

SAMMAMISH

ISSUE 174

CITY NEWSLETTER

DEC. 2016

Did you receive a city survey?

**IF SO, PLEASE FILL IT OUT,
HELP YOUR COMMUNITY!**

Late last month, 2,200 community surveys were mailed out to random households in all sections of the city.

The goal: To find out how a statistically valid cross-section of Sammamish residents feel about city services, community priorities and their quality of life.

“This is easily the most comprehensive survey we’ve ever done,” Communications Manager Tim Larson said. “It only takes about 15 minutes to fill out, but it covers a lot of territory.”

N-R-C, a nationally respected firm that focuses on the public sector, mails the survey twice.

“The ‘second chance’ survey should be arriving in mailboxes in early December, so we hope people will fish it out and take a few minutes to help the community,” Larson said. “We really value the people who come to our City Council meetings, but they’re not necessarily a statistically valid representation of broad community sentiment. So that’s why these surveys are so valuable. We’re hoping for a great response rate.”



Mary Pigott and her dog Annie take a stroll through Site B.

Another gift of land to Sammamish

THE SECOND OF THREE GIFTS WILL EXPAND BIG ROCK PARK

It’s all going according to the plan that was drawn up a half-dozen years ago, but it still seems too good to be true.

The city, thanks to the generosity of a community-minded resident, will shortly begin turning a 20-acre gift of land into a substantial expansion of Big Rock Park.

“This is another amazing gift,” City Manager Lyman Howard said. “It’s

right in the middle of our community and it preserves the trees, streams and meadows our residents value so much.”

The city’s benefactor is Mary Pigott, a resident who settled just north of Pine Lake in 1972. Over time, she and her late husband, Roger Giesecke, purchased a total of 51 acres. Back in 2010, Mary arranged to transfer the land to the city in three phases.

See BIG ROCK PARK, pg. 4

MAYOR’S MESSAGE

Page 2

VIRTUAL TOWN HALL

Story on page 3

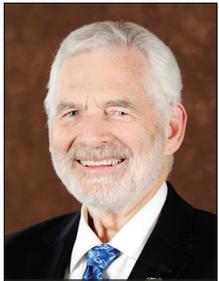
EMERGENCY PREP

Story on page 5

Post-election reflection: Local action will be vital!

The October Mayor's Message was about the increasing cultural diversity on the Eastside, and the way our cities are welcoming and embracing this enrichment of our society.

I also noted that Sammamish would become an even better place to live as people from all cultures ex-



*Don Gerend
Mayor*

panded their role as volunteers and candidates for local elected office.

Speaking of elections, the November results are in, and Sammamish, our state and the na-

tion will accept the outcomes and move forward united.

We might not be pleased with all of the results, but, as we have for more than 150 years, I'm confident we'll view these as perturbations around a stable equilibrium – please pardon my science background – and continue our march towards a diverse and prosperous future.

But given that some of our best ideas get bogged down in partisan politics at the federal level, and things don't quite work the way they used to, it's going to be crucial that we become more active and innovative at the local level.

In transportation, for example, the federal government is where the action used to be. The interstate highway system, huge federal investments in mass transit, and a Federal Highway Trust Fund were once amply replenished by federal gas taxes. Now we see a dried up trust fund and only marginal support for local transit and

highway projects.

Congress hasn't seen fit to increase the gas tax since 1993, despite the fact that fuel efficiency has resulted in a precipitous drop in revenues. So, at the state level, Washington has stepped up with significant increases in the state gas tax to fund maintenance and expansion of our roads and transit amenities.

In addition, Washington and other states, recognizing that gas taxes will continue to diminish as vehicles transition to electric propulsion, are starting pilot programs around a "Road Usage Charge," a possible replacement for the gas tax.

Regionally, the voters approved a massive Sound Transit 3 initiative to greatly expand the light rail and regional bus system in central Puget Sound. Most of the funding will come from local taxes, with very little support from federal or state sources.

There is no more money for deployment of broadband at the national level, while some 55 million Americans still lack robust access at home. Industry and local governments are stepping up, advancing 5G technology with enhanced wireless throughput to the home.

Taxation on internet sales is also bogged down at the congressional level. As a result, local businesses are burdened with sales taxes (some 10 percent on most items next year), while a large portion of internet sales dodge the tax. Cities, as they should, have been working for years to loosen this congressional logjam and create a level playing field for our local businesses.

Dynamic changes in implementa-

tion of new technologies are happening at the local level, usually in partnership with industry, often with only marginal federal or state support.

At a recent National League of Cities convention, I had the opportunity to see autonomous Ubers operating in downtown Pittsburgh. Battery-operated buses are being tested by Metro here in King County. Electric cars with ranges over 200 miles will soon be on the market at competitive prices to gas-powered, mid-priced sedans. Cities and industry are installing charging stations locally. Sammamish City Hall has had four such stations for years already, along with electric cars in the city fleet.

Since the federal and state response is often sluggish, cities have also been on the forefront of environmental and energy conservation actions, be it low-impact development techniques, smart metering of utilities, LED lighting, zero-energy construction techniques, smart homes, cybersecurity, or climate change.

The bottom line is that cities, out of necessity, are becoming less dependent on state and federal funding sources. That requires all municipalities to become more creative and resourceful in providing residents with basic and enhanced levels of service.

As we enjoy the holidays, let's also look forward to the challenges of 2017. Working together at the local grassroots level, drawing from our diverse and talented community, I know our nation will continue to rise – from the ground up!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Don Gerend".

Outcome statement: Virtual Town Hall on Growth

Virtual Town Hall, the city's new, online public-input tool, recently concluded a discussion of growth and development in Sammamish. After reviewing the feedback, the city posted the following "Outcome statement."

NOTE: This newsletter version of the statement has been edited for length. To see the full statement, go to www.sammamish.us, click on "Community Involvement" and select "Virtual Town Hall." The online statement also contains informational links for residents to consider as the community's conversation on growth continues.



Thanks to those who contributed to this important online discussion. With over 1,000 visitors to Virtual Town Hall, and 410 responses (266 registered; 144 unregistered), the growth topic drew the equivalent of 20.5 hours of public comment.

Here are the primary themes:

- Residents love Sammamish for its friendliness, excellent schools, safe neighborhoods and natural beauty.

- But there's been too much growth, too fast, since the economy picked up.

- Roads and other infrastructure have fallen behind population growth.

- The traffic is terrible.

- We need to slow down and let infrastructure catch up.

- We're losing too many trees to development

- New development should fit in with the character of existing neighborhoods

The City Council and city staff are reviewing the feedback we've received from this Virtual Town Hall, from the Round Table Meeting on Growth held on Sept. 8, and from many other sources. As an initial response, the city is go-

ing to move up its Transportation Master Planning Process to the first quarter of 2017. That's about nine months earlier than the original schedule. The city will also give great weight to this feedback as we create or refresh our Urban Forestry Plan, Land Acquisition Plan and development regulations.

All of these initiatives and processes depend on robust public input. As we have in years past, we encourage all residents to take part in the many public meetings that help inform the development of appropriate policy. To stay abreast of the schedule, please read the monthly city newsletter, check the city calendar on our website, and sign up for email alerts on the topic of growth.

Keep in mind that the city has always had a Six-Year Transportation Plan – and many other plans – that have been updated per the requirements of the law. Right now, for example, the city, in accordance with those plans, is scheduled to improve Issaquah-Fall City Road, Sahalee Way, portions of Issaquah-Pine Lake Road and several other road sections. But the need for

public input never stops. That's how we adjust priorities, schedules and investment choices.

Due to the Growth Management Act (GMA), the property rights held by all Americans, and the weight of many, many court rulings, there are limits to what a city can do to slow down growth. As tedious as that may be to hear, it's the truth. So, the city hopes this ongoing dialogue will bring some new considerations into play as we look for ways to mitigate and manage growth. Here are some of the ideas produced by the Virtual Town Hall:

- The city should buy land to preserve trees and open space.

- Accelerate the construction and improvement of roads.

- Require tree buffers between roads and new development sites.

Thank you for coming to the Virtual Town Hall on Growth. As we continue the conversation and refine our options, we will likely invite you to another Virtual Town Hall in the not too distant future. We hope you'll join us for that one as well!

Trails in Beaver Lake Preserve continue to expand

WASHINGTON TRAILS ASSOCIATION HAS LED 30 VOLUNTEER WORK PARTIES IN 2016

There is a lot of undeveloped land north of Beaver Lake – the Hazel Wolf Preserve, the Steve and Rosina Kipper Preserve, Soaring Eagle Park, and Beaver Lake Preserve – but they wouldn’t be easily accessible to young and old alike without a thoughtful network of trails.

To that end, work has continued over the years to provide more pathways through the forests and meadows that bless this section of Sammamish’s eastern zone.

In 2008, work was completed on 1.35 miles of trail near West Beaver Lake Drive Southeast, and now, thanks to the work of 30 volunteer work parties led by the Washington Trails Association (WTA), an additional three

quarters of a mile is being constructed.

One new section, now complete, provides a shorter loop above West Beaver Lake Drive Southeast, while another section, located south of the roadway, will finish up next spring.

“It’s great to see high school students, the scouts and repeat adult volunteers pitching in on behalf of the community,” City Manager Lyman Howard said. “And we’re especially grateful for the leadership and expertise provided by the WTA.”

To volunteer for work in the spring, interested residents can sign up by going to the “community involvement” tab on the city website at www.sammamish.us.



Volunteers with the Washington Trails Association build a boardwalk north of Beaver Lake.

BIG ROCK PARK, cont. from pg. 1

Site A became the first, 16-acre phase of Big Rock Park back in 2011. The current gift, Site B, will expand the passive, recreational park by 20 acres. Site C, the 15-acre parcel where Mary resides, will transfer to the city a few years from now.

The land was gifted to the community with the understanding that it would provide residents with a quiet recreational experience featuring trails, wildlife habitat, informal play opportunities and heritage education, among other things.

“We will, of course, honor the donor’s wishes,” Howard said. “Mary has enjoyed walking through these trees and meadows for many years, and we’re going to make sure our residents have the same opportunity for many generations to come.”

Site B was included in the city’s master plan for Big Rock Park, a process that wrapped up in 2014. If everything goes according to plan, it’s possible Sammamish residents could be strolling through the new section of the park sometime in 2018.



Big Rock Park (Site B) is in the lower left of this aerial photo.

Cascadia Rising produces rising concerns

GROWING CONSENSUS: MAKE SURE YOUR EMERGENCY SUPPLIES WILL LAST 2-4 WEEKS

After reviewing the results of Cascadia Rising, the largest disaster drill in the history of the northwest, there appears to be agreement that the state of Washington and the many cities and jurisdictions that took part have a long way to go.

The exercise, which assumed that the northwest had suffered the impacts of a “magnitude 9” earthquake and a tsunami, revealed many gaps in the state’s ability to respond to communities in need. The Cascadia Rising event assumed 14,000 deaths, 30,000 injuries and massive damage to roads and bridges in Washington and Oregon.

“One of the outcomes we’re seeing is that the experts are now asking residents to stockpile sufficient emergency supplies to last two to four weeks,” City Manager Lyman Howard said. “That’s a much longer period of time than emergency folks used to suggest.”

The reason for the change? Cascadia Rising showed that

communities throughout the northwest might be isolated, and without outside help, for many more days than previously projected. Among other things, the exercise showed that communication problems might be so severe that communities wouldn’t even be able to ask for help.

“We’re definitely going to ramp up our emergency preparedness here in Sammamish,” Howard said. “We’re recruiting right now for a full-time emergency management position at the city, and we’re going to do our best to make sure our residents are doing their part to be prepared at home.”

Among other things, residents should stock up on bottled water, canned and dry food, can openers, batteries, flashlights, battery-powered radios, first aid supplies, pet food and, if there’s an infant in the house, all appropriate baby foods and supplies.

For more information on how to keep your family safe during an emergency, go to www.sammamish.us and click on the “How do I?” tab.

Virtual Town Hall on bus service draws lots of traffic

The feedback didn’t start until Nov. 8, but just ten days later the Virtual Town Hall on bus service in Sammamish had already drawn 358 responses.

“This is our third topic with Virtual Town Hall,” Communications Manager Tim Larson said, noting that city communications and growth preceded the bus topic. “This is the fastest rate of feedback we’ve had so far.”

The online survey aims to gather information on what kind of improved transit service Sammamish residents would like to see.

“As our city officials continue their conversations with King County Metro and Sound Transit, the feedback we receive through Virtual Town Hall will provide valuable evidence that our residents need and

want better service,” Larson said. “We hope everyone with thoughts on this topic will enter Virtual Town Hall and speak their piece.”

To participate, all residents have to do is go to www.sammamish.us, click on the “community involvement” tab, and select “Virtual Town Hall.” The topic will close in early January.

The new online tool is designed to give residents an opportunity to weigh in on important topics without having to drive down to City Hall to address the City Council in person.

“It’s really broadening the cross-section of opinion we’re receiving from the public,” Larson said. “Instead of hearing from 7 or 8 people in the City Council chamber, we’re now hearing from 300 or 400 people. It’s great.”



Boarding a bus at the South Sammamish Park ‘n Ride.

City Event Opportunities

The City of Sammamish hosts over 20 free events annually with approximately 28,000 in attendance. The majority of these take place during the summer and include:

Fourth on the Plateau
Concerts in the Park
KidsFirst!
Shakespeare in the Park
Sammamish Days

Sponsorships

Promote your business while supporting community building. No matter what your budget, there are sponsorships opportunities that will help promote your business and help you build stronger community connections.

Vendors

We have three events that host multiple vendors. When you are a vendor, you have direct access to event attendees.

More information at sammamish.us or by contacting Lynne at 425-295-0584 or lhandlos@sammamish.us.



Harshwinder Singh

School principals, education leaders visit City Hall

Sammamish is known for its excellent schools, but principals from the Lake Washington School District, the Issaquah School District and Eastside Catholic don't often get together in one room.

So, the city, for the second time, invited representatives from Sammamish schools to join City Councilmembers and city staff for a roundtable discussion.

The Nov. 4 meeting, organized by Councilmember Bob Keller and presided over by Mayor Don Gerend, was held in the City Council chamber.

"Our previous meeting was some time ago, so we thought it would be a good idea to meet again," City

Manager Lyman Howard said. "We wanted to know how the city could help the principals with their educational missions, and we also wanted them to talk to each other. It was a great meeting."

Some of the items on the topic list:

- How can bus usage be increased to keep cars off roads?
- Drug and alcohol use prevention programs
- School safety
- Impact of growth on schools
- Shared facilities
- After-school activities



Lake Washington and Issaquah School District principals meet with city officials last month.

In addition to the principals, representatives from the Issaquah Schools Foundation, Lake Washington Schools Foundation, Sammamish Drug Free Coalition, Sammamish Community Center/YMCA and the Boys & Girls Club were also present.

CITY CALENDAR

DECEMBER

Thursday, Dec. 1

-Finance Committee Mtg, 9 a.m.

Friday, Dec. 2

-Very Merry Sammamish, 5 p.m.

Tuesday, Dec. 6

-City Council Meeting, 6:30 p.m.

Thursday, Dec. 8

-Tagore Commemorative Event
6 p.m.

Tuesday, Dec. 13

-City Council Meeting, 5 p.m.

Wednesday, Dec. 14

-Transportation Cmte Mtg, 9:30 a.m.

Thursday, Dec. 15

-Planning Comm Mtg, 6:30 p.m.

Monday, Dec. 26

-City offices closed

JANUARY

Monday, Jan. 2

-City offices closed

Tuesday, Jan. 3

-City Council office hour, 5-6 p.m.
-City Council Meeting, 6:30 p.m.

Tuesday, Jan. 10

City Council Study Session
6:30 p.m.

Tuesday, Jan. 17

City Council Meeting, 6:30 p.m.

PLEASE NOTE:

All meetings and events at City Hall, unless otherwise noted. Times, dates and locations are subject to change. Please consult the city website for the most current information.

Eastside shelters

Congregations for the Homeless/ Housing and Shelter for Men

Medical, dental and mental health services available.

515 116th Ave N.E.,
Bellevue
425-614-6506

Sophia Way

Emergency winter shelter for adult, single women from 8:30 p.m. to 7:30 a.m.

Lakeside Christian Church,
701 First Street,
Kirkland.
425-463-6285

The Landing in Redmond

Emergency overnight shelter for people 18 to 24 years of age.

Lineup for shelter at 8:30 p.m.
16225 N.E. 87th St., Ste A-1,
Redmond
425-449-3868

Ballot drop box a hit!

It's a small container, but the ballot drop box outside Sammamish City Hall was part of a huge success this election season.

According to King County Elections Director Julie Wise, the 43 boxes scattered around the county collected more than 544,000 ballots. That's 51 percent of all ballots cast.

In an email to ballot box hosts, Wise wrote: "That's incredible and far greater than we ever could have imagined!"

The Ballard Branch Library location led the pack with 21,280 ballots. Sammamish came in 16th with 6,809 ballots. Union Station took the last spot, with only 77 ballots.

One other plus: Sammamish residents using the box saved \$3,200.23 cents in postage!



The ballot drop box outside Sammamish City Hall.

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Be advised:

The city's stormwater management requirements are changing!

The city is currently updating its stormwater and development codes to ensure that low impact development (LID) is the preferred method of site development and redevelopment in accordance with NPDES regulations.

In addition to revising city codes and regulations the city will be adopting a new stormwater design manual, which will include the mandatory use of LID BMPs. New standards will be adopted and apply to any project that is not vested before Jan. 1, 2017.

CITY OF SAMMAMISH OFFICES

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Beth Goldberg	Admin Services Director
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Jeff Thomas	Community Dev Director
Melonie Anderson	City Clerk
Michelle Bennett	Police Chief
Jeff Clark	Fire Chief
Michael Kenyon	City Attorney

Newsletter suggestions or concerns?
Contact Communications Mgr Tim Larson
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