 2005, and raided reserves because of the structural budget gap. Salaries, benefits, and cost of living increases are costing a lot. The Council has proposed creating a counter cyclical reserve fund. King County made cuts to the Sheriff, Prosecuting Attorney, and the courts. When revenues increase over 4.2%, the excess will go into a fund, and this will help keep officers on the streets. It would take a super-majority, six votes, to access the funds. Mr. Dunn feels that this is the right thing to do. King County is supposed to have a balanced budget under the charter, but we don't.

Mr. Dunn also spoke to the Furlough Program. In 2009, King County will be shut down for 10 days, and next year, the county may be required to shut down for more days. An Unincorporated Utility Tax is something that is being looked at. Every one of us spends our money inside the cities so they are not supplementing us. The utility tax would be attached to water, garbage, and anything that we are taxed on. This is still being discussed. The Unincorporated Areas should think about what our position is, as we're outnumbered. Most of the social service programs look at the utility tax as a way to get additional funding. Mr. Dunn also believes that emergency services should be a priority in unincorporated King County.

Mr. Dunn feels that it is in our best interest for the GMVUAC to send a letter on the utility tax. Gordon made a comment that the four-day 10-hour work week never came up at the DDES review committee meetings, and there seems to be a lot of controversy on the shortened work week.

Mr. Dunn also said that the permit review for flooding is currently \$350, and he thinks it should be down to about \$150. He chairs the Executive Board on Flood Control, and they are looking at repairing levees. Mr. Dunn commented that the flood control committee is coming in over-budget, and they are looking at prioritizing which levees to repair. He will look at members of the GMVAC to be on the Flood Control Committee and the King County Fair Committee.

There is good news, as the King County Fair will remain and a task force has been put in place. The fair should be a celebration of rural character, but there were no rides last year because of the carbon footprint. He will be co-chairing with the City of Enumclaw.

Mr. Dunn commented on the Donut Hole and said that he made a recommendation that the TDR's Yarrow Bay needs to purchase from the Unincorporated Area. It may be zoned R8. He feels that the development rights should be purchased from properties in this area instead of from the county at large. TDRs can be sold at \$22,000 per acre.

Warren asked how long it takes to get a permit in rural King County. It should take four months or 120 days. DDES has said that if there is a question or an issue that the time frame for finishing stops. Warren has friends that have permits that are taking several years.

Mr. Dunn also said that the Rural Services initiative will create a Deputy Executive for Rural Affairs, and commented that if the legislature does not provide funding, the lifeboat will go away.

A temporary Executive to replace Mr. Sims will be appointed by the King County Council. Larry Phillips, Bob Ferguson, Kathy Lambert, and Dow Constantine are looking at running. Anyone in the county can be appointed. Of course, this person will have the inside track on the election for Council Executive. Mr. Dunn is running for reelection this November.

Long-time Council member Warren Iverson received a special recognition award from King County and Reagan Dunn for his long years of service and help in the local community. Warren also recognized his wife Barb.

8:00 PM

Public Comment on Topics Which are Not Listed on the Agenda

Patty Smith and Kim Emmons from the Farmers Market provided an update on the Maple Valley Farmers Market. They may hear something as early as tomorrow on their request for a grant of \$8,800. June 20 is still opening day, and Rock Creek Elementary is still written in stone. They passed out a vendor application to the Council and said that the City of Maple Valley gave them \$10,000 worth of funding. The vendor subcommittee will be meeting to identify those who might be interested in the Farmers Market. Daryl Westover is someone who has expressed an interest; he grows hydroponic tomatoes and other vegetables.

They thanked us for our support, and Patty said that there are many groups that applied for the grant. Patty and Kim would like to come back to our meeting next month, and the Council assured them that they are welcome.

8:30 PM

Council Business, Committee Assignments

Tahoma School District would like someone to sit on a board that looks at budget cuts. This person will have to commit to once or twice a month. Warren and Kevin volunteered to be co-representatives.

Dave: Megan Coppersmith and Dave will be sitting down to find out how our elections work. All candidates must have everything to the Council and King County by the end of September. There is a question as to whether or not we can have our survey as a part of the election. We talked about mass mailing the survey. Steve has looked into this before; it is \$1,200 for 5,000 mailings.

Peter: Nancy needs pictures for the website, and Peter reminded us to send them to him. The Oath of Office will be added to the bylaws upon completion of the process, and an affirmative vote. Today is the first reading of the change of bylaws. Peter will send out an email to the group as a reminder of the official wording so members can review it on their own time.

Peter commented that 12 official letters from the GMVUAC have been sent since Peter became the Corresponding Secretary; he will also have Nancy add a website link to the King County Unincorporated Area Newsletter.

The subcommittee will be meeting to review the King County Comprehensive Plan update, and reminded us that the meeting will be next Tuesday, February 10, at 6 PM at the Hobart Church.

Peter suggested a donation be made to the *Voice of the Valley* and \$100 was approved by the Council. Kevin will write a letter to be sent to Donna Hayes with our donation.

Gordon: Gordon will be writing a letter in regards to the utility tax, and the DDES committee he is a part of is not meeting at this time.

Gordon also introduced Cory Marcus, a lifelong resident of Ravensdale who is thinking about joining the Council.

Steve will be attending a meeting with Ron Sims and the other area presidents on February 9.

9:30 PM

Adjourn