December 2012

Area Council Committees
by Peter Rimbos, Corresponding Secretary

On Monday, December 3, the Greater Maple Valley Unincorporated Area Council (Area Council) held its regular monthly meeting. Major topics discussed were: (1) Community Service Area Grants; (2) Area Council Committees; and (3) Fire Levy.

The Area Council welcomed a new member Shawn Vita of the Ravensdale community area. There still remain several Area Council openings for those who live in the Tahoma School District outside of the City of Maple Valley.

Community Service Area Grants

The Area Council was awarded two grants through the new King County Community Service Area (CSA) Grant Program: (1) Citizen's Survey received $4,999 and (2) Train Show received $3,300. The Area Council's Election and Survey Committee will be preparing a Citizen's Survey that will be mailed to all Rural Area residents. Past Citizen's Survey results can be found here.

Committees

The Area Council established a new committee: Natural Resources/Parks to study regional parks, historic landmarks, natural habitats, water quality, wastewater, and solid waste. The new committee will be meeting soon to establish its Mission and Goals.

In January the King County Department of Natural Resources & Parks Water & Land Resources Division (DNRP/WLRD) will release its draft Flood Plan and SEPA Threshold Determination for public review and comment. The Area Council's Flood Control/Surface Water Management Committee will review the Plan Update and prepare comments for full Area Council review and submittal to WLRD. The FC/SWM Committee's purpose is to study King County flood control and surface water management issues and assess current status of policies and fees.

The following Area Council committees are active: Executive Committee, Election & Survey, Council By-Laws, Train Show, Flood Control/Surface Water Management, Transportation, Growth Management, and the new Natural Resources/Parks. Please see: http://greatermaplevalleyareacouncil.org/gmvaccommittees.html.

Fire Levy

Fire District #43 Citizens' Advisory Committee (two Area Council members serve on the committee) has been discussing an excess tax levy to be put on the ballot, possibly next April 3. Since the last levy was passed, the size of the Fire District in terms of manpower has decreased through attrition, cross-department transfers, and elimination.

Although the Fire District has enough funds to see them through 2013, without the levy funds the District will be forced to reduce staffing levels and, possibly, close a station. The Area Council discussed possible increased response times with only a two-man crew on the responding engines and no aid car available. Also, the potential for increased home insurance rates.

The Fire District #43 Board of Commissioners has approved a plan for a 3-yr levy needed because of declining assessed valuations in the District. A formal Information Package will be forthcoming from the Fire District. The Area Council has yet to take a position on the levy, but will do so early in 2013.

Next Area Council Meeting

Meetings are held the first Monday of each month. A Public Comment period at the beginning of each meeting provides citizens an opportunity to voice issues of concern to Area Council members and County and State government officials in attendance. Your Area Council's next monthly meeting will be Monday, January 7, 2013, from 7:00 - 9:30 PM at the Fire Station at 231st St & SR-169.

Your Area Council "works to keep the Rural Area rural" by serving as an all-volunteer, locally elected advisory body to King County on behalf of all rural unincorporated area residents living in the Tahoma School District.

*** NOTE: If you live in the Tahoma School District outside the City of Maple Valley, you are eligible to apply to become a member of the Area Council. Interested Rural Area citizens can send a brief letter of interest to GMVUAC, P.O. Box 101, Maple Valley, WA 98038 or an e-mail to gmvac_chair@hotmail.com. ***