

# SAMMAMISH

ISSUE 134

CITY NEWSLETTER

AUGUST 2013

## Improving economy accelerates change in Sammamish

### NEW GROWTH TRIGGERS CONCERNED CALLS TO CITY

Some have probably forgotten, and others arrived too late to know, but Sammamish was pushed into existence by powerful concerns about growth.

Houses were flying up, traffic was bogging down, and the population was rapidly outgrowing its meager supply of parks, ballfields and sidewalks.

“The 90’s were an anxious time on the Sammamish Plateau,” City Manager Ben Yazici said. “In the end, though, and this is a great credit to our residents, the community opted for self governance in 1999. Things have been getting better ever since.”

Following incorporation, the city implemented a temporary growth moratorium and dramatically increased investments in infrastructure. Then, when the economic recession set in, concerns about growth began to ease.

But some of that concern is back. An improving economy is driving more building permit applications through

*See CHANGE, pg. 3*



## City ranks fourth on national list of “Top booming suburbs in America”

Already ranked among America’s “best places to live,” Sammamish is now being described as one of the country’s “top booming suburbs.”

In fact, Coldwell Banker Real Estate, headquartered in New Jersey, has decided Sammamish deserves to be ranked fourth in that particular category, citing the city’s rising employment rate, safe neighborhoods, proximity to good schools, and impressive array of suburban amenities.

“We don’t know how their computers crunch the numbers,” City Manager Ben Yazici said. “But we feel very fortunate that we compare so favorably with all the other great communities around the country.”

Washington suburbs did especially well in the rankings, with Cottage Lake ranking as the top “booming suburb” in America. Mercer Island, finishing fifth in the rankings, came in just behind Sammamish.

**SAMMAMISH LANDING**  
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**EMAIL ALERT SUCCESS**  
*Story on page 4*

**LAND DONATION**  
*Story on page 4*

## Beach party at Sammamish Landing!

There were speeches, elected officials, and a ceremonial ribbon cutting, but the real story could be found at the water's edge – a splashing, gleeful celebration of Sammamish Landing by 4-year-old kids, tail-wagging dogs and other non-voters.

“It was a great scene,” City Manager Ben Yazici said. “The sun was out, the weather was perfect, and we had a great turnout.”

The July 26 beach party capped off a very long but ultimately successful effort by several jurisdictions to create the city's first public park on the Lake Sammamish waterfront.

“Shortly after incorporation, the Nelson family generously donated some land,” Yazici said. “Then the city

of Redmond donated some property and King County let us use a portion of their right of way along the trail.

Sammamish Landing is a great example of what can be done when there's cooperation and a shared vision.”

The narrow, eight-acre lakefront park features several pocket beaches, two docks, open space and a pair of picnic shelters. Located just below the northern city limits (4607 E. Lake Sammamish Parkway N.E.) Sammamish Landing does not yet have an associated parking lot but it's easily accessed via the East Lake Sammamish Trail.



*Sammamish Landing Beach Party on July 26.*

## Council adopts ECA update

After lengthy and sometimes contentious debate, the Environmentally Critical Areas (ECA) update was adopted by the City Council on July 9. The ECA, which governs the treatment of streams, wetlands, steep slopes and other sensitive areas, passed on a 5-2 vote.

“This is an ongoing balancing act,” City Manager Ben Yazici said. “State law requires cities to periodically weigh the best available science, protection of the environment, respect for property rights and a vast array of other factors, some of them quite technical and others quite subjective.

“It's never going to be easy, but I think our Planning Commission and City Council made an excellent, good-faith effort to arrive at a balanced approach.”

Although it's heavy going, residents can review the full text of the ECA update by going to [www.sammamish.us](http://www.sammamish.us), clicking the “regulations” tab on the left side of the home page and then selecting “adopted ordinances.” The Environmentally Critical Areas Update is the first entry at the top of the adopted ordinances list.

## 2013 Arts Fair artists at Sammamish Nights!

If you'd like a preview of the creative talent that will be on display during the Sammamish Arts Fair in October, please plan on attending Sammamish Nights on Saturday, Aug. 10.

Sammamish Nights is a ticketed event featuring fine food, adult beverages, music, dancing and an “art walk” atmosphere generated by Sammamish Arts Fair artists. The art work will be available for perusal and purchase. The event begins at 6:30 p.m. at City Hall.

The Arts Fair itself will come later, on Saturday, Oct. 12, and Sunday, Oct. 13, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. on both days, also at City Hall.

The Arts Fair is a community-wide cultural experience, produced by a partnership of the participating artists and the Sammamish Arts Commission. Attendees will be welcome to meet the jury-selected artists, discuss the creative process, and, of course, purchase any of the pieces on display.

# CITY OF SAMMAMISH

## *CHANGE, cont. from pg. 1*

City Hall, and that means city staffers are fielding more calls about altered views, construction noise, and the toppling of trees. Kamuron Gurol, the city's director of community development, is well aware of the uptick in concern.

"We've responded by assuring resi-



*Clearing and grading for a new development.*

dents that all customers, including developers and builders, are being held to the same high standard," Gurol said. "Although it's hard to see trees come down and have trucks on the street, everybody is required to play by the same rules.

"Since incorporation in 1999, the city has steadily refined its regulations. We do our best to treat everybody the same, to protect the environment, and at the same time allow for some flexibility when it's appropriate. Obviously, this can be a bit of a balancing act at times."

Yazici says the city's ability to manage growth has improved dramatically since 1999. A land-use comprehensive plan has been in place for years, with an update now underway. The regulations governing the city's shoreline and environmentally critical areas have also been recently updated.

"We are employing the 'best practices' available," Yazici said. "We're going to do a good job of managing the growth that comes with an improved

economy."

New subdivisions are underway now on what used to be pasture or forested land, and those changes can be challenging for nearby neighbors.

"Part of our success is that we are a desirable community to live in, with great schools, low crime and a high quality of life, so it's natural for others to want to live here too," Yazici said.

And totally stopping growth is not an option.

"Property owners have rights, and the courts have always been tough on cities that go too far. Trying to stop growth leads to lawsuits, and that can quickly empty the city treasury."

Sammamish is located inside an "urban growth area," as designated by the state's Growth Management Act (GMA). The GMA mandates that communities inside an "urban growth area" must take their share of residential growth.

To accommodate some of that, the city has adopted a Town Center Plan that encompasses 240 acres of lightly-developed land in the geographical center of the city. Anchored by City Hall and Sammamish Commons at the south end, the town center will feature a mix of residential, retail, commercial and public spaces.

"As an improving economy continues to drive development, we'll encourage growth in the Town Center," Yazici said. "In addition to giving us a great community gathering place, the Town Center

will also help reduce the impact of growth on our established neighborhoods."

City officials says it's absolutely vital that residents continue to play a strong role in the formulation of policy. Whether it's by attending comprehensive plan meetings, commenting directly to the Council, or applying to serve on the Planning Commission or some other board, the perspective and energy of residents is what keeps policy in proper alignment with the community's values and priorities.

"When change is inevitable, it makes sense to fashion it to your liking," Yazici said. "I really hope we see a lot of community involvement in the years ahead, just as we have in years past."

The community's past involvement has paid off. Even though Sammamish is only 14 years old, its regular appearance in the national rankings of "best places to live" would seem to indicate that the community has done a good



*Another more common sight of late.*

job of preserving its best qualities while adapting to change.

"We're a special place, and that means people are going to move here and trigger more construction and some very reasonable concerns," Yazici said. "But this community responded very intelligently to growth in the years since incorporation, and I'm confident we'll do the same in the years to come."

## Habitat for Humanity thanks city for land donation

Working together on behalf of affordable housing, the city and Habitat for Humanity have designated a 1.5-acre property along 228th Avenue as the future location of several residential units. The city-owned property, which used to house the city's old maintenance and operations shop, was recently donated to Habitat.

Habitat's Kirk Utzinger, Lee Brannam and Tom Granger appeared at the July 15 City Council meeting to thank Sammamish for the donation of land. Following the meeting, Utzinger issued a statement.

"We are extremely grateful to the city of Sammamish for their genuine commitment to provide more affordable home

ownership opportunities in their community," Utzinger said. "This land donation will allow us to build safe, healthy and sustainable homes for hard-working, low-income families."

Although the residential units have

not been designed yet, it's expected the donated site will be able to accommodate between eight to twelve units. Sammamish City Manager Ben Yazici said he's confident the new homes will fit in beautifully.

"We're very pleased to be partnering with Habitat," Yazici said. "Providing affordable housing in Sammamish is really important, so we wanted a partner with a great track record and the ability to deliver a quality housing product that would match the character of our community."

Habitat, which relies primarily on volunteer labor, has built well over 100 homes in eastside communities, selling them at cost to working families.



*Habitat's Lee Brannam (fourth from left), Kirk Utzinger (fourth from right) and Tom Granger (far right) join Sammamish Mayor Tom Odell (holding sign) and members of the Sammamish City Council and staff following the city's land donation.*

## 5,000 subscribers now receive city email alerts

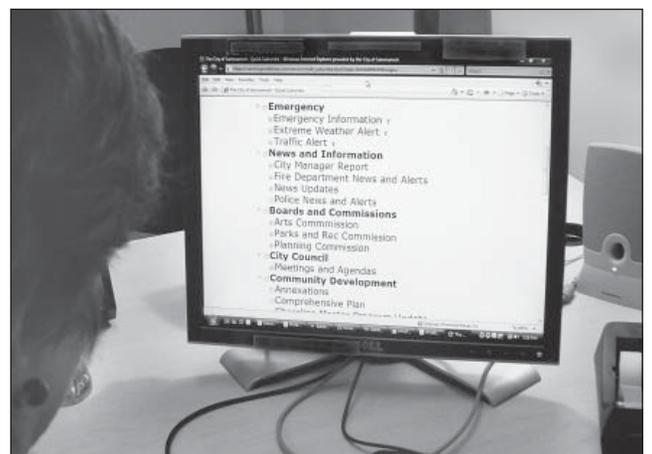
### JUST ADDED TO TOPIC LIST: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIC PLAN

Want to keep up to date with the city's economic development strategic plan? Well, just snap on your computer, go to [www.sammamish.us](http://www.sammamish.us), and click on the "email alert" icon in the upper-right corner of the home page. Follow the prompts and you'll soon see the topic, or topics, you're interested in.

Roughly 5,000 people have already done that, choosing from a list of 48 topics, and the number of people subscribing to the free city service continues to climb.

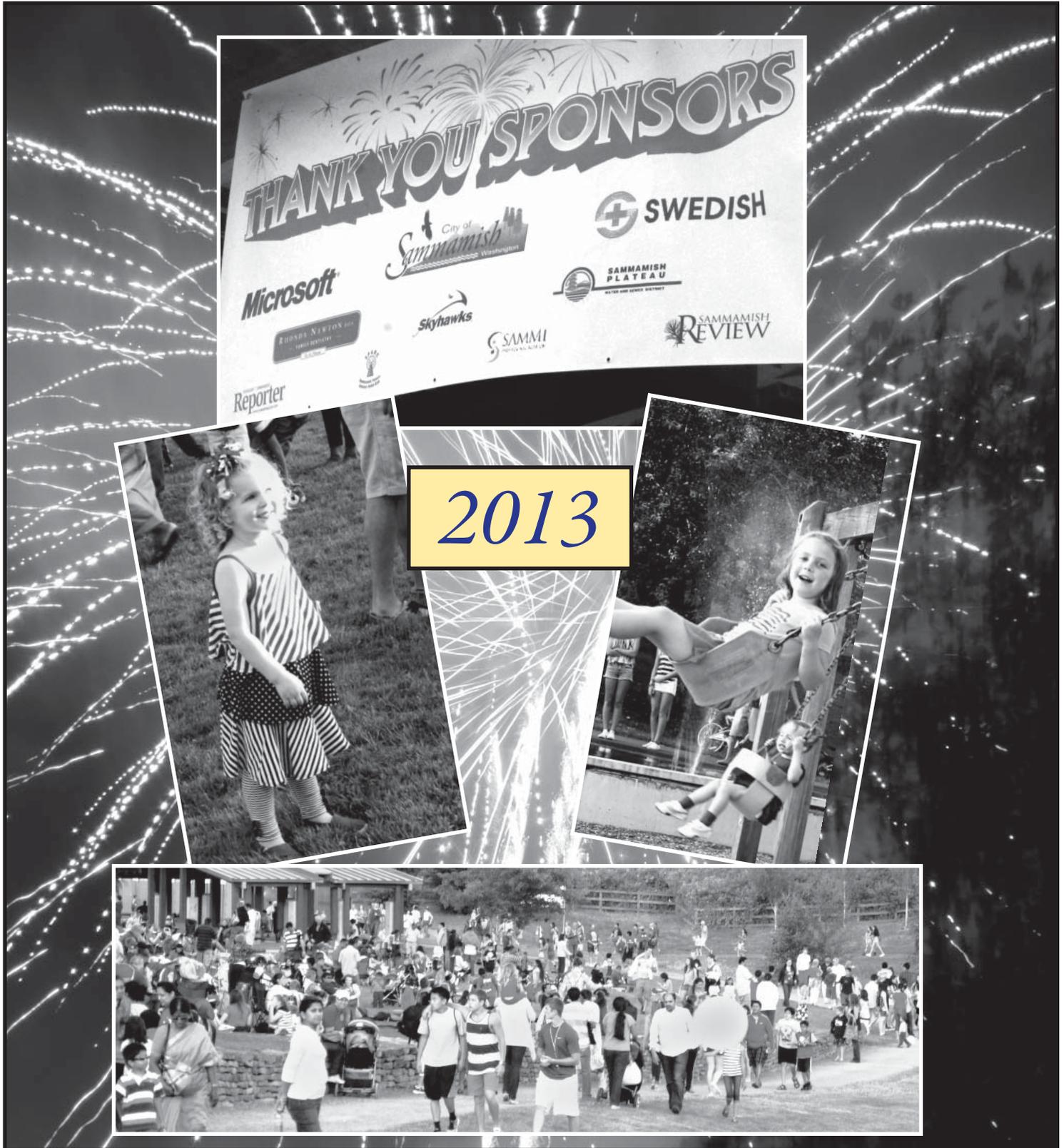
"It's such an easy way to stay in touch with the city, I think word of mouth is probably driving subscribers our way," Communications Manager Tim Larson said. "It'll be interesting to see how high that number is five years from now."

Among the more popular topics are special events, volunteer opportunities, news updates and emergency information.



*To receive email alerts on topics that interest you, just go to the city website ([www.sammamish.us](http://www.sammamish.us)) and sign up.*

July 4th at Sammamish Commons!!!



## Celebrate Sammamish on Aug. 10 !!!

TWO RACES FOLLOWED BY SAMMAMISH DAYS AND SAMMAMISH NIGHTS

### *8 a.m. - Adventure Race to Understand Autism - Mary Queen of Peace Church*

Teams will search for clues to figure out where to go in Sammamish. There will be tasks, pictures to be taken, and so much to be learned about autism. To register, go to [www.sammamishadventurerace.org](http://www.sammamishadventurerace.org).

### *9 a.m. - Rotary Challenge Series Race - Discovery Elementary School*

This annual event provides about two dozen physically and/or mentally challenged children a chance to race soapbox-derby-style cars down Southeast 24th Street. The event is capped off with a picnic and trophy presentations.

### *10 a.m. - Sammamish Days! - City Hall Plaza*

This cultural event and food truck rodeo will feature music, entertainment and, of course, many different kinds of food. The performers will include Karate West, Pan Leggo Steel Drums, Lelavision Physical Music, Elite Jiu-Jitsu Youth Group, From Within Nucleus Dance Co., and Fabricio Capoeira.

### *6:30 p.m. - Sammamish Nights! - City Hall*

Brought to you by the Sammamish Chamber of Commerce and the Sammamish Arts Commission, this elegant event will feature art, adult beverages, food, dancing and the smooth jazz saxophone of Darren Motamedy.

To get your tickets, go to [sammamishnights.eventbrite.com](http://sammamishnights.eventbrite.com).

## Public input encouraged on comp plan update

It's a long process – it started this spring and will continue until June 2015 – but it's never too early for residents to be part of the comprehensive plan update.

State law requires cities to periodically refresh the comp plan, a document that outlines goals and policies for housing, transportation, and other aspects of the city's development. The current comp plan was adopted in 2003, and significantly amended in 2006.

Residents are invited to weigh in at Planning Commission meetings, and then do the same when the City Council takes up the update early next year. Amendment proposals, which will be accepted until this September, will be processed in 2015.

For more information, go to the [www.sammamish.us](http://www.sammamish.us) and navigate to *departments, community development* and *comprehensive plan*.

## Where does rainwater go?

Have you ever wondered where rainwater goes after it hits your roof, yard, driveway, and streets? In case you didn't know, it flows into storm drains and directly to our streams, rivers and lakes – untreated! Any pollutants will eventually end up in Lake Sammamish, so do your part to keep our waters clean. Here are a few guidelines:

- Never dump grass clippings, oil, or other waste into storm drains.
- Try not to overfertilize your lawn or overuse pesticides.
- Wash your car on the lawn or take it to a commercial car wash.
- If your car is leaking, fix it!
- Pick up your pet waste: "Scoop it, bag it, trash it".

Help keep the waters of Sammamish clean for everyone! For more information, contact the city of Sammamish stormwater management team at 425-295-0573 or email us at [stormwatermanagementteam@sammamish.us](mailto:stormwatermanagementteam@sammamish.us).

# CITY CALENDAR

## AUGUST

### *Thursday, Aug. 1*

-Summer Nights in the Park, 6:30-8 p.m.  
Pine Lake Park

### *Tuesday, Aug. 6*

-Family Volunteer Event,  
10 a.m.-noon.  
-Sammamish Lower Commons  
Safe and Sound Sammamish,  
2-5 p.m.

### *Wednesday, Aug. 7*

-Donate Blood, 9 a.m.-3 p.m.  
-Sammamish Farmers Market, 3-8 p.m.

### *Thursday, Aug. 8*

-Summer Nights in the Park, 6:30-8 p.m.  
-Pine Lake Park

### *Saturday, Aug. 10*

-Sammamish Days, 10 a.m.-2 p.m.  
-Sammamish Nights, 6:30-10 p.m.

### *Wednesday, Aug. 14*

-Sammamish Farmers Market, 3-8 p.m.

### *Thursday, Aug. 15*

-Community Garden Steering  
Committee, 6:30 p.m.  
-Summer Nights in the Park,  
6:30-8 p.m., Pine Lake Park

### *Saturday, Aug. 17*

-Sammamish Walks,  
Evans Creek Preserve, 10 a.m.-noon

### *Monday, Aug. 19*

-Arts Commission Meeting  
Canceled

### *Tuesday, Aug. 20*

-Family Volunteer Event,  
10 a.m.-noon.  
Sammamish Lower Commons

-Kiwanis KidsFirst! Performance Series,  
Noon-1 p.m.  
Ebright Park

### *Wednesday, Aug. 21*

-Sammamish Farmers Market, 3-8 p.m.

### *Thursday, Aug. 22*

-Summer Nights in the Park, 6:30-8 p.m.  
Pine Lake Park

### *Wednesday, Aug. 28*

-Sammamish Farmers Market, 3-8 p.m.

### *Thursday, Aug. 29*

-Summer Nights in the Park,  
6:30-8 p.m., Pine Lake Park

## SEPTEMBER

### *Monday, Sept. 2*

-Labor Day  
City offices closed

### *Tuesday, Sept. 3*

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

### *Wednesday, Sept. 4*

-Sammamish Farmers Market, 3-8 p.m.

### *Thursday, Sept. 5*

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

### *Monday, Sept. 9*

-City Council Office Hour,  
5:30-6:30 p.m.

### *Tuesday, Sept. 10*

-City Council Study Session, 6:30 p.m.

### *Wednesday, Sept. 11*

-Sammamish Farmers Market, 3-8 p.m.

### *Thursday, Sept. 12*

-East Meets West Guided Artwork  
Exhibit Tour, 6-7 p.m.

-Art Poetry and Revolution Panel  
Discussion and Reception,  
7-8:30 p.m.

### *Monday, Sept. 16*

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

### *Wednesday, Sept. 18*

-Sammamish Farmers Market,  
3-8 p.m.

### *Thursday, Sept. 19*

-“Celebrating Autumn with Haiku”  
(55+ Art Program), 10 a.m.-noon  
Boys and Girls Club  
-Community Garden Steering  
Committee, 6:30 p.m.  
-Planning Commission Mtg, 6:30 p.m.

### *Saturday, Sept. 21*

-Sammamish Walks - Beaver Lake  
Preserve, 10 a.m.-noon

### *Wednesday, Sept. 25*

-Sammamish Farmers Market,  
3-8 p.m.  
-Finance Committee Meeting,  
4-5 p.m.

### *Thursday, Sept. 26*

-“The Nature of Sumi Painting”  
(55+ Art Program),  
10 a.m.-noon  
Boys and Girls Club  
-Swil Kanim - Storytelling,  
6-9 p.m.  
Beaver Lake Lodge

## 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.



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## SAMMAMISH CITY COUNCIL



*Tom Odell*  
Mayor



*Ramiro Valderrama*  
Deputy Mayor



*John Curley*  
Councilmember



*Don Gerend*  
Councilmember



*John James*  
Councilmember



*Tom Vance*  
Councilmember



*Nancy Whitten*  
Councilmember

## Summer Entertainment!

### Concerts in the Park

*(On Thursdays, 6:30-8 p.m., at Pine Lake Park)*

*Aug. 8*

*Cherry Cherry*

*(Neil Diamond Tribute)*

*Aug. 15*

*Petty Fever*

*(Tom Petty Tribute)*

*Aug. 22*

*Sammamish Symphony*

*(Tall Ships)*

*Aug. 29*

*North Country*

*(Bluegrass)*

## Kids First! Performance Series

*Aug. 13, 1 p.m. - Charlie Hope - Sammamish Commons*

*Sponsor: Friends of the Sammamish Library*

*Aug. 20, Noon - Eric Ode, Ebright Creek Park*

*Aug. 27, 1 p.m. - Alex Zerbe - Sammamish Commons*

*Sponsor: Friends of the Sammamish Library*

## CITY OF SAMMAMISH OFFICES

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Lyman Howard

Kamuron Guroi

Joe Guinasso

Laura Philpot

Jessi Bon

Mike Sauerwein

Melonie Anderson

Nathan Elledge

Wes Collins

Bruce Disend

City Manager

Deputy City Manager

Com Dev Dir/Asst City Mgr

Finance Director

Public Works Director

Parks & Rec Director

Admin Services Director

City Clerk

Police Chief

Fire Chief

City Attorney

**Newsletter suggestions or concerns?**  
**Contact Communications Mgr Tim Larson**  
425-295-0555  
[tlarson@sammamish.us](mailto:tlarson@sammamish.us)