

## **Civic Engagement Meeting Minutes—May 12, 2017**

Lorraine Sakata, facilitator, called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m., May 12, 2017. Approximately 50 residents and guests were in attendance.

### **Events of the Past Two Weeks**

**Access for All – County Council Hearing:** Joan Conlon reported on the May 1, 2017 County Council Meeting of the Whole. She and eight other Skyline residents attended the meeting to support passage of an ordinance to place the Access for All Measure on the August 1<sup>st</sup> ballot. The measure, if adopted by the voters, will establish an additional 1/10<sup>th</sup> of one percent sales tax throughout King County to support cultural activities and organizations. Joan and a few of the attendees were able to sit in the council chambers. Some other residents were in an overflow area and watched the hearing on closed-circuit television.

The hearing was lengthy and interrupted by an extended recess. The measure did pass by a vote of seven to two, and will be on the August 1<sup>st</sup> ballot. Councilmembers David Upthegrove and Larry Gossett voted against the measure.

Joan also expressed interest in learning more about the intricacies of the legislative process and asked if residents would be interested in having our County Councilmember Joe McDermott speak here at Skyline on this issue. There was general interest expressed.

**Portraits of Homelessness:** Berta Beveridge and Suzanne Hittman attended the *Seattle Times* presentation of the Portraits of Homelessness exhibit (related article printed in the *Seattle Times*’ *Pacific NW Magazine*’s Sunday, May 7<sup>th</sup>, edition). The exhibit and discussion by the photographer and *Seattle Times* writers were not focused on solutions to the problem of homelessness, but rather was an effort to show who these individuals are through photographs and commentary in their own words.

Suzanne emphasized the importance of keeping the issue in front of the political structure of the City and County. She pointed out that everyone in the various neighborhoods agreed that something should be done to address the homeless situation, but not in their neighborhood (NIMBY!). She also mentioned some new descriptive terms for members of our community who lack permanent shelter. These include “unsheltered” or “unhoused,” rather than “homeless.”

Finally, Suzanne noted that this event and the preceding reception allowed attendees to meet and talk with some of those who appeared in the photos. She also mentioned that the *Seattle Times* will be doing an additional contrasting report on high-end homes located within a mile of homeless shelters and camps.

Rhoda McLauchlan also brought to our attention that the Department of Social and Health Services is initiating efforts to address the housing needs of mentally ill residents who are released to local areas after a period of treatment.

**Visit by Adam Smith:** Alice Mailloux spoke briefly about Congressman Adam Smith’s visit to Skyline on May 11<sup>th</sup>. The event was well attended, with approximately 95 residents present. She

spoke with the Congressman after the event and told us that he was pleased both with the turnout and the quality of the questions. Congressman Smith gave a brief overview of the state of the nation and the Congress. He talked about his role as the ranking member of the House Armed Services Committee and his concerns regarding the partisan nature of politics today.

In response to a question from David O'Hara, Congressman Smith advised that members of the House are prohibited by ethics rules from responding to the concerns of citizens from outside their districts. He went on to suggest that one method of influencing members in other districts was through national advocacy organizations that can encourage residents residing in those districts to express concerns to their representatives. Frank Conlon suggested that we could individually take similar action by encouraging friends, families, and colleagues to approach their representatives.

### **Other Items**

**Democratic Party Organization:** Jesse Weinstein, Acting Precinct Committee Officer for the precinct that includes Skyline and the surrounding nine-block area, spoke to us about the role of party organizations and his role as the PCO for this precinct. He told us that the precinct includes approximately 600 registered voters, and that about half of them live here at Skyline. He described the political party structure, starting with his role as the representative of precinct representatives to the Legislative District Party Organization. In urban areas the next significant level of organization is the County Party Organization, followed by the State organization. In rural areas, the order is somewhat reversed, with the County organization serving as the initial next level, followed by the legislative district, which may include several counties.

Jesse encouraged residents interested in Democratic Party activities to contact him directly, and also invited anyone wishing to help to contact voters directly by telephone. (The normal practice of contacting voters is to go door-to-door to meet residents. However, this approach is prevented by the nature of apartment building security, so the only available option is to contact people by telephone.) Those interested in speaking with Jesse can reach him by telephone at (213) 706-4705 (texting preferred) or by email at [jesse@wefu.org](mailto:jesse@wefu.org).

*Note:* Lorraine Sakata did note that we have also invited the Republican Party representative to meet with us, but there is no current Republican PCO for this precinct. The Republican Legislative District Chair is attempting to find another PCO to join us at a later date.

**CEG Presence on the 725 Blog:** At our last meeting, Jim Tanner told us of the possibility of establishing a CEG page on Jim deMaine's *725 Blog*. At this meeting he showed us what has been set up and how it works. He noted that there are various methods of communication we can and will continue to use for CEG business, including email and hard-copy distribution of notes, agenda, and event activities.

Minutes, agenda, a calendar of events, and other information will be posted to the blog, along with a calendar of events brought to the attention of the group. Email and hardcopy distribution will continue to be used for announcements, particularly those of an urgent nature. The *725 Blog* is a moderated site. Individuals wishing to post information should email the information to the current *725 Blog* moderator—Jim Tanner. Individuals wishing to comment on a post should reply to the post using the form at the bottom of the post. A moderator, Jim Tanner

in this case, reviews the material and either approves, holds, or disapproves it. If approved, the information, accompanied by the author's name (but not email), will appear on the CEG page. Anyone wishing to receive notices of new information posted to the blog can subscribe. Those subscribers are notified via email any time a new post appears on the blog. You can also unsubscribe at any time.

During the discussion, Jim was clear that this is a work in progress, and we are figuring it out as we go. Kathe Dobbs mentioned that it is difficult to print material posted on the blog. Lilyan Snow advised that she will continue to print hard copies of CEG materials for those who don't use email. Jim Sanders asked if residents wish to continue to get emailed agenda and minutes. The general response was yes.

***On Tyranny, by Timothy Snyder:*** Kendall Baker discussed the book, *On Tyranny: Twenty Lessons from the Twentieth Century*, which he described as a political tract in the vein of Thomas Paine's *Common Sense*. Kendall was strongly impressed with the author's commentary on the rise of totalitarian movements in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century and lessons we might learn from those events. He characterized these books as worthwhile reads and timely and has given a number of them away as gifts to his extended family.

Kendall purchased ten extra copies of the book and has them available for resale at \$7.00 per copy. Those wishing to purchase the book in volume can also obtain them from Amazon.com as well as other bookstores. (*Note:* This book is also available at the Elliott Bay Book Company for \$8.00.)

### **Coming Events**

**Thursday, May 18, 7:00 p.m. – ACLU Presentation – The Fight for Our Lives:** Anthony D. Romero, National Executive Director of the American Civil Liberties Union, will be speaking at the Moore Theater on Thursday, May 18<sup>th</sup>, at 7:00 p.m. Mr. Romero has served as Executive Director of the ACLU since August of 2001. He will discuss how the ACLU is responding to the call and fighting for equality, freedom, justice, and our democracy.

Doors open at 6:00 p.m., and the event will begin at 7:00 p.m. There is a \$5.00 per person charge for admission. Anyone wishing to purchase tickets in advance can do so online at <https://action.aclu.org/romero-seattle>.

Sally Soest would like to invite interested residents to join her at 6:15 p.m. at the 8th Avenue entrance to walk to the event. Please contact her if you have questions or need additional information.

**Monday, May 22, 6:30 p.m. – Compass at First Presbyterian:** Compass Housing, First Presbyterian Church, and the City of Seattle invite you to attend a meeting on the new enhanced shelter to be located at the First Presbyterian Church.

Alice Wesley, Sally Parks, Suzanne Hittman, and Lea Schacht have formed a committee to support the shelter. The committee is requesting your help in the following efforts:

1. Prepare letters of support to deliver to the meeting. (If you would like a copy of the notice with sample letters, please contact Jim at [jimsanders1947@gmail.com](mailto:jimsanders1947@gmail.com).) Please put any completed and signed support letters in Alice Wesley's Skybox (#103) or Sally Parks' Skybox (#2102) by noon on Monday, May 22<sup>nd</sup>.
2. You are invited to join the group at the meeting. If you are available and would like to go, please meet the group at 6:15 p.m. at the 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue 1<sup>st</sup> floor exit to walk to the church. Fancy blue signs will be available for the first fifteen or so residents attending the meeting.

**Monday, May 22, 7:00 p.m. – Ilan Pappé: “Prospects for Peace in Palestine,” Town Hall:** Cabby Tennis was unable to attend the meeting, but Jim Sanders offered a reminder that Dr. Ilan Pappé will speak at Town Hall on Monday May 22<sup>nd</sup>. Additional information is available at <https://townhallseattle.org/event/ilan-pappe/>.

**Monday, June 12, 3:00 p.m. – Democracy Voucher Program, Mount Baker Room:** Please join us in the Mount Baker Room for a presentation by Wayne Bennett, Executive Director of the Seattle Ethics and Elections Commission, on the Democracy Voucher Program. Mr. Bennett will cover the purpose of the program, how it works, which candidates are eligible to receive vouchers, and how to secure replacement vouchers if you have misplaced the vouchers you should have received in January of this year. Skyline residents will also be available to help new residents register to vote, or to change registration if they are already a Washington State voter but need to change their address.

**Thursday, June 29, 3:00 p.m. – King County Executive Dow Constantine, Mount Baker Room:** Please join King County Executive Dow Constantine for a discussion of the role of County government and its challenges.

**Tuesday, July 18, 2:00 p.m. – Access for All – Discussion of the Ballot Measure for Cultural Events and Organization Support, Mount Baker Room:** We have invited the proponents of the Access for All initiative to join us for a discussion of the proposed increased sales tax for cultural affairs support, which will be on the August 1<sup>st</sup> ballot. (*Note:* We will also invite the opponents, if an organized opposition group materializes.)

**Through June 3: ARTRUMPS – Resistance in Action – Bonfire Gallery, 603 South Main Street:** This exhibit of art in response to the new administration is available for viewing Wednesday through Saturday from noon to 5:00 p.m. (For further information, see the *Real Change* article at <http://www.realchangenews.org/2017/05/10/opposition-art-bonfire-gallery-show-features-anti-trump-art>.)

**Other Events in Process:** a visit by United States Senator Maria Cantwell (possibly in July), and a talk by University of Washington Professor Kate Starbird on “Fake News” in August.

**Voter Registration Forms:** Diana Caplow has voter registration forms. If you need to register to vote, or need to change your registration, please contact her. You must register by July 3<sup>rd</sup> if registering online, or by July 24<sup>th</sup> at King County Records and Elections, to be eligible to vote in the August 1<sup>st</sup> primary.

The meeting adjourned at 4:50 p.m.

Thanks to our note takers Mary Ann Hagan, Jim Tanner, and Kathe Dobbs; to Lorraine Sakata for facilitating the meeting; to Wendy Schoen, our editor, and to all those who participated.

**Next Meeting—May 26, Mount Baker Room, 4:00 p.m.**