

East Bellevue Community Council
Summary Minutes of Regular Meeting

April 3, 2012
6:30 p.m.

Lake Hills Community Clubhouse
Bellevue, Washington

PRESENT: Chair Kasner and Councilmembers Capron, Gooding and Seal

ABSENT: Councilmember Hughes

STAFF: Cheryl Kuhn, Neighborhood Outreach
Lt. Tony Dempsey, Police Department

1. **CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. with Chair Kasner presiding.

2. **ROLL CALL**

The Clerk called the roll. All Councilmembers were present, with the exception of Councilmember Hughes.

Chair Kasner led the flag salute.

3. **COMMUNICATIONS - WRITTEN AND ORAL:** None.

4. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Councilmember Gooding moved to approve the agenda, and Councilmember Seal seconded the motion. The motion to approve the agenda carried by a vote of 4-0.

5. **PUBLIC HEARING:** None.

6. **RESOLUTIONS:** None.

7. **REPORTS OF CITY COUNCIL, BOARDS, AND COMMISSIONS:** None.

8. **DEPARTMENT REPORTS**

- (a) Graffiti in East Bellevue and Prevention Tips

Ms. Kuhn introduced Lt. Tony Dempsey.

Ms. Kuhn described the increase in graffiti incidents during the past three to four years. She distributed and reviewed a handout summarizing incidents by department, responses to those incidents, and the costs related to dealing with graffiti prevention and cleanup.

Lt. Dempsey described gang-related graffiti, commonly known as tagging. The Bellevue Police Department has one detective assigned to address graffiti related to gang activity.

Lt. Dempsey and Councilmembers discussed their concerns about hate messages expressed through graffiti.

Responding to Chair Kasner, Lt. Dempsey described a proactive Problem-Oriented-Policing (POP) project with Main Street/Old Bellevue merchants and residents to address concerns about tagging in the Downtown.

Chair Kasner suggested involving students in the City's anti-graffiti efforts.

Lt. Dempsey said that citizens who witness a person or person engaging in graffiti should call 911. In other cases, citizens could call a non-emergency City or Police Department number to report the incident. He said it is best to hear directly from the property owner or resident at the specific graffiti location.

Referring back to Mr. Kasner's comment, Ms. Kuhn explained that one concern about using students/volunteers to help remove graffiti is related to the use of toxic chemicals for removal. Some jurisdictions use volunteers, but the City of Bellevue has not been ready to do so.

Mr. Kasner wondered whether working with youth to increase pride in their neighborhoods, and to spread the message that graffiti is not cool, would be an effective approach.

Ms. Kuhn said the City is exploring multiple alternatives for addressing the problem. Lt. Dempsey emphasized the importance of cleaning it up quickly to discourage continued tagging.

Responding to Chair Kasner, Sonja Rossman, a 35-year resident, noted her history of community activism and her experience working at Crossroads Community Center, where she taught ESL classes for three years. She expressed concern about spending excessive taxpayers' dollars on anti-graffiti efforts. She likes the use of graffiti walls in some jurisdictions to provide a controlled outlet for young artists. She noted that she also was a junior-senior high school teacher, and she believes there needs to be places for kids to be kids.

Mr. Kasner suggested there might be indoor spaces as well that would be appropriate for controlled graffiti art.

Ms. Rossman observed that teaching students to feel a sense of ownership for their neighborhoods could help mitigate the problem.

Responding to Councilmember Seal, Lt. Dempsey said that taggers include all types of people. Ms. Kuhn noted a recent community presentation about problematic youth behavior, which indicated that criminal youth behavior cuts across all socio-economic and cultural backgrounds.

Chair Kasner observed that residential vacancies, both single-family and multifamily, have increased, and this is likely to negatively affect the sense of community and neighborhood pride.

Councilmember Capron emphasized that graffiti is vandalism and a crime, and he is especially disturbed by hate message graffiti. He believes that removing graffiti quickly, especially if it is gang-related, is an effective response.

Responding to the Council, Lt. Dempsey said it is okay for citizens to call 911 to report graffiti, especially if they do not know a non-emergency number for the Policy Department. However, they should indicate immediately that the situation is not an emergency.

Ms. Kuhn noted that the City's central phone number is 425-452-6800.

Following additional general discussion, Chair Kasner thanked Lt. Dempsey and Ms. Kuhn for attending.

Ms. Rossman offered her thanks to the Police Department for its service over the 35 years that she has lived in Bellevue.

9. **COMMITTEE REPORTS:** None.

10. **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

(a) State Legislative HB 2610 Update – Letter of Support from Jane Hague

Chair Kasner noted the letter in the meeting packet from King County Councilmember Jane Hague to State Senator Craig Pridemore, expressing her support for community councils and her concern about HB 2610, which seeks to eliminate the community councils.

11. **NEW BUSINESS**

(a) Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) Projects in East Bellevue

Chair Kasner noted the summary in the meeting packet regarding the 145th Place SE bike lanes and sidewalks project.

Mr. Kasner suggested that the Community Council identify capital projects that it would like to support, if any, during this year's budget process.

12. **CONTINUED COMMUNICATIONS**

(a) 2002 West Lake Hills Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) Recommendation

Mr. Kasner referred the Council to information in the meeting packet regarding the 2001-2002 Neighborhood Investment Strategy project in West Lake Hills. The CAC recommended a number of activities, including developing a stronger sense of community in Lake Hills neighborhoods. Mr. Kasner suggested it would be nice to have some type of community event later in the year.

(b) Additional Human Services Information

Mr. Kasner noted the following reports in the meeting packet: 2012 One Night Count of the homeless in King County, the September 2007 East King County Plan to End Homelessness, and information on the program known as Eastside Pathways: Every Child a Success.

Councilmembers talked about issues related to homelessness including mental illness and substance addiction, and about the role of the faith community and school districts in providing assistance and services.

Returning to the issue of a community celebration, Chair Kasner noted that the July meeting falls on July 3, immediately before the holiday. He suggested cancelling that meeting and instead holding a meeting/community event later in the month. Mr. Kasner said he will not be able to attend on July 3. Councilmembers discussed ideas for a picnic or similar activity.

Mr. Kasner announced that LA Fitness in Kelsey Creek Center plans to open on April 17.

Chair Kasner asked Councilmembers to attend the April 16 City Council meeting with him to provide a report and to comment on the Community Council's priorities.

13. **EXECUTIVE SESSION:** None.

14. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Councilmember Capron moved to approve the Summary Minutes of the March 6, 2012, meeting.

Councilmember Seal seconded the motion, which carried by a vote of 4-0.

15. **ADJOURNMENT**

Councilmember Capron moved to adjourn, which carried unanimously.

At 8:20 p.m., Chair Kasner declared the meeting adjourned.

Michelle Murphy, CMC
Deputy City Clerk

/kaw