

CITY OF SHORELINE
SHORELINE CITY COUNCIL
SUMMARY MINUTES OF WORKSHOP DINNER MEETING

Tuesday, May 26, 2009
6:00 p.m.

Shoreline Conference Center
Highlander Room

PRESENT: Mayor Cindy Ryu, Deputy Mayor Terry Scott, and Councilmembers Chris Eggen, Ron Hansen, Doris McConnell, Keith McGlashan, and Janet Way

ABSENT: none

STAFF: Bob Olander, City Manager; Julie Underwood, Assistant City Manager; Debbie Tarry, Finance Director

GUESTS: Long Range Financial Planning Citizen Advisory Committee Members: Gary Batch; Gloria Bryce; Bill Clements; Walt Hagen; Rick Stephens; Shari Tracey; Bill Bear; Keirdwyn Cataldo; Kathie Crozier; Carolyn Hope; Mary Lynn Potter; Paul Sutphen; Hiller West; and Eric Wilson

The Mayor called the meeting to order at 6:07 pm and kicked off introductions of the City's Long-range Financial Planning Citizen Advisory Committee. Ms. Tarry summarized the Committee's five recommendations and stressed that tonight's meeting is intended to provide an opportunity for dialogue among the Council and Committee members.

Mr. Olander asked the Committee to explain why they felt that the first recommendation of adopting a Transportation Benefit District (TBD) was the most important. Mr. Bill Clements stated that in the citizen surveys it showed that there was support for transportation and it's important to address what citizens believe are a priority.

Mr. Clements stated that the community forums that the Committee sponsored saw an engaged segment of the population. They were well informed and yet some people didn't know what efficiencies meant. For example, a Fire Commissioner that attended one of the forums cautioned the City about stretching the road budget too far and cutting cost at the expense of quality.

Mr. Hiller West stated that the City puts money from the General Fund into the Roads Capital fund. He questioned why the City would continue doing this if the State allows for creation of a Transportation Benefit District to raise dedicated funds for roads.

Ms. Tarry reviewed the timeline for the Council to review the TBD proposal.

Mr. Rick Stephens stated that he's looking at this issue from a small business point of view. Businesses feel they have to be as efficient as possible and so it's important for the City to operate efficiently as well. The City will need to improve how they share this information with the public.

The Mayor stated that because of the structural taxing situation, whether we decide to ask for more money or not, we need to look at whether or not there is capacity within the community to pay for this.

Mr. Stephens said that the City is not getting their fair share from King County. Mr. West added that one of the recommendations identified is to get more value from other taxing districts.

Councilmember Eggen said that when he was doorbelling he learned that many citizens complained about property taxes of other taxing districts. In addition, he was concerned whether the Committee had an in-depth review of efficiencies.

Mr. Clements stressed that the budget crisis is now and expressed a need for decisiveness with the \$20 fee. In addition, he stated that more information and more process would be needed if the Council went out for a levy lid lift in the future.

Mr. West said that people would be more supportive if people knew where the money would be spent. If there is a 2010 or 2011 levy lid lift, the levy proposal would need to outline where the money will go.

Ms. Keirdwyn Cataldo expressed that it's important for the City to determine what the community wants; what their priorities are.

Councilmember McGlashan asked why the Committee did not recommend going out to voters for a higher amount than the \$20 TBD fee.

Mr. Clements said that the Committee did consider both the \$20 fee or going to voters for a higher amount. There is a need for the Council to take immediate action. Ms. Kathie Crozier added that she attended two out of the three community forums; she sensed that this is the least of the worst. She said that if the Council went out for a vote for a higher fee and it failed, it would not be a good strategy for the Council to then implement a \$20 fee. The Mayor added that she sensed many of the participants saw the fee as a "user fee."

Mr. Bill Bear stated that every time he gets in his car, it may cost \$2.50 to \$5.00 per mile, and citizens need to consider real costs.

Councilmember Hansen stated that a majority of Shoreline voters did not the initiative that reduced the MVET fee, which was supposed to be used for transportation.

Mr. Walt Hagen said that when the Committee discussed this shortfall, they focused on increasing revenues, but the City may have to make service cuts. Ms. Carolyn Hope said that the Committee didn't discuss what to cut. Mr. Hagen added that the City should promote small business to bring in sales tax.

Mr. Olander stated that this is about maintaining Shoreline's quality of life. It's about what makes this the best neighborhood in the Seattle area.

Ms. Gloria Bryce said that the City has a terrific quality of life and that people don't realize all of the things that the City provides. She stated that there were only 20 people at the Community Forum on Property Taxes. She urged the City to continue to find other ways to communicate with citizens.

Shari Tracey said that this would have been a good workshop to videotape. The City should consider taping it if the workshop is repeated in the future.

Mr. Eric Wilson, who helped facilitate the Citizen Committee meetings, said that the group talked about this topic quite a bit. In order to penetrate, it has to be said over and over again.

The Mayor urged the Committee members to serve as ambassadors, being proactive, and asking citizens to engage in the process.

Councilmember McConnell expressed that she believed that citizens get a lot of value, which is why they stay here.

The Mayor ended the meeting by thanking all of the Committee members.

The meeting adjourned at 7:25 pm.

Julie Underwood, Assistant City Manager

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