

East Bellevue Community Council
Summary Minutes of Regular Meeting

September 1, 2020
6:30 p.m.

Virtual Meeting
Bellevue, Washington

PRESENT: Chair Hummer, Alternate Vice Chair Gooding, and Councilmembers Dhananjaya and Kasner

ABSENT: [Vacant position]

STAFF: None.

1. **CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m., with Chair Hummer presiding. She noted that Councilmembers and staff were participating remotely due to the governor's order prohibiting in-person meetings.

Chair Hummer said there would be no opportunity for oral communications during the meeting, and all written comments submitted prior to 3:00 p.m. today would be summarized for the record under Agenda Item 4.

2. **ROLL CALL/FLAG SALUTE**

Deputy City Clerk Karin Roberts called the roll. All Councilmembers were present.

- (a) Temporary Suspension of East Bellevue Community Council Rules of Procedure

Chair Hummer explained the need to temporarily suspend the East Bellevue Community Council's Rules of Procedure regarding remote participation in meetings and noted that the EBCC will hold remote meetings for an unknown period of time. As a result, a provision concerning EBCC's process for accepting communications from the public in the EBCC's Rules of Procedure needs to be temporarily suspended.

Alternate Vice Chair Gooding moved to suspend, for the September 1, 2020 meeting only, the provision in Section 7 of the EBCC's Rules of Procedure concerning oral communications from the public, and to allow for public comment to be provided in writing and summarized during the EBCC meeting.

Hearing no objection to the motion, Chair Hummer declared the rule suspended.

3. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Councilmember Dhananjaya moved to approve the agenda. Councilmember Kasner seconded the motion, which carried by a vote of 4-0.

4. **COMMUNICATIONS: WRITTEN AND ORAL**

Deputy City Clerk Karin Roberts said the EBCC received no written comments prior to 3:00 PM today for tonight's meeting.

Responding to Chair Hummer, Ms. Roberts confirmed that the EBCC received an email from David Hoffman, Puget Sound Energy, dated August 25. The email indicated that PSE energized the Lake Hills-Phantom Lake transmission line on Friday, August 21. PSE will begin landscaping work this fall to replace trees and vegetation. Ms. Roberts said Mr. Hoffman thanked everyone for their patience throughout the project.

Chair Hummer reminded the public to email all communications to EBCC@bellevuewa.gov. Deputy City Clerk Roberts confirmed that going forward she will provide written communications in the EBCC meeting packets.

6. **REPORT OF THE CHAIR**

Chair Hummer said a number of items are coming before the Planning Commission and the City Council that the EBCC will be reviewing in the future.

11. **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

(a) Interviews for vacant EBCC position

Chair Hummer introduced the interviews of the top five applicants to fill the vacant EBCC position.

Councilmember Dhananjaya noted that the first interviewee, Jeffrey Busch, had not yet joined the meeting but hopefully would be doing so soon. Mr. Dhananjaya recalled that at the June 30 meeting, EBCC Position No. 4 was declared vacant and direction was provided to staff to begin recruiting applicants to fill the vacancy. The City received 16 applications. At the August 4 meeting, the EBCC chose five applicants to interview at tonight's meeting.

Mr. Dhananjaya said that each candidate would be allowed to speak for 15 minutes, with three minutes for an opening statement and 12 minutes to reply to questions previously provided to them. An executive session is scheduled later in the agenda to discuss the candidates' qualifications. Final action to appoint a candidate to elective office must be held in a meeting open to the public. Mr. Dhananjaya said that vacancies are filled by appointment, for the remainder of an unexpired term, by a majority vote of EBCC members. Final action to appoint a candidate is tentatively scheduled for the EBCC's October 6 meeting.

Ron Epstein said he has lived in Bellevue for 23 years. He retired in 2016 from a career in software sales and support. He noted his concern that, as Bellevue grows, the City make the right decisions to

ensure that Bellevue remains a great place to live. Mr. Epstein expressed concern regarding traffic congestion, issues related to homelessness, and improving the quality of life in Bellevue.

Responding to Councilmember Dhananjaya, Mr. Epstein said he prepared for the interview beginning with a review of the EBCC website, including past meeting agendas and minutes. Mr. Epstein said he also researched current projects and issues before the City overall, and he visited another community council's website to get an idea of how they operate. Mr. Epstein said he would like the opportunity to serve his community.

Responding to Councilmember Dhananjaya, Mr. Epstein said he volunteered during the 2018-2019 tax season and learned about the need for assistance with completing tax forms, especially among older adults. Mr. Epstein said he misses the teamwork and collaboration involved in his past employment, and he would like to apply those skills to working for the community.

Responding to Councilmember Kasner, Mr. Epstein said he attended several of the City Council meetings regarding Puget Sound Energy's Energize Eastside project through Bellevue.

Responding to Councilmember Gooding, Mr. Epstein stated his understanding is that community councils are voluntary organizations established by state law. He acknowledged that the EBCC has existed for more than 50 years. Mr. Epstein observed that EBCC members care about their community. He noted the EBCC's role in certain land use actions.

Responding to Chair Hummer, Mr. Epstein said he believes the EBCC is relevant today as a necessary and effective framework for representing the voice of the local community. He said the EBCC provides an ongoing opportunity for public engagement regarding current City projects and issues.

Responding to Councilmember Dhananjaya, Mr. Epstein confirmed that he is able to serve in the position through the term ending on December 31, 2021.

Responding to Councilmember Kasner, Mr. Epstein said he would be interested in running for election beyond 2021.

Responding to Councilmember Gooding, Mr. Epstein said the highest priority issue for him is neighborhood safety and vitality. He noted that many residents are concerned about single-family home room rentals and home occupation businesses. Mr. Epstein said his second priority is retaining parks and open space as development continues. His third priority is addressing traffic congestion.

Responding to Chair Hummer, Mr. Epstein said that, in order to address his priorities as an EBCC member, he would develop a plan to obtain public input and to meet with neighborhood associations and City stakeholders to gather data. Mr. Epstein said he would then consult with his fellow council members regarding the findings and alternatives.

Responding to Councilmember Dhananjaya, Mr. Epstein noted the importance of clearly defining a problem or issue before moving forward to gather information and to engage the public. Mr. Epstein said the next steps are to consider alternative solutions and to discuss their benefits and drawbacks.

Councilmember Dhananjaya invited Mr. Epstein to ask questions of the council. Responding to Mr. Epstein, Chair Hummer said the EBCC does not have jurisdiction over general city codes. Chair Hummer said the EBCC chair manages the meetings and makes sure that they follow Robert's Rules of Order. Ms. Hummer said that EBCC members work together to gather as much information as possible regarding the issues that go before the EBCC for formal action. Chair Hummer said that any EBCC member may request agenda items for consideration by the Deputy City Clerk and the EBCC Chair. Ms. Hummer said the EBCC periodically selects one of its own members to attend City Council, Board, and Commission meetings when topics relevant to the EBCC are discussed.

Councilmember Kasner said the EBCC no longer has jurisdiction over shoreline land uses due to a court decision in recent years. He said the EBCC has jurisdiction over only certain types of land use matters.

Selma Ikiz made her opening statement to the EBCC. She said she has lived in Bellevue for 11 years and works at Microsoft. She noted the increase in development activity and traffic throughout those years. She said she loves her neighborhood and it has been nice to see new families coming into East Bellevue. Ms. Ikiz noted her involvement serving on multiple boards, including a diversity council and professional organizations. She said she would like to continue to serve the community through a number of initiatives.

Responding to Councilmember Dhananjaya, Ms. Ikiz said she appreciated the opportunity to review and prepare responses to the interview questions before tonight.

Responding to Councilmember Kasner, Ms. Ikiz said that becoming a mother was a catalyst for her interest in community involvement. She said her mother emphasized the importance of public service to her. She said her job involves research and analysis, which she believes would be beneficial as a member of the EBCC.

Responding to Councilmember Gooding, Ms. Ikiz said she has not attended City Council or other City-related meetings. However, in 2012, she began reading the City Council meeting minutes to familiarize herself with local government.

Responding to Chair Hummer, Ms. Ikiz said her understanding of a community council is that it serves in a supplementary and advisory role related to local decisions. She sees the EBCC as a forum for addressing the community's priorities and concerns.

Responding to Councilmember Dhananjaya, Ms. Ikiz said she believes the EBCC is relevant in terms of providing input to the City Council and others regarding residents' priorities.

Responding to Councilmember Kasner, Ms. Ikiz said she is able to serve on the EBCC through the end of 2021.

Responding to Councilmember Gooding, Ms. Ikiz said she anticipates that she would be interested in running for reelection as well.

Responding to Chair Hummer, Ms. Ikiz said the highest priorities facing Bellevue are affordable housing, traffic congestion and pedestrian-bike safety, and crime. She noted that petty theft is on the rise.

Responding to Councilmember Kasner, Ms. Ikiz noted her training and experience as an engineer and project manager, which require strong research and analytical skills. However, Ms. Ikiz said she also understands the value of having a long-term vision for addressing issues and challenges.

Councilmember Dhananjaya noted that Chiho Lai withdrew his application from consideration.

Michelle Valverde said she came to Bellevue in 2018 and her family lives near Lake Hills Elementary School in a townhome community. She has been in the Seattle area since early 2016, when she moved to the region to work for Amazon. She is a data and business intelligence engineer. Ms. Valverde said she started her career as an economist and completed two master's degrees. She attended Northeastern University on a community service scholarship and worked for nonprofit organizations in the Boston area. She served as a Girl Scout troop leader in college and is signed up to be a troop leader at Lake Hills Elementary School this school year. Ms. Valverde said she was born and raised in Puerto Rico and speaks Spanish. She said she has been impressed with the City of Bellevue's community engagement. She noted her involvement with her homeowners association and her interest in the Lake Hills Neighborhood Association (LHNA).

Responding to Councilmember Dhananjaya, Ms. Valverde said she researched the City's website in preparation for tonight's interview. She said she is impressed with the volume of information provided for the public. She is enrolled in the Bellevue Essentials program scheduled for this fall.

Responding to Councilmember Kasner, Ms. Valverde said that civic engagement has been a part of her life for a long time, including through college and graduate school. Ms. Valverde said she is passionate about education. She would like the opportunity to learn and to work for the benefit of the community.

Responding to Councilmember Gooding, Ms. Valverde said her understanding of the EBCC is that it works directly with the City to represent the East Bellevue area in specific land use actions. She believes that the EBCC provides a needed voice for the community.

Responding to Chair Hummer, Ms. Valverde said she has not attended any City-related meetings in person. However, she has listened to a number of City Council and other meetings online in recent months. Ms. Valverde said she listened to the most recent Planning Commission meeting and reviewed the Commission's minutes. She has also read the EBCC's recent meeting minutes.

Responding to Councilmember Dhananjaya, Ms. Valverde said the EBCC is relevant and provides a great opportunity for East Bellevue residents to have a bigger voice. She said the area is fortunate to be represented by a community council.

Responding to Councilmember Kasner, Ms. Valverde said she would be able to serve the remainder of the term through the end of 2021.

Responding to Councilmember Gooding, Ms. Valverde said she would be interested in running for reelection as well.

Responding to Chair Hummer, Ms. Valverde said her top three issues facing Bellevue are education, expanding the options for internet service providers in Bellevue, and parks and environmental stewardship.

Responding to Councilmember Dhananjaya, Ms. Valverde said she would approach the EBCC position by learning as much as she can and networking within the community.

Responding to Councilmember Kasner, Ms. Valverde said her approach to making decisions involves reviewing and analyzing data as well as working to solve problems.

Chair Hummer thanked everyone for their interest and participation. She encouraged everyone to become involved with the EBCC and City planning, and highlighted the key roles of the EBCC.

Deputy City Clerk Roberts said the final EBCC action to appoint the candidate is scheduled for the October 6 meeting.

15. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

- (a) Summary Minutes of the August 4, 2020, Regular Meeting

Councilmember Gooding moved to approve the minutes of the August 4, 2020 Regular Meeting. Councilmember Dhananjaya seconded the motion, which carried by a vote of 4-0.

14. **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

At 7:37 p.m., Chair Hummer declared recess to Executive Session for approximately 15 minutes to evaluate the qualifications of the candidates under consideration for appointment to the EBCC.

At 8:00 p.m., Chair Hummer announced that the Executive Session had been extended for an additional 15 minutes.

At 8:15 p.m., Chair Hummer announced that the Executive Session had been extended for an additional 15 minutes.

16. **ADJOURNMENT**

The Executive Session concluded at 8:33 p.m., and the meeting was adjourned.

Karin Roberts, CMC
Deputy City Clerk