

DRAFT

CITY OF SHORELINE

SHORELINE COMMUNITY FORUM SUMMARY MINUTES OF SPECIAL MEETING

Monday, March 29, 2004
7:30 p.m.

Shoreline Conference Center
Mt. Rainier Room

PRESENT: Councilmembers Fimia, Grace, and Ransom

PRESENT IN AUDIENCE: Deputy Mayor Jepsen, Councilmembers Chang and Gustafson

ABSENT: Mayor Hansen

1. CALL TO ORDER/FLAG SALUTE

Councilmember Ransom called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. and led the flag salute. He announced the schedule for the remaining community forums and explained the meeting format. He then read the public participation handout and asked speakers to address their comments to the questions raised therein.

2. PUBLIC COMMENT

(a) Ginger Botham, Shoreline, felt the City should fund cost-effective citizen surveys and increase public comment opportunities. She felt citizens should be allowed to speak on action items after staff and Council discussions. She also felt the Council should be more responsive to citizens' questions and requests. She opposed Resolution No. 212 and said speakers should be allowed to donate unused time to others. She requested that Council not impose the three-speaker-per-side rule. She also asked that staff reports include citizen letters in their entirety.

(b) Jean Christensen, Shoreline, felt that people do not take written comments seriously. She suggested the Council read *Sons of the Profits* for ideas on improving the public input process, and asked that it look to the past to see how it can improve in the future. She also suggested that Council use informal venues such as picnics or parties to make people feel more comfortable and improve communication. She also asked that speakers' time be increased to five minutes.

(c) Walt Hagen, Shoreline, said people get the impression that public input is irrelevant because there is no Council feedback. He said the Council believes staff and consultants more than the public. He felt there should be some method to track citizen input, and suggested that citizen requests be treated as Council action items. He also felt

the Council should be more responsive to citizens who speak at Council meetings. Responding to Councilmember Fimia, he said people should not be required to support their statements with detailed documentation because, unlike the City, they do not have technical staff.

(d) Tim Crawford, Shoreline, asserted that City staff is not honest in its dealings with the public. He said the Council should take the public seriously and do its job by considering its views. He said that staff has changed the Development Code without public input. He felt the Council puts more trust in staff and consultants rather than the public.

(e) Patty Crawford, Shoreline, felt the public was not included in the process of changing the Development Code. She noted that Shoreline has a government access channel and an education access channel, but no public access channel. She felt that Channel 21 should serve both the government and public access needs. She opposed Resolution No. 212 and the three-speaker rule, and felt speakers' time should be increased to five minutes. She felt the City should avoid an "us versus them" mentality, and said Council should direct staff to work in the public interest. She pointed out that the Shoreline Owner's Manual no longer includes the City organization chart or the permit section.

(f) Dick Lemmon, Shoreline, felt that City surveys are not useful or cost-effective because they don't include relevant information that citizens need to be able to respond in an informed way. He felt survey questions could be manipulated to achieve a desired result. He also felt the Council should not ignore public input and that the City should adopt a "citizen-driven" process. He suggested that high school students could conduct door-to-door surveys to save the City money as well as to fulfill their community service requirements for school.

(g) LaNita Wacker, Shoreline, said the public input process should be based on Shoreline's needs, not on other cities' practices. She felt that Council meetings are dominated by staff presentations that leave little room for public input. She felt that citizens should be able to speak on action items after staff and Council discussion, otherwise it appears the Council is "rubber stamping" staff recommendations. She disagreed with the three-speaker rule, and asked that citizens' concerns be placed on Council agendas as action items. She said many Shoreline citizens are experts in their fields but the Council does not often consider their views. She suggested that the print media be used to advertise Channel 21, which is her main source for City information. She also stressed the importance of follow-up, civility, and courtesy when dealing with citizen requests.

(h) Betty Lynn Crezik-Brown, Shoreline, felt that people on the west side have more influence on the Council because of their wealth. She felt the Council has treated the public "hard-heartedly" and that staff act defensively toward the public. She suggested that the Council get together with environmental advocates and watch the video "Up Thornton Creek." She felt the City should cultivate a sense of kindness and

DRAFT

seek out people with more knowledge, wisdom, and experience. She felt this approach would result in better representation for all.

(i) Laurence Yaffe, Shoreline, noted that the Council often receives citizen letters more than a week late. He suggested that the three-minute time limit be increased, and that citizen topics be placed on the agenda at Council meetings. He also favored public comment following action items. He felt that staff often dismisses citizens' concerns, and that the comments from staff are not always accurate. He emphasized the fact that staff works for the Council, and the Council works for the people. He concluded by noting the difficulty of designing useful, cost-effective surveys.

(j) Pat Murray, Shoreline, suggested that speakers be allowed to talk for five minutes, with a one-minute warning light reminding them to sum up. He felt people do not get adequate feedback from the Council, and he supported public comment periods following action items. He suggested that the Council get direct input from citizens rather than through expensive surveys, noting that meetings cost much less. He hoped that the lack of respect he witnessed by one past Councilmember is never repeated. He concurred with the previous speakers' comments.

(k) Richard Johnsen, Shoreline, expressed support for previous speakers' comments. He agreed with a citizen-driven agenda and public comment following action items. He felt the City needs an outside party to scrutinize the City Manager and staff, noting that staff does not adequately inform the Council. He felt the Council should conduct more meetings if it cannot complete its agendas in one evening. He suggested monthly City newsletters and expanded programming on Channel 21. He also suggested an expanded *Enterprise* column and a return to the Council committee system. He felt the City could use more interaction between citizens and staff, and that the public should have more opportunities to respond. He said his preferred method of communication is through public comment at City Council meetings, not voice mail, e-mail or letters.

Councilmember Grace noted that the public comments on this topic would be compiled and considered at the next Council Retreat.

3. ADJOURNMENT

At 9:00 p.m., Councilmember Ransom declared the meeting adjourned.

Scott Passey, Communications Assistant

This page intentionally left blank.