

CITY OF BELLEVUE
CITY COUNCIL

Summary Minutes of Study Session

February 19, 2008
6:00 p.m.

Council Conference Room
Bellevue, Washington

PRESENT: Mayor Degginger, Deputy Mayor Balducci, and Councilmembers Chelminiak, Davidson, Lee and Noble

ABSENT: None.

1. Executive Session

Deputy Mayor Balducci called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. and announced recess to Executive Session for approximately 30 minutes to discuss one matter of pending litigation.

The meeting resumed at 6:33 p.m. with Mayor Degginger presiding.

2. Study Session

(a) Selection Process for Filling Council Vacancy

Mayor Degginger introduced Council's interviews of seven candidates for the vacant Council position. He recalled that the Council agreed to give each candidate approximately three minutes to make an opening statement. Following brief discussion, Mayor Degginger noted a consensus to ask each candidate the three questions provided in the desk packet. The Council decided to draw candidates' names from a hat to determine the order for the interview process.

Jennifer Robertson reviewed her involvement with the City including serving in her second term on the Planning Commission, currently as Chair, and co-chairing the Light Rail Best Practices Committee. As a municipal attorney, she is familiar with all aspects of local government including land use, personnel, and interlocal matters. She is skilled in listening to the public and analyzing complex issues. Being self-employed, Ms. Robertson will be able to devote adequate time to serving on the City Council.

In response to the questions, Ms. Robertson described the role of the Council as listening, learning, and attending to details. Her vision for Bellevue is continued economic growth including redevelopment of the Bel-Red corridor. Key transportation needs are enhanced transit service, including bus rapid transit, on the Eastside; building a NE 6th Street overpass; extending

NE 4th Street from downtown to the Wilburton area east of I-405; and keeping pace with growth-related infrastructure demands.

Patsy Bonincontri described her childhood in Hong Kong and her experience living in different areas of the world and the United States. She feels this has given her a global perspective and the ability to adapt and learn from those with differing backgrounds and points of view. As an architect, she is able to incorporate and balance both technical and artistic perspectives in her work and worldview.

Ms. Bonincontri said the role of a Councilmember is to guide the community toward its vision while maintaining a balance of a wide range of needs. Her vision of Bellevue includes balancing development with the preservation of open spaces and the natural environment. Her approach to increasing transportation demands is to design a mobility system that meets the needs of its citizens. She advocates public education to encourage people to assess and modify their current travel habits.

Ken Schiring commented on his longstanding dedication to the community. His overriding philosophy throughout his life in Bellevue has been to foster and preserve the residential community while facilitating economic growth.

Mr. Schiring commented on the importance of the City Council's work. He noted his intention to retire from full-time employment if selected to serve on the Council. He briefly described his involvement on the Bel-Red Steering Committee and his interest in the continued development of neighborhoods and thriving business districts. Mr. Schiring spoke to the strong interrelationship between transportation and planning. He indicated his interest in learning more about solving transportation issues.

David Karle commended the public process being used in the selection of a Councilmember. He noted his interest in maintaining a strong business community and increasing densification and urbanization. He encouraged the continuation of the Council's healthy collaboration with City staff, the public, and within the Council itself. He feels the current vacancy provides the opportunity to bring a fresh perspective to the Council in addressing the challenges. Mr. Karle noted his background in business and technology, commitment to serve, and dedication to preserving the quality of life in Bellevue for future generations.

Mr. Karle described the role of the Councilmember as working with City staff and the public to address challenges, identify and evaluate alternatives, and make decisions that are beneficial to the community. He values the work of Bellevue staff and the City Council to achieve consensus on issues and policies. Mr. Karle commented on Bellevue's increasing urbanization and the importance of maintaining the community's character and quality of life. He feels that transportation is largely a regional issue. He serves on the Light Rail Best Practices Committee because he feels light rail can directly benefit the future of the community.

Betina Finley noted her passion for public service. Her experience with public-sector mentors taught her how to be a strategic thinker, work for consensus, and reach out to diverse groups.

She noted her current participation on the Arts Commission and as Chair of this year's Sculpture Exhibition. She has been involved with Bel-Red corridor planning and the Meydenbauer Bay Park and Land Use Committee. Ms. Finley feels she represents a growing segment of young families with moderate socio-economic standing and/or small business operators.

Ms. Finley feels the role of a Councilmember is being a good listener. If selected to serve, she would want to get to know and learn from current Councilmembers and key City staff. Ms. Finley's vision for Bellevue is as a strong regional presence and a focus on the critical issues of transportation, water supply, affordable housing, and arts and cultural activities. She noted her interest in a range of transportation measures including a downtown circulator, expanded transit service (including light rail), more bike lanes, private partnerships, and road improvements.

Lise Northey noted her involvement with the Transportation Commission. She encouraged the selection of a Councilmember who has extensive knowledge of local government and the ability to be effective within a regional context. She has worked as an employee of and consultant to local governments, and she understands the political and regulatory environment. Ms. Northey indicated that her current self employment would allow her to dedicate sufficient time to the job of Councilmember. She commented on the importance of both vision and action.

Ms. Northey feels a Councilmember must be able to listen and to work collaboratively toward a goal. Her vision for Bellevue is a safe place to raise a family and to enjoy strong schools and a sense of community. It is important to continue as a financially sound city and to be able to meet infrastructure needs. Ms. Northey commented on the importance of maintaining healthy relationships with neighboring communities, while functioning as a leader for others to emulate. In terms of improving transportation, Ms. Northey advocates state legislation offering financial incentives to businesses who provide flexible, alternative work schedules for employees. She feels this approach would make the most efficient and economical use of transportation infrastructure, and it would be less expensive than building new roads.

Mike Creighton noted his previous service on the Council and explained that he is now retired and now has more time to devote to the demands of the position. He and his wife are selling their home and plan to move to downtown Bellevue, and they also have a residence outside of the area. He continues to be involved in local activities including Seafair and the Bel-Red Steering Committee. He has worked on boards and committees with five of the six state legislators serving Bellevue. Mr. Creighton maintains an interest in Downtown Implementation Plan projects.

Mr. Creighton said the role of a Councilmember is to represent citizens in the establishment of policies. It is important to work cooperatively within the Council and to interact effectively with the community. His vision for Bellevue is to continue to see it evolve as a regional center, and to pursue opportunities such as the Bel-Red corridor for the further development of businesses and housing. He noted his interest in transportation projects identified in the Downtown Implementation Plan as well as neighborhood projects such as West Lake Sammamish Parkway. He commented on the need to provide adequate infrastructure to support development. He supports light rail and acknowledges that this solution will be determined by voters.

Mayor Degginger stated that time will be scheduled during next week's Extended Study Session to continue to review the candidates.

3. Council Business [Regular Session Agenda Item 6]

Dr. Davidson attended meetings of the Regional Water Quality Committee, Cascade Water Alliance's Planning and Resource Committee, Metropolitan Water Pollution Abatement Advisory Committee (MWPAAC), and the King County Conservation District.

Councilmember Noble attended the Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC) Transportation Policy Board meeting. He reported that Deputy Mayor Balducci was elected to serve as Vice Chair of the Eastside Transportation Partnership.

Councilmember Chelminiak attended meetings associated with PSRC's Economic Development District as well as the Police Department's promotion ceremony.

Councilmember Lee attended the Police promotion ceremony and the Neighborhood Mediation Program's annual function. He noted that the People's Republic of China Consul General from San Francisco will be visiting Bellevue tomorrow.

Deputy Mayor Balducci attended the Disability Board meeting. She noted that the Light Rail Best Practices Committee traveled to San Jose and San Diego to visit light rail systems in those cities. Ms. Balducci will join the committee to visit Portland's system on February 29.

Mayor Degginger attended meetings associated with SR 520 mediation.

At 8:00 p.m., Mayor Degginger declared recess to the Regular Session.

Myrna L. Basich
City Clerk

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