



## Fireworks Prohibition

by Peter Rimbos, GMVUAC Corresponding Secretary

The Area Council held its regular monthly meeting virtually on *Monday, March 7*. Our Guest Speaker was John Taylor, Director of the King County Department of Local Services (DLS). Major topics discussed were: *Fireworks Prohibition*; *Area Council By-Law Amendments*; and *Town Hall Meetings*.

### Fireworks Prohibition

John Taylor, DLS Director, described the King County Council's new Fireworks Prohibition Ordinance for unincorporated areas. The Ordinance amends King County Code as follows:

- *Prohibits the retail sale and use of fireworks in unincorporated King County;*
- *Increases penalties for violations of fireworks regulations;*
- *Continues to allow for:*
  - o *Permitted public firework displays,*
  - o *Sale and discharge of trick and novelty devices,*
  - o *Fireworks for religious events, and,*
  - o *Other special needs when authorized by permit; and*
- *Clarifies and updates the permit requirements for permitted fireworks events.*

In passing the Ordinance the King County Council expressed concerns with safety and fire hazards. The Ordinance takes effect this July, but no citations will be issued in the first year (2022). Actual enforcement (citation and fine) will begin in 2023.

DLS looked at various enforcement mechanisms other than the Sheriff's Department, but couldn't find any that would suffice. Rather, a complaint system will be implemented, similar to code enforcement complaints.

### Area Council By-Law Amendments

The Area Council adopted the following amendments to its *By-Laws*:

1. Revised the processes for adding/welcoming *new members* and formally eliminated *member elections*.
2. Defined the position of "*Regional Coordinator*" who works with other King County Rural Area UACs, Associations, and Organizations to provide a wide-ranging voice for Rural Area concerns using a Joint Planning perspective. [*Attachment #2—List of Committees and Focal Points*]
3. Codified a set of *Guiding Principles* under which Area Council comments, positions, and communications are officially conveyed as a group or by individual members. [*Attachment #3—Guiding Principles*]

Area Council *By-Laws* including Attachments #1, #2, and #3 can be found at: [www.gmvuac.org](http://www.gmvuac.org). On the Home page click the "*About Us*" tab, then click on *By-Laws*.

### Town Hall Meeting

The Area Council falls within the territory of the Greater Maple Valley/Cedar River (GMV/CR) Community Service Area (CSA): <https://kingcounty.gov/depts/local-services/programs/community-service-areas.aspx>.

King County will be holding a GMV/CR CSA Town Hall Meeting on Monday, March 21, 6 - 8:30 PM via Zoom: [Join via Zoom](#) Meeting ID: 892 9570 8409 | Passcode: **TOWNhall22** (case sensitive); Dial in: 253-215-8782 | Meeting ID: 892 9570 8409 | Passcode: 4700186961.

One of the purposes of the CSA Town Hall Meetings is to help King County prioritize each Community's Needs List (CNL) by April, which will inform department biennial budgets. The Area Council decided to submit its seven *Guiding Principles*: <http://gmvuac.org/guiding-principles/> as its initial CNL.

### **Next Area Council Meeting**

The next Area Council monthly meeting will be held Monday, April 4. ***This meeting will be the first in-person Area Council meeting in 2 years.*** It will be held at the Hobart Church in the main area, so there will be plenty of room. We are exploring how to accommodate a *hybrid* where people could attend either in-person or virtually via Zoom.

All regular monthly meetings are held on the *first* Monday of the month (except for Holidays, when they are held on the *second* Monday), from 7 - 9:30 PM. Meeting announcements are published in the *Voice of the Valley*, the Area Council's website ([www.gmvuac.org](http://www.gmvuac.org)) and local *NextDoor* platforms. You can also find us on *Facebook*. Each meeting begins with an open Public Comment period.

### **Area Council Membership**

Your Area Council serves as an all-volunteer, locally recognized advisory body to King County on behalf of all rural unincorporated area residents living in the Tahoma School District (i.e., minus the City of Maple Valley). The Area Council's *Vision Statement* is:

*"Our community's Rural Character will be supported by facilitating strong local ties and communication between the public, organizations, and government; promoting locally owned businesses and supporting quality education; protecting the environment, and maintaining landowners' rights and responsibilities; promoting controlled and well-planned growth with appropriate infrastructure; ensuring proper representation for rural interests and needs; and supporting the health and safety and the privacy of our vibrant community."*

The twelve-seat Area Council currently has three open seats.

If you have an interest in joining please send an e-mail to: [info@gmvuac.org](mailto:info@gmvuac.org) or attend a monthly meeting and express your interest. To join you need to live *within* the Tahoma School District.

Anyone—even those who do not live *within* the Tahoma School District—are eligible to serve on any Area Council committee: Environment, Growth Management, Transportation, Ad Hoc Economic, Public Relations, or Train Show.

The Area Council welcomes your participation. For information on each of these committees please see the Area Council's web site: [www.gmvuac.org](http://www.gmvuac.org) and use the drop-down menu under *Committees*. Again, if you have an interest in joining any Area Council committees, please send an e-mail to: [info@gmvuac.org](mailto:info@gmvuac.org). Thank you.