

SAMMAMISH

ISSUE 141

CITY NEWSLETTER

MARCH 2014

Quieting fears; spreading facts

CITY STAYS BUSY CORRECTING
NE WATER DISTRICT NEWSLETTER

The emails pouring into City Hall need to be answered. They're from frightened residents who've been told the city may have plans to ruin their sweet-tasting drinking water by adding chemicals – and then charge them extra for the privilege!

“In the ten years I've been with the city, I don't remember ever getting this many upset emails,” Communications Manager Tim Larson said. “I've been pinned down at my desk, typing away, trying to correct the misinformation some of our residents have received.”

The emails, which were still coming in at press time, were triggered by a newsletter from the Northeast Sammamish Sewer and Water District (NESSWD). In that December communication, the district suggested that a city takeover of the water district would lead to chlorinated water, a chemically induced loss of “taste”

See WATER, pg. 3



Klahanie nixes Issaquah annexation

ALL EYES NOW TURN TO A WELCOMING SAMMAMISH

It was very close, but at press time it was apparent that Klahanie residents had voted against annexation to Issaquah. By a small but stable margin, the “no” votes exceeded the 50 percent threshold.

Sammamish, which passed a resolution last year saying that it would initiate annexations efforts if the Issaquah vote failed, is now in the driver's seat. But the road ahead has a few speed bumps, some of them pro-

cedural, some of them political.

“We're hoping Issaquah will work with us to expedite the transfer of Klahanie from their ‘potential annexations area’ to ours,” City Manager Ben Yazici said. “We trust those conversations will go smoothly.”

The potential annexation area (PAA) change will require the blessing of the Growth Management Planning Council, a group of city and county

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MAYOR'S MESSAGE

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SIMPLE MEASURES

Story on page 4

PAVED TRAIL

Story on page 5

Who are we? Where have we been? Where are we going?

I hope my wife Mary Lynn, an art historian and Paul Gauguin scholar, will forgive my mangling of the title of his most famous painting: "Where do we come from? What are we? Where are we going?"

But I hope, as we go forward with the revision of our City's Comprehensive Plan, that



*Tom Vance
Mayor*

we can answer those questions, and have a better understanding of ourselves, our city, and a plan for our future.

I hope, also, that the result of our efforts will be more transparent than Gauguin's mysterious and complex painting.

Our last major work on this document was our first Comprehensive Plan in 2003. And although some additional material has been added over

the years, this is the first major revision since then.

A few weeks ago, the "Who are we?" and "Where have we been?" part of the process was published: the City of Sammamish Community Profile. You can download it from the front page of the city website (www.sammamish.us).

Much of what it tells us, I think, is information we can already see all around us. We are still, more than 10 years later, primarily a city of families. About one-third of our population is under the age of 18. More than 60 percent of our households include three or more persons.

We are an affluent community. We are well-educated, and we highly value our great local schools and safe neighborhoods.

How have we changed? We are aging: We have a growing population of seniors and empty nesters who are staying in their family homes. We are

also much more ethnically diverse. Sammamish has the third highest proportion of foreign-born residents on the eastside.

Over the next several months, our Planning Commission and then the City Council will be focusing on housing, transportation, land use, environment and conservation, sustainability, economic development, our capital facilities, and parks, recreation and open space, among other issues.

The Planning Commission will complete revisions this year, and the City Council will complete a final review early next year.

By mid-2015, after considering all that has changed, and all that has remained the same, we should have a much better answer for Gauguin's last question: Where are we going?



KLAHANIE, cont. from pg. 1

elected officials who will pass on a recommendation to the King County Council. If King County approves the PAA transfer, and a couple of other process hoops are successfully navigated, the city would be in a position to schedule the annexation vote.

In the midst of all this, the city would also conduct an annexation fiscal study to make sure the financial impacts on Klahanie and the city would be acceptable.

"Our Council thinks it makes sense for Klahanie to

annex to Sammamish," Yazici said. "Klahanie shares a border with our city, most of the kids go to our schools,



Klahanie street scene

and it's up on the plateau with us, not down in the valley with Issaquah.

"The main reason they were assigned to Issaquah's PAA was because Sammamish didn't exist as a city when that decision was made. I think most of Klahanie's voters will agree with that logic and vote to join us if they get the opportunity."

Klahanie is a planned residential community with 3,000 homes. The annexation of Klahanie would bring the city's population to approximately 60,000.

WATER, cont. from pg. 1

quality, the imposition of a utility tax, and looser cost controls.

The fear response provoked by the NESSWD newsletter followed a suggestion from the city that the district participate in a joint feasibility study. That study would have evaluated whether it would make sense for the city to assume, or takeover, the water district.

“When an incorporation happens, and a new city encircles a pre-existing water district, a redundancy results,” Larson said. “The Growth Management Act encourages cities to consolidate urban services and gain efficiencies through the sharing of resources, etc.

“Not surprisingly, there’s often resistance to this kind of change. But we were really taken aback by the content of that NESSWD newsletter. It really scared their customers, and we’ve had to spend a lot of time trying to correct a very erroneous impression.”

As part of that effort, City Manager Ben Yazici and Public Works Director Laura Philpot paid a visit to the Sahalee homeowners’

association board and made the following points:

- If the city took over the district, it would not put chlorine in the water.
- It would not blend the district’s water with water from other districts.
- The city would let NESSWD continue to operate as a distinct system, drawing water from its own wells.
- It would not impose a utility tax. The city has never had utility tax and has no plans for one.

Yazici says the board’s response was pretty skeptical.

“Their take seemed to be something along the lines of ‘Well, you many not have any current plans to do any of those things, but that doesn’t mean you won’t do them in

the future.’

“It’s hard to argue with that. Even though we have no reason to make the changes they fear, no government can guarantee the future. Not city government, and not the government that’s currently running the district.”

In the meantime, the emails continue to come in:

“This is outrageous...”

“No! This is a stupid idea!!!”

“I don’t want chlorinated water...”

“I am extremely upset...”

“The city intends to increase taxes...”

NESSWD provides water to about 3,250 customer accounts in the northern part of the city. There is no timeline for a possible city assumption. Although the Growth Management

Act encourages cities to pursue assumptions when practical, it places no deadline on the process.

“It could be that a feasibility study would show there’s no compelling reason to make a change,” Yazici said, “and we could just leave things the way they are. But we won’t get a fix on the benefits of consolidation, and the potential reduction in tax dollar expenditures, until we do a study.”

NESSWD has declined to participate in a joint study.



City Manager Ben Yazici (standing) listens to Sahalee homeowners’ board.

Stormwater dispute in Issaquah Highlands is settled

A lengthy disagreement between the city of Issaquah and the Sammamish Plateau Water and Sewer District has been settled.

The dispute revolved around Issaquah’s plans to inject storm water into the ground in Issaquah Highlands. The district objected, saying the storm water would pose a threat

to its aquifer and primary wells.

Among other things, the agreement calls for the following:

- Issaquah will decommission its Lower Reid Infiltration Gallery (LRIG) stormwater system in 2014.
- The water district will contribute up to \$1 million to decommission the LRIG and build a new storm-

water management system.

- Issaquah will stop its effort to take over portions of the water district that are within its borders.

Although Sammamish was not directly involved, it hosted negotiation sessions between Issaquah, the district and the Department of Ecology at Sammamish City Hall.

Simple Measures – in concert on March 18

RAJAN KRISHNASWAMI ON CELLO AND MARK SALMON ON PIANO AT SAMMAMISH PRESBYTERIAN

A very special musical experience will be offered to Sammamish residents when the Krishnaswami-Salmon duo plays a blend of French and German pieces this month.

The concert, presented by the Sammamish Arts Commission, will begin at 7:30 p.m. on Tuesday, March 19, at the Sammamish Presbyterian Church, 22522 N.E. Inglewood Hill Road.



Rajan Krishnaswami

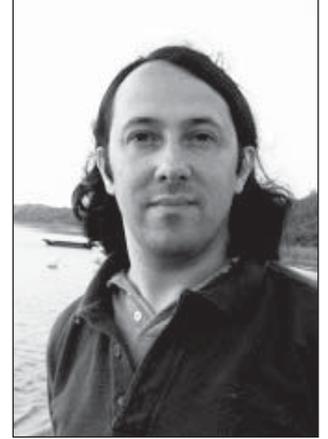
The first half of the concert will feature French music, including a delightfully playful sonata by Francis Poulenc that is reminiscent of French cabaret music with American jazz influences.

The second half will con-

sist of an early work by German composer Richard Strauss. The Strauss sonata will exhibit youthful exuberance and unbridled enthusiasm in the style of the late 19th century Romantic period.

Krishnaswami and Salmon have been making music together for over 20 years, playing together both nationally and internationally. Both are originally from Connecticut and attended the Julliard School.

More information on the duo is available at www.simplemeasures.org. This concert, co-sponsored by the city and 4Culture, is free and open to the public.



Mark Salmon

Do you have the right charge card?

ONLY CHARGEPOINT CARDS WORK AT CITY HALL IF YOU WANT TO JUICE UP YOUR ELECTRIC VEHICLE

The charging stations popping up nationwide to fuel electric vehicles are not all the same. The electricity may be identical, but the charge cards or key fobs required to activate the charging stations are different.

The two fueling stations in the City Hall parking lot, for example, require a ChargePoint card. Just as a Texaco card won't buy you gasoline at a Shell station, some-

thing other than a ChargePoint card won't do the trick at City Hall.

The other vendors in Washington state – Blink, Aerovironment, Semaconnect, etc. – also require their own cards and key fobs.

For more information on how to go about opening up an account, just go to the vendors' websites.



Crossing Boundaries

An invitational printmaking exhibition entitled "Crossing Boundaries" will continue until April 25 at City Hall. The Sammamish Arts Commission presentation will be highlighted on April 10 at 7 p.m. by a reception for the artists and a conversation related to methods of printmaking. The reception will be free and open to the public. All participating artists are from this region but have national or international reputations.



A print by Barbara Robertson

King County to share information on design of a paved trail

FOUR OPEN HOUSES IN MARCH WILL FOCUS ON THE SOUTH SAMMAMISH TRAIL SEGMENT

Along the East Lake Sammamish Trail, the distance between Inglewood Hill Road and Southeast 43rd Way is 4.8 miles. Today, it's a gravel surface. But starting in the spring of 2015, King County hopes to lay down pavement and make other significant improvements. To share information and obtain comments from the public, King County will be holding four open houses this month, with each one focusing on a specific section of the project. All meetings will be from 5 to 7 p.m.

**March 12, Pine Lake Middle School Commons,
3200 228th Ave. S.E.**

Trail section: S.E. 43rd Way to S.E. 33rd Street

March 13, Rachel Carson Elem., 1035 244th Ave. N.E.

Trail section: S.E. 33rd Street to 1200 East Lake Sammamish Shore Lane S.E.

March 18, Margaret Mead Elem., 1725 216th Ave. N.E.

Trail section: 1200 East Lake Sammamish Shore Lane S.E. to 130 East Lake Sammamish Shore Lane N.E.

March 19, Pine Lake Middle School, 3200 228th Ave. S.E.

Trail section: 130 East Lake Sammamish Shore Lane N.E. to Inglewood Hill Road



Gravel trail in Sammamish.



Paved trail in Issaquah.

What programs will the Community and Aquatic Center have?

YMCA WILL SHARE INFORMATION AND GATHER PUBLIC INPUT AT MARCH 19 PUBLIC MEETING

As the city proceeds toward the construction of the Community and Aquatic Center, it's important for residents to know what programs are going to be offered.

And it's also important for the YMCA, which will operate the facility on behalf of the city, to cultivate a better understanding of the community's interests and priorities.

To that end, the YMCA will hold a public meeting at XXXXXXXXXX on



Wednesday, March 19, from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

The construction of the Community and Aquatic Center was endorsed by a majority of Sammamish residents through and advisory vote in November 2012.

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

Application window for human services grants opens March 19

SAMMAMISH JOINS 15 OTHER CITIES IN FUNDING RECOGNIZED 501(C)(3) ORGANIZATIONS

Organizations that provide direct human services may apply for grants at <http://share1app.culturegrants.org/> between March 19 and April 23. These grants are for the 2015-2016 biennium.

The application portal will consider funding requests for programs in Sammamish and the following 15 other cities: Auburn, Bellevue, Burien, Covington, Des Moines, Federal Way, Issaquah, Kenmore, Kent, Kirkland, Redmond, Renton, SeaTac, Shoreline and Tukwila.

To help applicants use the portal, the cities are sponsoring two brief workshops. The first will occur on Wednesday, March 12, at SeaTac City Hall, from 10 to 11:30 a.m. The second workshop is scheduled for Tuesday, March 18, at Redmond City Hall, from 1 to 2:30 p.m. The workshops



will be especially useful for new applicants, but all are welcome.

For a list of organizations that have received funding from the city of Sammamish, please visit www.sammamish.us/services/grants.aspx.

Sammamish is committed to providing funding support to local non-profit organizations to help ensure that Sammamish residents can access needed assistance.

This may include help with food, shelter, utility bills, medical or dental care, legal issues, counseling, employment, affordable child care and other services. Every effort is made to ensure services are locally provided.

For additional information, contact Sammamish City Clerk Melonie Anderson at 425-295-0511 or manderson@sammamish.us.

wildlife steward story will go here



CITY CALENDAR

MARCH

Saturday, Mar. 1

“Make it a Clay Day,”
Special Arts Sammamish,
1-3 p.m., EX3 Boys and Girls Club

Tuesday, Mar. 4

City Council Meeting, 6:30 p.m.

Wednesday, Mar. 5

Parks and Recreation
Commission Meeting,
6:30 p.m.

Thursday, Mar. 6

Planning Commission
Meeting, 6:30 p.m.

Saturday, Mar. 8

Volunteer Event at
Evans Creek Preserve,
10 a.m.-2 p.m.

Tuesday, Mar. 11

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

Monday, Mar. 17

City Council Meeting, 6:30 p.m.

Arts Commission Meeting,
6:30 p.m.

Tuesday, Mar. 18

Simple Measures,
“The Krishnaswami-Salman Duo,”
7:30-9 p.m.
Sammamish Presbyterian Church

Wednesday, Mar. 19

Sammamish Youth
Board Meeting,
6 p.m.

Thursday, Mar. 20

Planning Commission Meeting,
6:30 p.m.

APRIL

Tuesday, Apr. 1

City Council Meeting,
6:30 p.m.

Wednesday, Apr. 2

Parks and Recreation
Commission Meeting,
6:30 p.m.

Thursday, Apr. 3

Planning Commission Meeting,
6:30 p.m.

Tuesday, Apr. 8

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

Thursday, Apr. 10

“Crossing Boundaries”
Reception,
7-9 p.m.

Saturday, Apr. 12

“Haiku in the Woods,”
10 a.m.-2 p.m.
Beaver Lake Lodge

Monday, Apr. 14

City Council Meeting,
6:30 p.m.

Wednesday, Apr. 16

Sammamish Youth
Board Meeting,
6 p.m.

Thursday, Apr. 17

Planning Commission Meeting,
6:30 p.m.

Monday, Apr. 21

Arts Commission Meeting,
6:30 p.m.

Tuesday, Apr. 22

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

Saturday, Apr. 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

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 Vance
Mayor*



*Kathy Huckabay
Deputy Mayor*



*Don Gerend
Councilmember*



*Bob Keller
Councilmember*



*Tom Odell
Councilmember*



*Ramiro Valderrama
Councilmember*



*Nancy Whitten
Councilmember*

Personal safety during a flood



- Do not walk through flowing water
- Do not drive through flowing water
 - Stay away from power lines.
 - Electricity travels through water
 - Be alert for gas leaks.
- Look out for broken bottles, nails, other flood debris

CITY OF SAMMAMISH OFFICES

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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?
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