

SAMMAMISH

ISSUE 142

CITY NEWSLETTER

APRIL 2014

Issaquah ponders Klahanie options

After a narrow majority of voters in the Klahanie Potential Annexation Area (50.53 percent) turned down the opportunity to join Issaquah, there appear to be two possible “next steps.”

One is for Issaquah to split off the portion of the Potential Annexation Area (PAA) that voted to join them and give those residents another opportunity to join the city. That would then allow the rest of the PAA to potentially join Sammamish.

Option two is to let go of the entire PAA and give all residents in the area the opportunity to join Sammamish. At its March 10 meeting, the Issaquah City Council agreed to give both options further study. No date has been set for a decision.

“Issaquah should be given the space and time it needs to make a thoughtful decision,” City Manager Ben Yazici said. “Our City Council has been clear that we would like to annex Klahanie if Issaquah decides to release the area, but we’re very much in standby mode right now.”

The Klahanie PAA is made up of Klahanie proper, without about 3,000

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NE Water District urges customers to put political pressure on city

ALSO BUDGETS \$600,000 TO FIGHT AN ASSUMPTION THE CITY CURRENTLY HAS NO PLANS TO PURSUE

At a public meeting last month, officials of the N.E. Sammamish Sewer and Water District told residents the best way to stop a city takeover of the utility was by applying political pressure to the City Council. And at the end of the meeting, officials broke the attendees into small groups so they could brainstorm ways to apply that pressure.

The district’s fear of a city assumption was prompted by the city’s sug-

gestion last year that a joint feasibility study be conducted to ascertain whether an assumption would make sense. Although the state’s Growth Management Act (GMA) encourages cities to assume water districts when practical, the district declined to participate in the study.

District officials also announced at the meeting that they’ve budgeted around \$500,000 of the district’s

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MAYOR’S MESSAGE

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The state of our city is very good indeed!

Over the past month or so I've presented a "State of the City" update to some of our local civic groups. In part, I spoke about the new Community Profile that I wrote about last month. We remain a relatively affluent city of families, with a large portion of young people and a growing community of empty-nesters and seniors still living in their family homes.



Tom Vance
Mayor

We have become a more diverse city: 24 percent of our residents are foreign born.

As you might expect, the financial state of our city was another major topic. Here is part of that discussion:

We used to speak with pride about our AAA bond rating, as a measure of our city's financial health. Not anymore. Our bond rating did not go down, however; it went away. Since paying off our last bit of remaining bonded debt about a year ago, we have nothing left to rate: no bonded

debt, no rating.

Never fear! The same rating agencies that rate bonds also rate a city's "bonded debt capacity", how much we could borrow, if we wanted to. The number is staggering: \$459 million, or about eight times our biennial budget! (Be assured that neither this Mayor, nor our Deputy Mayor, Council or City Manager has any plan to use that debt capacity any time soon.)

Since my "State of the City" addresses last month, however, I've been struck by two recent events that illustrate another strength of our city: the excellence of our city staff, the people who operate and administer our city daily, monthly, yearly. In the last three months, two of our department heads have been selected to lead other cities in King County.

In January, Mike Sauerwein, our director of administrative services, was hired by the city of Medina to be their new city manager. Among his many responsibilities here, Mike worked on public safety, our police and fire service. Mike's patient and practical style was an important part

of our long negotiation to get to our new agreement with Eastside Fire & Rescue. We all miss Mike.

More recently, Kamuron Gurol, our director of community development, was selected to be the new city manager of Burien. Kamuron has spent the last nine years navigating his department and the city through the complex and important day to day work of the permit center and land use policy, including the environment, shorelines, our Comprehensive Plan, and much more. Personally, I will miss Kamuron very much. I worked with Kamuron since early in his nine years with the city, first as part of the Planning Commission and then the City Council.

I join everyone else at City Hall and around our city in wishing both Mike and Kamuron the best in their new responsibilities.

So, if I were to recast my "State of the City" report, I'd have to add a new section: When cities come to our city to find their new leaders, the state of our city is very good indeed.



City devising regulations to cover homeless encampments

Following the departure of Tent City 4 from the Mary Queen of Peace property in January, the Planning Commission and city staff have been working diligently on new code that would regulate future homeless encampments.

The new "homeless encampment use permit" language will attempt to balance the rights of campers with the interests of neighbors in the vicinity of future tent encampments. Current state

law gives churches the right to provide space for the homeless.



Tent City 4 in Sammamish

A public hearing on the matter was held last month, but residents are invited to continue sharing their opinion by attending Planning Commission meetings or sending emails to hec@sammamish.us. Residents may also learn more about the topic by going to the city website at www.sammamish.us and clicking through *Departments, Community Development* and *homeless encampment code*.

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funds to fight an assumption. The money, they said, would be used for legal, engineering and study expenses, among other things. A review of water commission minutes from Nov. 5 show that the district actually set aside more than \$600,000 to fund the fight.

City Manager Ben Yazici says no decision has been made regarding an assumption. If the study were to show that no significant benefits would flow from an assumption, he says the city would leave the district alone.

“We wanted to do a joint study because we thought it would enhance the credibility of the results no matter how the study turned out,” City Manager Ben Yazici said. “I think it’s a waste of public funds to invest in dueling studies that produce opposing results.

“It’s also a bit ironic that they objected to the joint study, in part, because it was too expensive. But a few thousand dollars for a study is small potatoes compared to the half million plus they’ve given themselves permission to spend.”

Considering that cities have the

legal right to assume districts in these circumstances, and are encouraged to do so by the GMA when practical, one attendee asked why the district was setting aside so much money to fight a battle it couldn’t win. The answer, from district officials: The battle could be won through politics.

“We are preparing to welcome a lot of district customers to our Council meetings in the weeks ahead,” Yazici said. “We look forward to hearing their concerns and sharing information with them.”

Some of that information will be a corrective to the district’s December newsletter, which gave customers the erroneous impression that a city takeover would lead to chlorinated water, a loss of taste quality, the imposition of a utility tax, and looser cost controls.

“If their goal was to frighten their own customers, they certainly succeeded,” Yazici said. “We got a wave of emails from some very upset people.”

Yazici points out that the city has no utility tax, no plans to impose one, and, should an assumption take place, no reason to chlorinate anybody’s water.

“This is a distinct system with its own wells and a group of ratepayers who really seem to love their water,” Yazici said. “The city would have no reason to change that.

The GMA’s intent, Yazici said, is to eliminate the redundancies that occur when you have two governments, one on top of the other.

“The water district government was here before the city incorporated. Now, though, we have two governments, both perfectly capable of running a water utility,” Yazici said. “The GMA’s intent is to find efficiencies through consolidation.

“The goal of the proposed feasibility study would be to determine if those savings and efficiencies are more than a theory. We would want real evidence that an assumption would be good for ratepayers and taxpayers before we considered a change.”

The Northeast Sammamish Sewer and Water District provides water to about 3,250 customer accounts in the northern part of the city. Only two of those water customers are outside Sammamish city limits.

KLAHANIE, cont. from pg. 1

homes, and several smaller, adjacent developments. All together, the PAA has 3,930 residential units, a population of 10,800, and 1.94 square miles of land. If the entire PAA were to annex to Sammamish, it would bring the city’s total population to approximately 60,000.



Klahanie scene

Council chamber closes May 13 MEETINGS TO BE HELD IN MAINTENANCE AND OPERATIONS CENTER UNTIL JUNE 10

On a temporary basis, the City Council and Planning Commission will begin using the city’s Maintenance and Operations Center (MOC) for their meetings beginning May 13. Per the current schedule, they will return to the City Council chamber in City Hall by June 10.

The short-term move will clear the way for some significant improvements to the city’s emergency management and audio-visual capabilities in the Council chamber and an adjoining conference room.

The MOC is located in the northeast quadrant of the city at 1801 244th Avenue N.E., a short distance to the north of Northeast Eighth Street. As always, meetings will be open to the public.

County held four open houses in March to discuss paved trail

AFTER EIGHT YEARS WITH A GRAVEL SURFACE, THE EAST LAKE SAMMAMISH TRAIL IS ABOUT TO GET SMOOTH

When King County was preparing to build the Eastlake Sammamish Trail almost a decade ago, many trailside residents launched a passionate and sustained protest. After the gravel trail opened, though, things got fairly quiet.

The question now is whether the paving of that same trail, and the implementation of numerous new improvements along the way, will produce similar alarm.

“We’re glad King County has done so much outreach in Sammamish,” City Manager Ben Yazici said. “These are very sensitive issues for a lot of our residents so I’m glad there have been several opportunities for serious

conversations.”

In March, the county held four open houses, one for each section of its “South Sammamish” segment. That segment stretches 4.8 miles from Inglewood Hill Road to Southeast 43rd Way. Construction is scheduled to begin in the second quarter of 2015.

The “North Sammamish” segment, from Inglewood Hill Road north to the city limits, is further along. At press time, it was expected to close for construction sometime this month.

For more information, contact ELST@kingcounty.gov or 1-888-668-4886.



City Engineer Jeff Brauns (center) and King County officials go over aerial photographs of the East Lake Sammamish Trail with residents on March 19.

Two recycling opportunities

COMPUTER AND ELECTRONICS RECYCLING EVENT

Saturday, April 5, 10 a.m.-1 p.m., at City Hall

Bring laptops, tablets, keyboards, cell phones, desktop computers, CRT and LCD monitors, TVs less than 40”, mice, cables, printers, ink, toner, and hardware components. This recycling drive will benefit “Kids Without Borders,” a Sammamish non-profit that supplies laptops to kids around the world.

SPRING RECYCLING EVENT & BIN SALE

Sunday, April 13, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Sunny Hills Elementary site will accept tires, motor oil, filters, anti-freeze, mattresses, clothing, porcelain toilets.

Discovery Elementary site will accept computers, electronic equipment, TVs, refrigerators, batteries.

For more information call City Hall at 425-295-0555.

City devises regulations to cover homeless encampments

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Kamuron Gurol leaves to become Burien city manager

As the director of community development for nine years, Kamuron Gurol has been a key figure in Sammamish's early history, shepherding complex projects to completion and facilitating the community's sometimes contentious effort to define itself. But after almost a decade in Sammamish, Gurol is leaving to become the city manager in Burien.

"Sammamish has made so much progress, it's been exciting to be part of it," Gurol said. "It's really taught me a lot and helped me grow as public servant. I'm very grateful."

With a Masters in Public Administration from Harvard, and years of rough and tumble land-use debate under his belt, Gurol will bring a very seasoned perspective to Burien.

"He will be excellent," City Manager Ben Yazici said. "We're going to miss his patience, his intelligence, and his talent for the heavy lift."

And what are Gurol's parting words?

"Keep listening to each other and keep making fact-based decisions. As we've all learned over the years, passion is no substitute for good policy. And, oh yes, thanks for nine great years!"



Kamuron Gurol

The Y discusses programs for the city's new Community Center

Wanting to make sure the the programs at the new Community and Aquatic Center are a good fit for Sammamish residents, the YMCA held a two-way conversation with residents at City Hall last month. The Y, which will operate the city's soon-to-be-built facility, specifically wanted to know what "gaps" existed in the community's current menu of activities.

The Y's outreach to the community will continue at community events, meetings with homeowners' associations, through focus groups, and in a variety of other ways. According to Y officials, the March 19 meeting was just the "beginning of the conversation."

The new, 68,000-square-foot, \$34.5 million facility, to be located just west of City Hall and the library, is scheduled to start construction this summer and reach completion in about 18 months.



The Y's Judy Smith discusses program options with residents.

Limiting runoff a priority at Community Center

Normally, large building projects tend to produce an undesirable side effect when the rain comes down – lots of runoff. But as the community prepares to invest in the new \$34.5 million Community and Aquatic Center, some of that money will be spent on making the whole site, along with some nearby acreage, a lot more absorbent. Some examples:

- A vegetated rain roof will capture moisture
- Pervious surfaces will absorb rain
- Water will be conserved on site, allowing for recycled use
- Six acres of nearby land will be reforested as part of a drainage covenant
- Almost three acres directly west of the facility will be preserved as a conservation easement

The reforestation effort will extend to the lower bowl of Sammamish Commons, the spot where Wetland #61 serves as the headwaters of Ebright Creek.

The trees are important because they help with "evapotranspiration." In plain english, that means the tree leaves hold some of the rain before it hits the ground, allowing it to evaporate. Plus, the trees draw in and use water through their root systems, which also reduces runoff.

City reviewing tree retention rules

As in all cities, Sammamish has rules regarding the treatment of some very important inhabitants – our trees!

And, periodically, those rules get reviewed and adjusted. That's what's happening now as the Planning Commission gathers feedback from residents, developers and other stakeholders.

If you would like to weigh in on the proper treatment of trees, please contact Senior Planner Mona Davis at TreeRetention@sammamish.us. Your feedback is welcome, via email or through your presence at one of several public meetings.

Among other things, the Planning Commission will be looking at incentives, penalties, and tree retention standards for both developers and owners of single-family lots. Their recommendations will go to the City Council this summer.

Voices needed for “The Price”

The Sammamish Arts Commission is sponsoring a reading of “The Price,” an Arthur Miller play about two grown brothers who come together after many years to settle their late father's estate. If you would like to help bring the playwright's words to life by volunteering as a reader, please contact Daphne Robinson at daphnemrobionson@msn.com or 425-591-6016.

The ACT Theatre Community Play will be read on Thursday, May 8, 7-8:30 p.m., at the Sammamish King County Library. It's free and open to the public.

Puget Sound Starts Here!

In recent years, we've heard a lot about what we can do, as individuals and as a community, to preserve the health of Puget Sound. But the effort to educate and inspire us never ends. May is “Puget Sound Starts Here” month!

For a full list of activities in May, go to www.PugetSoundStartsHere.org. Among other things, there will be special Seattle Mariners Saturday on May 10 at Safeco Field.

In the meantime, keep taking those individual steps to help maintain the health of Puget Sound's 2,500 miles of shoreline:

- Never dump anything into a storm drain.
- Fix auto leaks right away.
- Don't wash your car in the driveway.
- Pick up pet waste.
- Use natural yard products like compost and mulch.
- Follow directions for the use of chemical pesticides and fertilizers, and use them sparingly.
- Store and dispose of household chemicals according to the instructions on the label.
- Landscape your yard with native plants and trees that will soak up more rain and slow runoff.

Learn more about Puget Sound Starts here at www.PugetSoundStartsHere.org.

8th Annual
Sammamish **ARTS Fair**
fine arts - performance arts - arts activities - admission FREE

CALL FOR ARTISTS

Application deadline May 16th 2014

Fair dates: October 11th & 12th, 2014

Sponsored by the City of Sammamish, Sammamish Arts Commission
For more information: www.sammamishartsfair.wordpress.com

CITY CALENDAR

APRIL

Tuesday, April 1
City Council Meeting, 6:30 p.m.

Wednesday, April 2
Parks and Rec Comm Mtg, 6:30 p.m.

Thursday, April 3
Planning Commission Mtg, 6:30 p.m.

Saturday, April 5
Computer Recycling Drive,
10 a.m.-1 p.m.

Tuesday, April 8
City Council Study Session, 6:30 p.m.

Wednesday, April 9
Let's Talk Tomatoes! 6:30-8 p.m.

Thursday, April 10
"Crossing Boundaries" Reception,
7-9 p.m.

Saturday, April 12
HAIKU in the Park, Sammamish Walks,
10:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m., Beaver Lake Lodge

Sunday, April 13
Spring Recycling Event & Bin Sale,
10 a.m.-4 p.m., Discovery Elementary

Monday, April 14
Council Cmte of the Whole, 6:30 p.m.

Tuesday, April 15
City Council Meeting, 6:30 p.m.

Wednesday, April 16
Sammamish Youth Board Mtg, 6 p.m.

Thursday, April 17
Planning Comm Mtg, 6:30 p.m.

Monday, April 21
Arts Commission Mtg, 6:30 p.m.

Tuesday, April 22
Earth Day Volunteer Event, 3-5 p.m.
Lower Sammamish Commons

Saturday, April 26
Volunteer at Lower Sammamish
Commons, 9 a.m.-noon

"Au-Some Artists" - Special Arts Sammamish, 1-3 p.m.
EX3 Boys and Girls Club Recreation
and Teen Center

MAY

Thursday, May 1
Planning Commission Mtg, 6:30 p.m.

Saturday, May 3
Volunteer at Samm Landing, 9 a.m.-noon

Monday, May 5
Blood Drive, Puget Sound Blood Center,
9 a.m.-3 p.m.

Tuesday, May 6
City Council Meeting, 6:30 p.m.

Wednesday, May 7
Parks and Rec Comm Mtg, 6:30 p.m.

Thursday, May 8
Art for Seniors (55+) Workshop Series
10 a.m.-1 p.m., Boys and Girls Club

"The Price" - Act Theatre, 6-9 p.m.
Sammamish Library

Using Soils and Fertilizers in Your Garden,
6:30-8 p.m., Beaver Lake Lodge

Tuesday, May 13
City Council Study Session, 6:30 p.m.
Maintenance and Operations Facility

Wednesday, May 14
Farmer's Market, 3-8 p.m.

Thursday, May 15
Planning Comm Mtg, 6:30 p.m.

Saturday, May 17
Volunteer at Samm Landing, 9 a.m.-noon

Sammamish Walks at Pine Lake,
10 a.m.-noon

Monday, May 19
Arts Commission Mtg, 6:30 p.m.

Committee of the Whole, 6:30 p.m.
Maintenance and Operations Facility

Tuesday, May 20
City Council Meeting, 6:30 p.m.
Maintenance and Operations Facility

Wednesday, May 21
Farmer's Market, 3-8 p.m.

Sammamish Youth Board Mtg, 6 p.m.

Thursday, May 22
Art for Seniors (55+) Workshop Series
"Drawing your Way", 10 a.m.-1 p.m.
Boys and Girls Club

Monday, May 26
Memorial Day, City offices closed

Wednesday, May 28
Farmer's Market, 3-8 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.



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Sammamish, WA 98075

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*Tom Vance
Mayor*



*Kathy Huckabay
Deputy Mayor*



*Don Gerend
Councilmember*



*Bob Keller
Councilmember*



*Tom Odell
Councilmember*



*Ramiro Valderrama
Councilmember*



*Nancy Whitten
Councilmember*

3rd Annual Fun Run

BOYS & GIRLS CLUB FUNDRAISER

SUNDAY MORNING, MAY 4



Register at: www.rs.positiveplace.org

CITY OF SAMMAMISH OFFICES

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City Manager

Lyman Howard

Deputy City Manager

Kamuron Gurol

Com Dev Dir/Asst City Mgr

Jessi Bon

Parks & Rec Director

Joe Guinasso

Finance Director

Laura Philpot

Public Works Director

Melonie Anderson

City Clerk

Nathan Elledge

Police Chief

Wes Collins

Fire Chief

Michael Kenyon

City Attorney

**Newsletter suggestions or concerns?
Contact Communications Mgr Tim Larson
425-295-0555
tlarson@sammamish.us**