

July 2013

New Members Welcomed

by Peter Rimbo, Corresponding Secretary

On Monday, June 3, the Area Council held its regular monthly meeting. Major topics discussed were 1) new members; 2) King County Cultural Development Authority; 3) King County budget; and 4) King County parks levy.

New Members

Rob Morris, Chair of the Area Council's Election and Citizens' Survey Committee, introduced newly elected members to fill open positions in all four of our Community Areas: Rhys Sterling, Lorraine Blacklock, and Craig Duckering in Hobart; Todd Mitchell in Francis; Sue Neuner, Charles Meis, and Anne Meis in River Heights; and Craig Duckering and Rhys Sterling, who were seated in Ravensdale to fill two of its three open positions.

Re-elected to the Area Council in the following Community Areas were: Warren Iverson in Hobart; Steve Heister and Peter Rimbo in Francis; and Susan Harvey in Ravensdale.

The Area Council thanks all unincorporated area citizens who participated in the Bi-Annual Election.

Cultural Development Authority

Executive Director Jim Kelly of King County's Cultural Development Authority described 4Culture's work, plans, and outreach in the local community. 4Culture is a tax-exempt public development authority (PDA) to provide public services more efficiently than an agency of government.

It supports citizens and groups who preserve our shared heritage and create arts and cultural opportunities including the Maple Valley Creative Arts Council and Maple Valley Youth Symphony.

Some of 4Culture's goals are to: (1) Advance and safeguard cultural and historic resources; (2) Develop, partner, fund and promote cultural projects and programs that aide in civic priorities and cultural development; and (3) Align with and stimulate regional efforts to foster and promote cultural tourism. [For more information on 4Culture, click here.](#)

King County Budget

Dwight Dively, Director of the King County Office of Performance, Strategy and Budget, provided details on the County budget, which is designed to meet the regional needs of King County. [For details, click here.](#)

Property taxes in the State of Washington are limited in several ways. There is a rate limit of \$5.90 per \$1,000 of assessed value (e.g., this August's Parks levy Lid is included, but this November's Emergency Medical Services levy renewal is not). Revenue growth is limited to 1% per year plus the value of any new construction (while a levy lid allows this to be exceeded, it must stay within the overall \$5.90 per \$1,000 limitation). School levies are considered excess and as such are not included in the \$5.90 per \$1,000 of assessed value limit.

Mr. Dively discussed prior concerns expressed by the Area Council and Fire District #43 that competing levies could adversely affect each other. As a result, King County has agreed to compensate fire districts should such complications arise.

Finally, Mr. Dively discussed the proposed 2013/2014 biennial budget for Road Services is \$189 million, which will greatly impact maintenance of the County's roads. In 2014, the Roads budget will be 40% less than it was in 2008. The Area Council has repeatedly expressed concerns over safety and maintenance of our overcrowded roads. Mr. Dively stated the State Legislature holds most of the cards here. Members of the Area Council expressed dismay that the just-completed extra session of the State Legislature failed to provide the County any tools to help alleviate these problems. The Area Council's Transportation Committee will continue to develop potential solutions in conjunction with the other Rural Area Unincorporated Area Councils.

King County Parks Levy

This August's Parks Levy replaces the 2007 Operations and Maintenance Levy and Open Space and Trails Levy, both of which expire this year. It is a six-year property tax levy lid lift to raise revenue for the maintenance and operations of King County's 200 parks, 175 miles of regional trails, and 26,000 acres of open space. Levy funds would also be used to expand the regional trails system. Following a detailed discussion, the Area Council voted to endorse the King County Parks Levy. For more information on the Parks Levy see: www.kingcounty.gov/recreation/parks/about/levy.aspx.

Next Area Council Meeting

The Area Council's next monthly meeting will be held Monday, August 5, from 7:00 - 9:00 PM at the Fire Station at 231st St & SR-169. 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 government officials in attendance.