

## CEG Meeting Minutes—August 25, 2017

Tom Gibbs, serving as facilitator for this session, opened the meeting at 4:00 p.m.

### COMMENTS ON PAST TWO WEEKS

**Congressman Adam Smith:** August 12<sup>th</sup> Diane Stevens and Patricia Kaiser attended Congressman Adam Smith’s Town Hall at Foster High School in Tukwila on August 12<sup>th</sup> and jointly provided the following comments:

Diane and Patricia estimated the crowd at between 150 and 200 people. Both commented on the design and construction of the High School Performing Arts Center.

Congressman Smith opened the session with a short commentary on various issues, including his opposition to any preemptive strike against North Korea. He spoke about the need for comprehensive immigration reform, including a path to citizenship for undocumented residents who have been living and working in the United States. On health care, he has introduced H.R. 676, which would provide “National Improved Medicare for All.” Premiums and out-of-pocket expenses would be replaced with progressive income and wealth taxes ranging from 3 to 6 percent.

Congressman Smith also talked about the inability of wage earners to improve their financial situation. He spoke about the need to restore adequate middle-class wages and to supervise corporations to ensure that they become or remain involved in their communities.

Following his opening comments, the Congressman took 30 to 40 questions from the audience. Although scheduled to be available from 10:00 to 11:00 a.m., he stayed until approximately 12:30 p.m. Questions and comments included:

Climate Change: The U.S. needs to recommit to the Paris Accords. Alternative energy sources are too developed to turn back. Fifty percent of our energy now comes from renewable sources. (*Note:* This figure was questioned by members of the CEG audience, and it may be that it referred to Washington State or some other subset of the United States.)

Public Education: It’s better than portrayed in the press, but needs improvement. Community involvement is a key need.

Israeli-Palestinian Relations: The U.S. needs to recognize the rights of Palestinians, but should not boycott Israel. A two-state solution is necessary for Israeli survival.

Supreme Court: The Court should repeal the Citizens United Decision. Corporations are not people and money is not speech.

Russian Hacking of Elections: There is a need to continue the investigations. Smith supports the efforts of Robert Muller.

Citizenship: Two members of the audience stated that they served in the U.S. military with a promise of citizenship, which they did not obtain. Smith asked them to meet with his staff to see what they could do.

Port and Pollution: It was stated that the Port (notably SeaTac) expansion hurts our air quality.

Congressman Smith also voiced his opposition to reductions in firearm regulations and privatizing prisons. In response to a comment about mudslinging in campaigns, he voiced support for a six-week limitation on election cycles. Finally, he expressed his concern that the world is moving away from democratic principles to more totalitarian rule.

Frank Conlon offered a comment about Foster High School, saying that while it is a great structure, the school has incredible challenges with a student population that speaks thirty to forty different languages. Joan Horner pointed out that Tukwila has a strong property tax base due to industrial development.

**Visit by Councilmember Joe McDermott**: Tom Gibbs asked for comments or questions regarding Councilmember McDermott’s visit to Skyline on August 18<sup>th</sup>. There were none at that time, and it appeared that almost everyone present at the meeting had attended Councilmember McDermott’s talk.

Toward the end of the meeting, Suzanne Hittman asked about the status of the Safe Injection Sites Action. Jim Sanders answered that it appears the matter is on hold. *Note*: After the CEG meeting, a review of the County Council records indicates that Ordinance 2017-0341 (proposed by initiative), which would prohibit the expenditure of County funds for safe injection sites, was referred to the Health and Human Services Committee until the results of Initiative 27 are certified. The Initiative will not be on the ballot in November, and a citizens group has filed suit to prevent the Initiative from going forward, based on the argument that Health Department actions are not subject to restriction by a vote of the people.

## COMING EVENTS

### **Wednesday, Sept. 13, 6:30 p.m.      Fact vs. Fake – Fighting Back Against Fake News**

The *Seattle Times* will host a panel discussion at Kane Hall (University of Washington) on “Fact vs. Fake—Fighting back against Fake News” at 6:30 p.m. on September 13<sup>th</sup>. The event will be available for streaming, and the Mount Baker Room is available and has been booked for viewing.

*Post-Meeting Update*: The event will be streamed to the Mount Baker Room. We have a volunteer to handle the electronics. The event at Kane Hall is fully

subscribed, but those wishing to attend can sign up to be on a waiting list at <https://livewire.seattletimes.com>.

**Thursday, Sept. 28, 6:30 – 8:00 p.m.      Mayoral Forum on Homelessness – St. James Cathedral**

Shirley Adler reminded us that the Saint James Cathedral Housing Advocacy Committee is sponsoring a Mayoral Forum in the Cathedral Hall, focused on housing and homelessness. Those who wish to walk to the meeting (entrance on the east side of the Cathedral) are invited to join Shirley at the 5<sup>th</sup> floor Skyline lobby at 6:15 p.m. that evening.

**Tuesday, Oct. 3, 4:00 – 5:00 p.m.      Attorney General Robert Ferguson’s Visit to Skyline**

Attorney General Robert Ferguson will join us for a discussion of state issues and legal matters. If you have questions or issues you would like the Attorney General to address, please send them to Peg Haggerty via email at [peghaggerty@gmail.com](mailto:peghaggerty@gmail.com) or call her at (206) 935-5277.

**Thursday, Oct. 5, 7:00 – 9:00 p.m.      League of Women Voters Mayoral and City Council Forum**

Diana Caplow reported that The League of Women Voters of Seattle and King County is sponsoring a Mayoral and City Council Forum on October 5<sup>th</sup> at the Seattle First Baptist Church, 1111 Harvard Avenue, Seattle, WA 98122.

**Skyline Candidate Forums: Each Monday and one Tuesday in October**

We have received confirmations from all of our invitees that they will participate in our Skyline Candidate Forums (see schedule below). This is your chance to see the candidates without having to leave the building. As in the past, these will be moderated forums, using questions submitted by Skyline residents in advance of the event.

**FORUM SCHEDULE**

Monday, Oct. 2, 3:00 p.m.	City Council Position 8:	Jon Grant and Theresa Mosqueda
Monday, Oct. 9, 3:00 p.m.	Port Comm. Position 1:	Ryan Calkins and John Creighton
Tuesday, Oct. 10, 7:30 p.m.	City Council Position 9:	Lorena Gonzalez and Pat Murakami
Monday, Oct. 16, 3:00 p.m.	Port Comm. Position 4:	Preeti Shridhar and Peter Steinbrueck
Monday, Oct. 23, 3:00 p.m.	Mayor of Seattle:	Jenny Durkan and Cary Moon

**WE NEED YOUR QUESTIONS FOR THESE FORUMS FOR MAYOR, CITY COUNCIL, AND PORT COMMISSION. SOONER IS BETTER THAN LATER!**

Please send questions to Jim Sanders at [jimsanders1947@gmail.com](mailto:jimsanders1947@gmail.com), or leave a hard copy in Skybox 202.

Thanks to all of those who have agreed to help at this series of forums.

## **OTHER ISSUES**

### **Initiative 940 – Law Enforcement Training Signature Gathering**

Diana Caplow brought to our attention that the League of Women Voters of Washington is sponsoring Initiative 940, which would, if enacted, require that all law enforcement officers receive forty hours (as opposed to eight hours in some jurisdictions) of de-escalation training and training in working with mentally ill citizens they encounter in the course of their duties. The Initiative would also require law enforcement officers to render first aid to those in need. Finally, the Washington State Criminal Justice Training Commission, in concert with interested stakeholders, would require the development of training standards.

*Note:* A reading of the Initiative after the CEG meeting indicates that I-940 would also materially revise the standards regarding reasonableness of use of deadly force by law enforcement officers in the course of their duties. The current standard requires that the officer be found to have acted with “malice” in the use of deadly force. The revised standard would require that the officer must have acted “in good faith.” The text of the initiative is available at the De-Escalate Washington Website, <http://www.deescalatewa.org>.

To be placed on the ballot, supporters will need to secure 259,000 valid signatures. Due to errors and other problems, supporters are encouraged to obtain in excess of 300,000 signatures. Anyone interested in signing the petition to put the initiative on the ballot can find it outside Apartment 201 (Caplow). The petitions will also be available for signature at various CEG supported events.

### **Internal CEG Communication—email distribution**

Since the Civic Engagement Group began, Jim Sanders has been distributing emails to the group. Gmail terminated that practice, apparently due to volume constraints. Rick Baugh has agreed to take over that task for the time being. In the future, emails will be prepared by Jim and forwarded to Rick for transmittal. Responses to those emails should go directly to Jim at his email address.

The group did discuss this matter and confirmed the following actions:

1. We will continue to send out meeting minutes via email, as well as post them to the CEG pages on the 725 Blog.
2. We will limit activity updates (calendar items) to a single weekly email, rather than multiple emails as items become known.
3. In the event of an emergent issue—either an event or a request for action, we will do the best we can.

**Cell Phones for the Homeless:** There was a brief discussion about whether cell phones are made available to low income homeless and other indigent residents, and whether there was an influx of homeless to the Seattle area from other jurisdictions. Rather than recount the discussion, we are sharing the following information:

- Yes, cell phones for indigent individuals and families are made available under a federal program initiated by the previous administration. Information on “lifeline” phones can be found at <https://www.safelinkwireless.com/Enrollment/Safelink/en/NewPublic/index.html>.
- No, the majority of the homeless in King County are not new residents in our community. The January 2017 count of homeless individuals reflects that seventy-seven percent of those counted were living in King County at the time they became homeless. Twenty percent indicated they were born or grew up in King County, and twenty-four percent reported they had lived in King County for more than ten years. The complete report can be found at <http://allhomekc.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/2017-Count-Us-In-PIT-Comprehensive-Report.pdf>

The meeting adjourned at 4:45 p.m.

**Next Meeting: Friday, September 8<sup>th</sup>, Sky Club (Note Location Change)**

Thanks to Tom Gibbs for serving as our facilitator, Mary Ann Hagan and Suzanne Hittman for taking notes, Wendy Schoen for editing and formatting the document, and to all of you who participated.