

Civic Engagement Group Meeting Minutes—April 28, 2017

The meeting was opened by Lorraine Sakata at 4:00 p.m.

Events of the Past Two Weeks

March for Science: Sally Soest shared some thoughts about the “March for Science” and other marches she has participated in during the past few weeks. The March for Science was held on April 22nd (Earth Day), starting at Cal Anderson Park and ending at Seattle Center. She talked about the energizing effect of being one of several thousand demonstrators surrounding the Seattle Center International Fountain and the cathartic effect of being with a large number of other like-minded individuals. She also noted that this is one way to keep the attention of elected officials—we haven’t gone away.

Sally also invited residents to join her and other friends in the “Peoples Climate March” on Saturday, April 29th, at 9:30 a.m. Those interested in participating will meet in the 5th floor lobby to walk to Occidental Park and join the march. (A separate email was sent out on Friday, April 28th, regarding this event.)

Healing the Intellectual Divide: Mary Jane Francis talked about watching the Town Hall presentation. She noted that there were five women who had searched for ways to communicate with those with whom they disagreed. The core project was to bring together residents of King County, Washington (urban, liberal, blue, democratic, Clinton supporters) and Sherman County, Oregon (rural, conservative, red, republican, Trump supporters).

MJ noted her principal “takeaway” was the need to remember to begin communication with curious, rather than loaded “gotcha” questions. She discussed Bo Zhang’s analogy of *air*, *rock*, and *water* as three ways of communication. *Air* seeks calm, serenity, and not necessarily engagement, but rather just awareness. *Rock* is an effort to respond, but maintaining a strong sense of personal dignity. *Water*, on the other hand, is the basis for dialogue.

She also noted the panelists’ commitments to personal face-to-face discussion, rather than email, Twitter, or other electronic means of communication. Each of the five women felt that the key to communication and understanding was in hearing each other’s stories.

If you wish to view the event online, it can be found at the following URL:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vNzDFrBSIuM>

Daily Tasks: Hollis Williams encouraged everyone to do something each day to participate in the process of communicating with our elected officials (e.g., place a phone call, mail a postcard, etc.); try to do something each day.

Coming Events

May 1, 1:30 p.m., King County Cultural Support, King County Courthouse Room 1001:

Joan Conlon reported that she, Alice Mailloux, Sally Parks, and Else Cobb have formed a committee to encourage support of the arts. In addition to attempting to retain the National Endowment for the Arts, they are also concerned with local funding.

Members of the committee learned that the ordinance for the “Access for All” Cultural Support initiative will be considered by the Committee of the Whole in the King County Council Chambers at 1:30 p.m. on Monday, May 1st. If approved, the County will put a sales tax increase on the ballot for the August 1st election. Passage of this ordinance, and approval by the voters in August, will increase the sales tax by 1/10th of a percent (one cent per ten dollars).

The resulting revenues of approximately \$60 million per year would be dedicated to supporting cultural (arts, science) organizations and activities. Funds would be distributed by 4Culture, the county’s arts agency that distributes grants to school districts and arts and sciences organizations.

Joan invited residents to join her and others at 12:45 p.m. on Monday, May 1st, to attend the hearing in support of the ordinance. (A separate notice was distributed on April 29, 2017 regarding this matter.)

May 4, 7:00 p.m., Portraits of Homelessness, Seattle Public Library Microsoft Auditorium:

Mary Jane Francis brought to our attention that a panel of *Seattle Times* journalists, moderated by KUOW’s Ross Reynolds, will discuss the new exhibit of photographs of Seattle residents who reside in various encampments in our city. Panelists include Tyrone Beason, project writer; Erika Schultz, project photographer; Daniel Beekman, *Seattle Times* city government and local politics staff reporter; and Vernal Coleman, *Seattle Times* staff reporter.

The event begins at 7:00 p.m. but doors open at 6:30 p.m., and the venue is not large. Those interested in going as a group are encouraged to meet at the 8th Avenue lobby on the first floor for a 6:15 p.m. departure walking to the Library.

May 11, 1:30 p.m., Congressman Adam Smith, Mount Baker Room:

Alice Mailloux advised that our 9th District Congressman, Adam Smith, will join us for a conversation regarding the state of the nation and events in the Capitol. The Congressman will make a short statement and then respond to questions. You are encouraged to be seated by 1:20 p.m. so that we can begin precisely on time.

May 12, 2:30 p.m., Professor Noam Planko – “Israel at 69,” Mount Baker Room:

David O’Hara announced that the Peace and Justice Committee is bringing Professor Planko to Skyline for a lecture/discussion entitled “Israel at 69: The Future of Zionism.” Professor Planko is the Samuel Stroum Chair of Jewish Studies in the Jackson School of International Studies. He also directs the Stroum Center for Jewish Studies. He received his Ph.D. in Religious Studies/Judaic Studies from Yale University in 2004.

May 22, 6:30 p.m., Compass Housing Shelter at 1st Presbyterian Church:

Alice Wesley advised that there will be a public meeting at 1st Presbyterian Church to discuss the plan to open a 24-hour shelter for homeless men, women, and couples at the church. The church, Compass Housing, and representatives of the City of Seattle will explain the shelter, how it is a new model, and take questions.

Alice and others are preparing draft letters of support, which will be left in residents' Skyboxes for their use. Residents may use their own language to express support for the project. All interested are also encouraged to join us at the meeting to show neighborhood support for the project. (There will be more on this subject as we get closer to the event.)

May 22, 7:00 pm., Ilan Pappé – “Prospects for Peace in Israel-Palestine,” Town Hall:

Cabby Tennis brought to our attention that Ilan Pappé, an internationally recognized Israeli historian and educator, will appear at Town Hall to discuss prospects for peace in Israel. This event is co-sponsored by the Episcopal Archdiocese of Olympia and Town Hall and will not be streamed. Tickets are \$10.00 and can be purchased through Brown Paper Tickets via the URL <https://townhallseattle.org/event/ilan-pappe/> and then click on “Buy Tickets.”

June 12, 3:00 p.m., Democracy Vouchers for City Elections, Mount Baker Room:

John Harkins will introduce staff from the City of Seattle's Ethics and Elections Democracy Voucher Program, who will explain what the vouchers are, how they can be used to support candidates for city offices, and how to get replacements if you lost or tossed your vouchers.

We also hope to have the capacity to do voter registration on site at this event.

Videotaping: Linda Wolf suggested that we video-record this event. Carmen Tieu has advised that Lifestyle has taping equipment and she, Jensen, or eventually, Justin, are available to train residents in its use. We will need a signed consent form from any speakers we wish to record, and we cannot record residents during talks.

June 29, 3:00 p.m., King County Executive Dow Constantine, Mount Baker Room:

On behalf of Katherine Graubard, Jim Sanders reported that King County Executive Dow Constantine will join us to discuss the role of County government and the impact of federal actions on county operations.

August Date and Time TBD: Kate Starbird to speak on “Fake News,” Mount Baker Room:

We have invited Kate Starbird to speak to Skyline residents regarding fake news. Professor Starbird is on the faculty of the University of Washington's Human Centered Design and Engineering Department and is a recognized expert in this field. We will confirm a date for her appearance sometime in June.

CEG Page on the 725 Skyline Blog:

Jim Tanner gave a brief description of how CEG might use Jim deMaine's Skyline725 blog to enable communications. We would create a separate page on the blog (website) as a home for the CEG interest group. The first posting would be the current list of useful websites that Jim Sanders distributed earlier in a Word document.

Some people raised the following concerns about blog technology:

- How do we get people to get access to the blog?
Anyone with a computer and a web browser can access the blog website.
- How do we educate people on blog use?
Jim Tanner will write some simple procedures to distribute to CEG. One possible obstacle is that CEG is not an SRA-sponsored group, and we cannot use the usual channels of communications.

- Can anyone post articles to the blog?
The blog is moderated, which means that only certain authorized individuals can post information to the blog.

Jim Tanner will take the lead on using the 725 Skyline blog for CEG communication. Some of the steps will be:

- Talk to Jim deMaine about adding CEG to the current blog.
- Create a basic plan for CEG's use of the blog.
- Create some simple procedures and instructions for preparing information for the blog and how to access it.

Other Things

Voter Registration Packets: Diana Caplow advised that we expect to have voter change of registration and possibly voter registration forms at the Democracy Voucher session on June 12th. She also suggested that we explore the possibility of including voter registration materials in the Skyline welcome packet for new residents. We will explore this with the committee.

Candidate Forums Discussion: The original question was whether to do a pre-primary candidate forum. The consensus of the assembled body was that the complication of a ten-candidate field made a pre-primary forum impractical. We will consider doing candidate forums in the fall for the 8th City Council position (the city-wide position), as well as other races and ballot issues. (Stay tuned.)

Meeting Schedule: We discussed the possibility of reducing our meeting schedule during the summer to once each month, rather than twice a month, but did not reach a consensus. We will discuss this again at the next meeting.

Closing Comment—Positive, not Negative: Frank Conlon commented at the end of the meeting that we need to find proactive, positive focal points, not just opposition to current events.

The meeting adjourned at 4:59 p.m.

Thanks to Mary Ann Hagan, Jim Tanner, Kathe Dobbs, and Jane Sanders for taking notes, and to Lilyan Snow and Wendy Schoen for editing, proofing and formatting this transmittal.

Next Meeting—Friday, May 12, 4:00 p.m., Mt. Baker Room