

DRAFT Minutes of the 34<sup>th</sup> District Democrats  
King County, Washington  
Meeting of 13 September 2006

107. Chair Ivan Weiss called the meeting to order at 7:03pm.
- 107.1 Seattle Deputy Mayor Tim Ceis led the members in the flag salute.
  - 107.2 The membership approved the minutes of the August meeting and the Treasurer's Report, both as published in the September newsletter and online at [www.34dems.org](http://www.34dems.org).
108. Chair Weiss' Report.
- 108.1 The King County Council has voted unanimously to put creation of the Vashon Public Utility District on the November ballot (this measure was unanimously endorsed by the 34<sup>th</sup> District at our August meeting).
  - 108.2 This Saturday is the White Center Community Development Association dinner-auction. So far 13 members of the 34<sup>th</sup> District will be attending.
  - 108.3 The Outreach Committee is working with Volunteer Chore Services to help clean the house and yard of an elderly woman in Burien on Saturday. We need members to volunteer and help with this great outreach event.
109. First Vice-Chair Tanya Aguilar's Report.
- 109.1 The Latino Vote Project is a major effort by the State Democratic Party to identify and reach out to potential Latino voters, describing issues in Spanish, told by those who know the culture. The Latino demographic is the fastest growing in Washington State. In general, Latinos vote Democratic, but if we stop the outreach Republicans will make inroads. The Latino Vote Project is only funded thru the end of election 2006 in November.
110. Chair Weiss introduced member Joseph Bogaard to talk about the "Save our Wild Salmon" program.
- 110.1 Bogaard stated that the federal government allows dams on the Columbia and Snake rivers to kill up to of 90 percent of all of out-migrating salmon. With so few sockeye returning in the past decade, fisheries biologists have a very limited gene pool to work with. Even the most efficient hatchery programs can't work magic when downriver dams and reservoirs kill 90 percent of the salmon. Scientists have said that the surest way to recover Idaho's salmon is to remove four high-cost, low-value dams on the lower Snake River in Eastern Washington. These dams are a drain on taxpayers, and are the biggest killer of our sockeye salmon.
  - 110.2 Bogaard distributed a resolution to lower these dams and improve salmon runs. But a vote on the resolution would require us to suspend the rules. Chair Weiss stated we will put the resolution in the newsletter and discuss it at the October meeting.
  - 110.3 See also [www.wildsalmon.org](http://www.wildsalmon.org)
111. Chair Weiss recognized elected officials present tonight: Burien City Councilmember and Deputy Mayor Jack Block, State Representative Joe McDermott, King County Councilmember and President Larry Phillips, State Representative Eileen Cody, Seattle City Councilmember Tom Rasmussen, and King County Councilmember Dow Constantine.

**Program – Annexation of North Highline**

112. Chair Weiss introduced the topic by stating that if you talk to 50 different people about the annexation of this neighborhood, you'll get 50 different positions and answers. We will hear from representatives of King County, the City of Seattle, the City of Burien and the North Highline Unincorporated Area Council.

113. Sarah Jepsen of King County spoke first.
  - 113.1 She described the annexation initiative, then the process of annexation, and finally the N. Highline area specifically.
  - 113.2 About 200,000 people live in unincorporated areas of King County. There are ten major unincorporated urban areas. The County is encouraging these areas to incorporate or be annexed by 2012 for these reasons:
  - 113.3 First, financial management – the County can't continue financially to provide services. Second, the land use vision as prescribed in the State's Growth Management Act encourages dense urban areas to be part of cities. And finally, Cities have the taxing ability to provide services to urban areas much better than counties, which provide regional services and services to largely rural areas.
  - 113.4 King County runs a \$20 million deficit to provide local services. The deficit is the cost of the services greater than the taxes collected from these areas. Of this \$20 million deficit, \$7.6 million is in N. Highline. To make up this deficit, the County takes funds intended to provide regional services and uses them to provide local services.
  - 113.5 Under the State Growth Management Act, the role of Counties is to provide rural and regional services. Regional services include transit, water and wastewater, superior and district courts, and so forth. Cities are directed to provide local services, including police, parks, recreation, fire and emergency medical, streets.
  - 113.6 Of the 10 unincorporated urban areas, 9 have already been designated as a potential annexation area - PAA – by a nearby City. The only area not so designated is N. Highline.
  - 113.7 There are several different annexation methods and procedures. Because of the size of the population of this area, the method used will be an election. The ballot issue will be "will you join Burien", or "will you join Seattle", not a choice between "Burien or Seattle". The County would like to see the PAA designation to occur this year, a vote happen in 2007, and completion of the annexation in 2009.
  
114. Deputy Mayor Tim Ceis and Kenny Pittman presented Seattle's case.
  - 114.1 Why is this an issue? The County getting out of the local government business - the new reality is that county is evolving to become a regional government.
  - 114.2 Why would Seattle want to annex? Wouldn't Seattle lose money? Yes, but there are 39 neighborhoods in Seattle - similar to N. Highline - and most of them "lose money" too. Seattle has an industrial core and downtown core which support neighborhoods. Seattle could provide twice as many cops, more firefighters, four on each engine. Plus better parks, learning centers for kids, parks activities, a higher level of maintenance for parks. N. Highline fits with other neighborhoods already in Seattle. Why do we have a city limit at Roxbury? It makes no sense - N. highline fits with adjoining Seattle neighborhoods.
  
115. Deputy Mayor Jack Block and City Manager David Cline presented a case for annexation by Burien.
  - 115.1 North Highline and Burien are all one area.
  - 115.2 In Seattle per capita taxes are \$1400 a year; in Burien they are \$500 per capita. Burien is an efficient and effective deliverer of services.
  - 115.3 City Manager David Cline emphasized that this is a cooperative process with City of Seattle and King County. Burien has council meetings every Monday night - plus five meetings in N. highline. They've used an interactive listening process in an attempt to determine what's good for the community. People like their neighborhoods, and both Burien and North Highline have lots of things in common - cops, firefighters, school district, water and wastewater ... and Burien city hall is close by.

116. Russ Kay represented the North Highline Unincorporated Area Council.
- 116.1 The Council has 13 members - 8 from districts (voting precincts). Russ described how the Council is elected. The Council helped manage a study of incorporation which the County funded. The incorporation study looked at tons of information. The study showed that upon incorporation, the new City of North Highline would be \$6.7 million a year in the hole for operations and would immediately have a 3 million capital shortfall.
- 116.2 Consultants also did some work regarding the annexation. They surveyed 1500 people. The results are online at <http://www.northhighlineuac.org/>. The bottom line: 47% of those surveyed wanted to stay unincorporated, 20% preferred Burien, 17% preferred Seattle and 3% preferred incorporation.
- 116.3 The Council itself chose Burien. Why? As Cline and Block said - N. Highline looks like Burien - large lots. Seattle is about density. North Highline wants to keep same service providers – they would have to pay 3 or 4 times more for sewer, more for water in Seattle. Forty businesses signed petition for annexation by Burien.
- 116.4 The Council is upset that it was not included in the Memorandum of Understanding on Annexation signed by King County, Burien and Seattle - they were not brought to the table.
117. Q&A.
- 117.1 Barbara Schaad-Lamphere asked about School district boundary contiguity with City of Seattle – she wants to keep school districts whole so as not to disrupt schools. Ceis answered: Burien and Seattle agree that district boundaries don't change and state law doesn't require it during annexation.
- 117.2 Kathy King: Burien does not levy a B&O tax for businesses with gross receipts less than \$100,000. How can we protect all the small businesses in the area? Answer: Seattle has a \$50,000 exemption with a proposal to raise it to \$75,000.. Cline also noted that Burien's B&O tax rate is 25% of Seattle's tax rate
- 117.3 Don Webb: What if both cities vote for a PAA? Is it first come, first serve? Jepsen stated: this is unclear. The County will not take sides or support one city or the other during annexation of a contested area.
- 117.4 Cherisse Luxa: Burien and North Highline share police and fire services. If Seattle annexes, Burien's taxes go up to pay for police and fire.
- 117.5 Ceis addressed the issue of zoning and density: 70% of Seattle is zoned Single Family Residential and that won't change. Ceis asked the members about the Delridge neighborhood of Seattle - is it residential and is it improving? The members overwhelmingly answered "Yes". Cities don't turn a profit. Ceis also stated that the providers of water and wastewater in North Highline will stay the same – the Southwest Suburban District.
118. Rob Johnson of the Transportation Choices Coalition spoke to the Transit Now initiative which will be on the King County ballot in November. The measure increases the sales tax by one tenth of one per cent – about \$25 per person per year, and improves bus service in a variety of ways. See web sites at . <http://www.peoplefortransitnow.com/> and <http://www.transportationchoices.org/> .

### **Old Business**

119. There was no old business.

### **New Business**

120. The membership considered a resolution asking for a vote on the Alaskan Way Tunnel. A few people spoke about the poor wording of the resolution. Bill Schrier moved and Greg Doss seconded that consideration of this resolution be tabled. The membership, on a show of hands, overwhelmingly agreed to do so.

121. Chris Arkills asked for membership support of Transit Now. He moved and it was seconded to suspend the rules to allow for an endorsement. The suspension of the rules passed with one dissenting vote. Arkills then moved and it was seconded to endorse Transit Now. The endorsement passed with one dissenting vote.

**Good of the order:**

122. Dow Constantine stated he will be introducing a measure to create a ferry district to help cover water transit. This district will be funded via property tax.
123. A visitor announced that she represented [www.purpletablecloth.org](http://www.purpletablecloth.org) which offers postcards related to issues. A display was in the back of the hall.
124. Elaine Russell remember members that when they vote - via absentee or at the polls, to be sure to designate a party on the ballot in order for the vote to count for partisan races.
125. Alan Munro saw a really vicious commercial about Gerry Alexander. The commercial used Justice Alexander's emotion support of another justice arrested on a DUI to imply that Alexander was soft on crime. That's very misleading. The money to create this commercial is an unethical way to get around the new rule limiting contributions on behalf of the judges. Alexander's opponent has no judicial experience
126. Tom Rasmussen told the members that next Wednesday September 20th at noon in City Council chambers the Seattle City Council will hold a discussion of a study about conditions of senior centers in Seattle. The good news is that the West Seattle Senior Center is in better condition than most.
127. Marcie Stone of Washington Public Campaigns stated she has information and brochures about the group. It is a nonprofit, non-partisan group looking to institute state financing of campaigns. They have a fund-raiser on Sept. 27<sup>th</sup> at the Central Cinema in the Seattle Central District. Contact her for more info.
128. Tanya Aguilar reminded members of the volunteer chore services Outreach event this weekend. Contact Steve Karbowski.
129. Also this weekend is a major festival in the Latino community. It is Mexican independence day from Spain. A day of patriotism for Latinos in US. Festivities all weekend at Seattle Center. The 11th District Democrats are sponsoring festivities and parade in South Park.
130. Chair Weiss adjourned the meeting at 9:07PM

Respectfully submitted,  
*Bill Schrier*  
Secretary