

CEG Meeting—August 9, 2019

Putnam Barber, Facilitator, opened the meeting at 4:00 p.m.

REPORTS ON PAST EVENTS

July 16 2019, 2:00 p.m. Library Levy Discussion (Jim Sanders)

Jim began this discussion by saying, “We won; that was the important thing.” One fact about libraries is that the license for an ebook is five times as expensive as the purchase of the printed copy. In California, the university library has stopped subscribing to one academic journal publisher because of the constantly increasing cost. Some academics are now refusing to do peer reviews for manuscripts submitted to that publisher. Historically, libraries and parks have been a general obligation of municipal budgets, but when the Model Cities program funding ended, municipalities were bound to continue supporting the projects that had been initiated, squeezing the cities’ budgets. That’s when the practice of supporting libraries and parks through levies started. There is no sign that the practice is likely to change.

July 23, 2019, 11:00 a.m. Ralph Munro, Mount Baker Room (Put Barber)

Put reported on the visit by Ralph Munro, who was Washington’s Secretary of State for five terms between 1980 and 2000. Munro said that he is often asked what it’s like to be a Republican in Washington state. He quoted ten different questions he often gets, and then answered them. His did not shy away from Republican positions, but he also demonstrated his long-standing commitment to a broad view of politics. He did not, though, say very much of substance about Republican positions. When asked how he got started as a Republican, Put pointed to his origins in a Republican family and his leadership of the Republican Club at Western when he was a student there. Munro indicated that he was available for a return visit.

July 23, 2019, 7:30 p.m. 3rd City Council District Primary Candidate Forum. (Frank Conlon)

Frank reported that there were a few hiccoughs at this forum: one candidate was unable to participate because of illness in his family, and another sent a substitute because she had recently given birth. Because there were only five (not six) candidates, there was extra time at the end, suggesting that having one or two questions in reserve at future candidate forums would be a good idea. At the next

candidate forum, there will be time for many more questions (with only two candidates). It will be important to have some questions that focus very specifically on the issues of our immediate neighborhood. Jim Sanders wondered whether it would be a good idea to give the questions to the candidates in advance, along with a firm request that they answer the specific question, rather than repeating more general campaign messaging. It was suggested that the event might be more satisfying if there was an opportunity to have questions from the floor—following up to things the candidates had said at the event or on other occasions. In the discussion that followed, there was support for the idea that there should be a way for members of the audience to submit written questions that would be sorted by a resident. Candidates would then be asked as many additional questions as time permitted (as was done at the 43rd District Town Hall at the 1st Baptist Church). Jim Sanders said that he would be thinking about the upcoming second Candidate Forum and would welcome comments and advice sent by email to jimsanders1947@gmail.com.

July 30, 2019, 2:00 p.m. Skyline Soapbox (Steve Ellis)

Steve reported that it was interesting to hear the views of other residents. There was a comment that some of the participants used up a good deal of the available time, suggesting that future Soapbox events might have a more structured framework.

FUTURE EVENTS AND DISCUSSION

- Put commented that the interesting movie, *The Great Hack*, would be presented on Monday, August 12, in the Madrona Room. The movie is based on the career of a woman with a background in Democratic politics who ended up working for Cambridge Analytica in their efforts to support Brexit, the campaign of Donald Trump, and other causes.
- There will also be a 3rd City Council District candidate forum at Town Hall on September 26th at 5:30 in the Great Hall.
- After the usual agenda items were completed, there was a conversation about the future arrangements for the Civic Engagement working group.
- Put reported that he will be away during the next two monthly CEG meetings. He has arranged for the September meeting to be facilitated by Mary Jane Francis and the October meeting by Steve Ellis. Put will prepare the agenda for the September meeting, and Jim Sanders will do one for the October meeting.

- CEG has been considering inviting the following people to speak at Skyline: Mike Kreidler, Insurance Commissioner; Chris Reykdal, Superintendent of Public Instruction; Denise Juneau, Seattle Public Schools Superintendent; Danny Westneat, *Seattle Times* columnist; and retired *Seattle Times* columnist Jerry Large. Another suggestion was that having a briefing on the operations and goals of the Port of Seattle would be very useful. Put asked whether future speakers should be invited to speak during September or October. It was observed that the calendar was already quite busy through November. Put said that he would start trying to get people on the calendar for later in the year or early in 2020.
- Jim Sanders explained the background behind Referendum 88, which would bar the newly approved forms of special consideration in state and local contracting that can be given to disadvantaged groups (following the Legislature's adoption of Initiative 1000 in the recent session). Jim asked if there would be interest in a Forum on this topic with spokespersons for both sides. There was general agreement that it would be useful.
- Put asked whether it would be a good idea to explore the possibility of CEG becoming a recognized Interest Group within the SRA. The benefit, he suggested, would give additional notice of upcoming CEG meetings and events. Jim Sanders opposed this idea because of the restrictions that might be placed on CEG activities as a result. Some participants felt that CEG is not as well-known as it should be, and the added publicity might be useful. Others warned that the SRA process might be complicated, and that the "political" character of CEG might present problems. In the end, Put said he would approach the Lifestyle Committee to ask what the reaction might be to the idea of becoming an interest group and what the effect might be on CEG operations. He said that he would not take any action about the idea until there had been further discussion among the current CEG participants.
- Peggy Newsome announced that David Domke will talk again at Skyline on four Mondays in October (7th, 14th, 21st, and 28th), all starting at 3:00 p.m. The title for the series is "American Demagogues and the Future of Democracy." The talks will each last about 90 minutes. There was a discussion about the standards at Skyline affecting solicitation for donations and about whether or not donations to explicitly political activities can be tax-deductible. Peggy said she would investigate the appropriate way for any such request to be made and discuss the requirements with Domke. When he spoke at Skyline earlier this year, there were two separate organizations that he described as supporting his work—one tax-deductible and one not. Presumably, both are still relevant, and

the difference will be explained.

- At closing, Put mentioned that the ACLU will be offering a series of six sessions at the Downtown Library (or other nearby locations) on “how to be an effective advocate with lawmakers.” This series will begin on September 10. More information about the sessions (and a registration form) can be found at <https://action.aclu.org/signup/power-registration>.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:00 p.m.

Next Meeting: September 13

Mount Baker Room: 4:00 p.m.

Thanks to Putnam Barber for facilitating the session; to Put and Sue Hogan for taking notes for the minutes; to Wendy Schoen for editing and formatting the minutes; and to all of you who participated.