

Victory Heights Community Council Meeting Minutes
January 17, 2017

Meeting called to order at 7:02 PM by President Ann Forrest. Fifteen people present.

Wayne Barnett of the City's Ethics and Elections Commission spoke about the new democracy vouchers we have been receiving in the mail lately. They can be used in city races (mayor, city council, prosecutor) to support any "qualified" candidate. One qualifies by having a least 400 \$10 donations from separate contributors, promising to hold to a spending limit, and agreeing to three debates each in the primary and general election. Seattle is the only city in the country with this voucher system, we are the testing laboratory. Vouchers can be mailed to a candidate's campaign, or simply returned to the Ethics and Elections Commission with the candidate's name written on them in the provided postage-free envelopes.

Sabrina Bolieu, the District 5 Director for city councilperson Debora Juarez, spoke and took questions. She handed out bullet-points with the councilwoman's accomplishments, namely the Bitter Lake Reservoir Park, Aurora Commons, and Meadowbrook sidewalks. Naturally, we were more interested in what was going on around us in Lake City. On the perennial topic of sidewalks, Bolieu said, "Turns out SDOT does not have a transparent way of prioritizing sidewalks." Juarez did manage to have a proposed Link Light Rail stop at NE 130th Street put on the Sound Transit 3 proposal last November which passed, but still won't be built until 2033 (as an aside, she said the Northgate station would be up and running in 2020, one year ahead of schedule, and the pedestrian bridge is funded, and Juarez is working on using private investment to make a wider, nicer bridge). The police station is a political problem, something Juarez wants to "make it cost effective." But things are really tense with activists who are against it. If we want a new police station, we need community members to testify at hearings and not worry about being called racists (her words). Email responses to the councilwoman are not being handled in a timely manner, mainly owing to over 400 a day, but conceding "we could do much better" replying to them. About specific Lake City issues like a proposed injection site, homeless problems, and sidewalks, Bolieu said the heroin epidemic is a large problem, "Heroin is everywhere." But, "it's not a good fit for the eastside [of District 5] or Lake City for an injection site," responding to rumors that one was about to be placed in Lake City. Instead one will be downtown and one in south King county. Juarez would prefer pursuing medically assisted treatment, but "prepare to have some hard conversations about dealing with the heroin epidemic." Some in the audience were complaining about all the low-income housing that was being dumped in the "urban village" of Lake City but it was pointed out some urban villages don't even have a grocery store, and the average household income in Lake City is higher than many other parts of the city. While "the answer to homelessness is more housing," everyone is acutely aware of how expensive living in Seattle currently is, bringing its own set of problems. Bolieu staffs Juarez's office located on the North Seattle College campus, and you can sign up on their website if you'd like to drop in for a chat. There will be a "community celebration" called the Shanty Tavern Dive In featuring Juarez, held at the venerable Lake City landmark on Friday, February 10th from 6-8 PM.

The proposed blood drive in Victory Heights was cancelled due to lack of interest. Ann will try again when the weather is nicer.

The emergency communications HUB is coming, the city should be buying supplies and getting them to us soon, so we can set up in the park. Ann will be doing another earthquake preparedness class on Saturday, February 4th at the Northgate Library from 3:30 to 5:15 PM.

The next meeting is Tuesday, February 21st at 7 PM in the preschool building in the park. We'll hear the results of the VHCC survey, and debrief from neighborhood meetings.

Meeting adjourned at 8:04 PM.

Submitted by Ryan Johnson
Secretary, Victory Heights Community Council