Puget Sound Ports Need To Get Ready for Panama Canal Widening (Seattle Times, 3/17/2010)

Port Debates Whether to Raise Tax Rate (Seattle Times, 10/23/09)

Seattle Sets New Record for Cruise Ships in 2009 (Port of Seattle, 10/26/09)

Port Investigation Exposes Fraud and ‘Get-It-Done’ Culture (Seattle Times, 12/4/08)

First Public Workshop for Tackling Airport Noise Issues (Port of Seattle, 2/17/10)

These headlines highlight both the importance of the Port of Seattle to the local, regional and state economy and some of the recent challenges of Port District oversight and governance.

What do you know about the Seattle Port District and the commission we elect to oversee it? How do we, the voters of King County, begin to understand this sprawling hybrid entity: a mega-business competing on the world economic stage and at the same time a public entity expected to operate in ways that ensure and protect the public interest?

Many of us, when we think of the Port, think of container ships off-loading goods from many parts of the world, or loading for export the many products of Washington and the region. We may overlook the multiple other activities of the Port — 32 million passengers flying in and out of SeaTac airport, ships built and repaired at the Duwamish Manufacturing Industrial Center, the North Pacific salmon and halibut fleets docked at Fisherman’s Terminal, the factory fleet and cold storage at Terminal 91, recreational boaters moored at Shilshole Marina, and the Smith Cove and Bell Street cruise ship terminals which handled a trickle of ships ten years ago and now see over 200 sailings a year from Seattle. Many of these ventures are closely associated with trucking and rail connections to the center of the country and all of them provide jobs—up to 200,000—to this region.

Managing an enterprise of such scope and diversity has many challenges, and the Port District and its governing body, the Port Commission, have faced a number of them during the past several years. A recent audit led to allegations of civil fraud, abdication of oversight responsibility and inappropriate delegation of authority to the Port CEO. At the same time, the global recession has threatened the economic well-being of the Port of Seattle.

As the commission and the Port District face these challenges, they and we, the voters of King County, must continue to address these questions. How does the commission balance the public interest with the competitive international business role of the Port? How do we, the public, monitor the balance? What do we need to know as we elect Port Commissioners, and how can we become informed, as well as involved?

At the forum on May 6, our speakers will help us understand the inherent tension between being a public agency while operating a profitable, competitive global business, and show us how we as citizens can ensure that our interests are protected.
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Contact Information
President: Allison Feher
Voter Editor: Beatrice Crane

League of Women Voters of Seattle
1620 18th Avenue, Suite 101
Seattle, WA 98122
Phone: (206) 329-4848
Fax: (206) 329-1273
info@seattlelwv.org
www.seattlelwv.org
Office Hours:
   Weekdays, 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

League of Women Voters of Washington
4730 University Way NE # 720
Seattle, WA 98105
(206) 622-8961
lwvwa@lwvwa.org
www.lwvwa.org

League of Women Voters of the United States
(202) 429-1965
lwv@lwv.org
www.lwv.org

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President’s Message

May is arriving, with longer days and more things to fill them!

We start out with the opportunity to learn about the Port of Seattle at this month’s forum. This is such a critical component to the economic health of our community, yet most of us know very little about how it functions. That may explain why over 100,000 of the ballots cast last November did not make a selection for any of the three races for Port Commissioner. I hope you will really make an effort to bring friends and neighbors to the event and help us raise awareness about this large and complex entity.

We also have our annual meeting this month, where we make some decisions about what we’re going to be doing for the coming year. We have some wonderful opportunities both for study and collaboration with other community organizations on those issues we care strongly about. I hope you all take the time to come out and join us in making these decisions as well as picking one or two to participate in.

And speaking of volunteering, while units go on hiatus for the summer, Voter Service activities heat up. We need people to table at community events – this isn’t just to register voters, it’s also one of the public faces of the League and an opportunity to share who we are and what we do. In addition, we will likely be receiving a number of requests to help organize and moderate candidate forums as well as requests for speakers who can present both sides of the issues on the ballot. If you’re interested but think you don’t know enough to do it, we have training and mentors who can show you it’s easier than you think! Another way to learn about upcoming issues on the ballot is to be part of the group that researches and writes our ballot issue summaries. Many of our community members rely on this work we do to learn about the issues and make informed decisions. We get a lot of positive feedback, and you’ll find you get a boost from participating.

Speaking of heat, in June we have the national convention in Atlanta, where we will be planning the work for the League of Women Voters of the United States for the next two years. Issues including arms control and national standards for education are under consideration. Also, our new board members will be starting to get themselves oriented to the work ahead.

Gotta go, I just realized I’ve got a lot to do!

Sincerely,

Allison Feher

Mission Statement
The League of Women Voters of Seattle, a nonpartisan political organization, encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues and influences public policy through education and advocacy.

The League of Women Voters of Seattle serves the greater Seattle area, including the cities of north King County as well as east King County from Bothell to Bellevue.
# May/June

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## MAY

- **Board Meeting** Saturday, May 1 9:00 a.m. League Office
- **International Relations Committee** Monday, May 3 12:45-2:45 p.m. League Office
- **Forum: Port of Seattle** Thursday, May 6 7:30 p.m. Seattle First Baptist Church
- **Social Justice Committee** Saturday, May 8 1:00-3:00 p.m. League Office
- **West Seattle Fundraiser** Lunch and Fiber Art Demo Thursday, May 13 12:30 p.m. The Kenney 7125 Fauntleroy SW
- **Transportation Committee** Tuesday, May 18 10:00 a.m. League Office
- **Immigration Committee** Wednesday, May 19 9:00-11:00 a.m. League Office
- **Annual Meeting** Thursday, May 20 5:00 p.m. Seattle First Baptist Church
- **LWVWA Council 2010** May 21-23 Bellingham, WA
- **View Ridge Fundraiser** With Knute Berger Saturday, May 29 3:00-5:00 p.m. Parkpoint Condominium Clubhouse, 6551 Sandpoint Way
- **Economics and Taxation Committee** Saturday, May 29 9:00 a.m. 909 E Newton St. #D9

## JUNE

- **Board Meeting** Saturday, June 5 9:00 a.m. League Office
- **2010 LWVUS Convention** Friday, June 11-Tuesday, June 15 Atlanta, Georgia
- **Wing Luke Museum Trip** Wednesday, June 16 10:00 a.m.
Summer Schedule

At the League of Women Voters (LWVS) of Seattle, the year begins in July, so summer is a time of transition, as the new board elected at the Annual Meeting in May settles in. Some League activities take a break—the last regular Thursday forum takes place in May, and units and most committees take the summer months off. And this is the last issue of the Voter for the current League year. The next issue will be the Summer Voter, which comes out in late July.

However, the LWVS office will be open throughout the summer. In fact, for many League activities, such as voter registration, candidate forums and ballot issues, summer is high season. If you would like to help out this summer, please call Lindsay at (206) 329-4848.

April Board Briefs By Brita Butler-Wall, Secretary

The Board of Directors of the League of Women Voters of Seattle (LWVS) met on Saturday morning, April 3. This is a brief summary of their work.

Membership: LWVS currently has 728 members, including 668 in good standing.

Budget discussion: Treasurer Judy Bevington reviewed the budget and expenditures and recommended prudence in spending for the rest of the fiscal year.

Units: In March, 148 members in 18 units met to discuss climate change. The IR committee furnished a resource person to nearly every unit.

Program: The Board discussed input from the program planning process and information about state and local topics, in developing a list of program topics to present to the membership at the annual meeting.

The Board approved a motion to recommend to the membership adoption of a proposal by the Education committee to conduct an education study, with some specific additions to scope.

Bylaws and policies: The Board approved a change in bylaws to adjust the term of service for board members to coincide with the fiscal year, effective in 2011 (or voluntarily before then).

Fundraising: The Board voted to move forward with a proposal by Jean Carlson to develop a fall fundraising event in lieu of the political party and auction. This year’s event would highlight the centennial of women’s suffrage.

Annual Meeting: The Board selected a recipient for the 2010 Carrie Chapman Catt award to be presented at the annual meeting on May 20.

Delegates: The Board will be represented at state Council in May by Allison Feher. Delegates to the national convention in Atlanta in June will include Feher, Nora Leech, Kelly Powers, and Judy Bevington. The Board also appointed Lucy Gaskill-Gaddis to attend as a LWVS delegate.
Committees

**INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE**
**Date:** Monday, May 3  
**Time:** 12:45-2:45 p.m.  
**Place:** League Office  
Anyone interested in participating is welcome! For discussion, everyone is invited to bring one article on an I-R topic which has recently caught your attention. For more information, email Ellen Berg: ellenzberg@msn.com.

**SOCIAL JUSTICE COMMITTEE**
**Date:** Saturday, May 8  
**Time:** 1:00 – 3:00 p.m.  
**Place:** League Office

**TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE**
**Date:** Tuesday, May 18  
**Time:** 10:00 a.m.  
**Place:** League Office  
**Topic:** Questions for the Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT)  
**Speaker:** SDOT spokesperson  
**Committee Chair:** Janet Winans (206) 329-4848

**IMMIGRATION COMMITTEE**
**Date:** Wednesday, May 19  
**Time:** 9:00 – 11:00 a.m.  
**Place:** League Office  
**Topic:** Gearing up for comprehensive immigration reform

**ECONOMICS AND TAXATION COMMITTEE**
**Date:** Saturday, May 29  
**Time:** 9:00 a.m.  
**Place:** 909 E. Newton St., D-9  
For more information, call Nora Leech at (206) 329-4848.

**EDUCATION COMMITTEE**
The Education Committee will meet in May to hear from Jennifer Wallace, Executive Director of the Professional Educators Standards Board. She was unable to appear in March as planned. The date had not been set at the time of the Voter deadline, but expect it to be in the third week of May. Contact Lucy Gaskill-Gaddis at terrylucy2u@comcast.net for the date. We will also talk about our proposal for a study on teachers. All members are welcome.

**DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**
We are currently meeting on Thursday afternoons to plan our major fundraising events for the coming year. If you’d like to help out please come join us! Call the office for exact times.

---

**Diversity Policy**

The League of Women Voters of Seattle (LWVS), in both its values and practices, affirms its beliefs and commitment to diversity and pluralism, which means there shall be no barriers to participation in any activity of the League on the basis of gender, race, creed, age, sexual orientation, national origin or disability.

LWVS recognizes that diverse perspectives are important and necessary for responsible and representative decision-making. LWVS subscribes to the belief that diversity and pluralism are fundamental to the values it upholds and that this inclusiveness enhances the organization’s ability to respond more effectively to changing conditions and needs.

LWVS affirms its commitment to reflecting the diversity of Americans in its membership, board, staff and programs.
Announcements

HELP WANTED

SHAKE IT AND BAKE IT FOR ANNUAL MEETING! VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

In order to save some funds and still have a marvelous dinner, we are having a DIY (do it yourself) dinner at the Annual Meeting Thursday, May 20, 5 p.m. at Seattle First Baptist Church.

This is a great opportunity to showcase your yummy lasagna recipe or garden flowers and help out the League! Your help would really be appreciated.

We will have use of the church’s recently remodeled kitchen and ovens.

Please call the office and let the CIS desk if you can help out with:

- Set up (arrive 30-45 minutes early)
- Flowers
- Punch/ice/bowl/ladle/water pitchers
- Vegetable lasagna for 12
- Meat lasagna for 12
- Vegetable salad for 12
- Fruit salad for 12
- Other salad for 12
- Rolls and butter (2 dozen)
- Buffet table supervisors
- Clean up (stay 30 minutes after)

Thanks so much!
Kelly Powers, Membership

VOTER SERVICE

The League of Women Voters of Seattle offers voter registration at many community events during the summer. We are looking for people willing to staff tables at farmers’ markets, street fairs, and festivals such as Folklife, Juneteenth, Hempfest and Bumbershoot. Please contact Lindsay at (206) 329-4848 or lindsay@seattlelwv.org for information about dates, times and training opportunities.

We are also preparing for the upcoming campaign season, which will be here before we know it. The League is proud to continue its tradition of sponsoring candidate forums throughout the community, which voters know they can trust to be held to the most rigorous standards of fairness. But we can’t do it without you! If you would like to help us out with facilitating candidate forums – whether you would like to learn to be a moderator, are willing to pitch in with logistics, or anything in between – please let us know! You can call Lindsay at (206) 329-4848 or email lindsay@seattlelwv.org.

In addition, the LWVS will soon begin preparing background and informational materials about this fall’s ballot issues. If you can provide assistance with researching, compiling or editing, get in touch! This is a great way to familiarize yourself with the issues and become a resource for others seeking unbiased facts! See above for contact information.
The View Ridge Unit
League of Women Voters of Seattle

invites you to a special event with

Knute Berger

Author of Pugetopolis
Contributor to Crosscut, KUOW, Washington Law & Politics

Hors d’oeuvres, Washington wines and sparkling cider will be served.
Copies of Pugetopolis will be available for sale.

Date: Sunday, May 23
Time: 3:00 – 5:00 p.m.
Location: Parkpoint Condominium Clubhouse
6551 Sandpoint Way

Suggested donation: $15

to benefit the LWV of Seattle

RSVP: (206) 527-8589

Directions:
Park on NE 65th, just West of Sandpoint Way. Walk a few steps north along Sandpoint Way to the Parkpoint entrance. Clubhouse is on your left.
ANNUAL MEETING

Date: Thursday, May 20, 2010
Time: 5:00 p.m. – 9:30 p.m.
Place: Seattle First Baptist Church, 1111 Harvard Avenue

The annual meeting of the membership of the League of Women Voters of Seattle matters! At this meeting, members decide on the issues that we will focus on in the next year; elect new officers and directors; approve the budget; vote on bylaw changes; and adopt new positions. A quorum of five percent of the membership is required for all votes; beyond that, we encourage members to attend so that their voices will be heard in this grassroots organization.

The annual meeting is also the occasion for awarding the Carrie Chapman Catt award to a member who has contributed significantly to the League over the years; honoring 50-year members; and thanking leaders and volunteers for their dedication to making democracy work.

The annual meeting is a chance for renewal and for looking ahead to the excitement of the coming year! By reaffirming the mission and providing resources to meet our goals, we make a commitment to the organization and its principles. It is only with your continued support and participation that the LWVS can realize its mission.

Please RSVP by Tuesday, May 18 so we can be sure that everyone will receive a dinner: (206) 329-4848 or lindsay@seattlelwv.org.

Cost: $12.00 at the door (includes registration fee and dinner)

WING LUKE MUSEUM TRIP

Date: Wednesday, June 16
Time: 10:00 a.m.
Place: Wing Luke Asian Museum

The Immigration Committee is sponsoring a trip to view the exhibit “Paj Ntaub, Stories of the Hmong in Washington,” followed by dim sum lunch. All are welcome. For more information, please call Barbara Yasui, (206) 329-4848, or Barbara Reid, (206) 329-4848.

BAYVIEW UNIT FORMING

Long-time League member Peg Williams, who celebrated her 90th birthday last year, has taken on a new role with the League—that of unit leader for the new Bayview unit. The new unit was organized this spring, and will meet regularly at the Bayview Retirement Center in Queen Anne, home to several current League members and, we hope, some potential new ones.

WEST SEATTLE FUNDRAISER—LUNCH AND FIBER ART DEMONSTRATION

Date: Tuesday, May 11
Time: 12:30 p.m.
Place: The Kenney, 7125 Fauntleroy Way SW

The West Seattle afternoon and evening units will host a potluck lunch and a talk by fiber artist and member Barbara O’Steen. She will display her work and explain her technique. Barbara has recently shown her work at the Seattle Convention Center. There will be a $20 fee for League benefit. All are invited.

For more information, please call Ethel Williams at (206) 329-4848.
League News

SEATTLE CENTER: FUTURE OF THE FUN FOREST SITE
BY NANCY BAGLEY, LAND USE COMMITTEE

News of a plan, developed by the owners of the Space Needle and Dale Chihuly, to create a glass museum, retail and restaurant complex on part of the site of the Fun Forest burst on the scene last month. The plan had been developed over the course of a year without any input from the public, and many questions were raised in the media. Reactions from city leaders were mixed, and the Seattle Center offered to entertain other proposals for the site, and to hold a forum March 30 at the Seattle Center to solicit public comments on the future of the Fun Forest site.

About 400 people showed up for the forum. After brief introductory remarks by the Seattle Center director, the chair of the Seattle Center Advisory Commission, and Sally Bagshaw, chair of the city council Parks and Seattle Center Committee, public comments were taken for over two hours. The majority of speakers favored the project, and many attendees sported big orange “Chihuly at the Needle” buttons. Recurring themes were the huge draw for tourists and residents of a permanent Chihuly exhibit, the additional revenue and pizzazz for the Seattle Center, the positive economic impact on nearby businesses, and jobs creation.

The League of Women Voters of Seattle was represented at the forum by Nancy Bagley of its Land Use Committee, who urged decision-makers to consider carefully the goals and principles of the Seattle Center Master Plan, adopted unanimously by the Seattle City Council in 2008. The League enthusiastically supported the Plan, which included an increase in open space and the revitalization of Center House. The Master Plan, intended to guide phased development over the next 20 years, calls for opening up and redeveloping the Center House. It does not envision that another building will take up space on the Fun Forest site that is intended to be open space—“an active, fun destination for children and families,” as described in the Master Plan. The League also cautioned against too much emphasis on revenue at the expense of the unique character of the center.

Dorothy Hopper spoke on behalf of 115 downtown residents who had signed a petition opposing the Chihuly project and the loss of open space in a city center that is woefully lacking in open space. Former Seattle City Councilmember Phyllis Lamphere testified eloquently that open space is precious, and once lost, cannot be regained. She suggested that the city council consider a bond issue to fund some of the implementation of the Master Plan.

Ultimate decisions on the Fun Forest site rest with the Seattle City Council. When legislative proposals are forwarded to the council, they will be considered by the Parks and Seattle Center Committee: Sally Bagshaw, chair; Jean Godden, who also attended the forum; Tom Rasmussen; and Bruce Harrell.

UPDATE ON THE MULTIFAMILY HOUSING CODE PROCESS
BY KAREN KANE, CHAIR, LAND USE COMMITTEE

The Seattle City Council’s Committee on the Built Environment (COBE) is holding meetings to hear public comment on updates to the lowrise portion of the Multifamily Code (MFC). The code section currently being updated focuses on smaller residential structures such as townhomes, rowhouses and apartment buildings of approximately four stories or less located in lowrise “L zones”. In the most recent issue of her online newsletter, Seattle City Councilmember and COBE chair Sally Clark describes them as “the ones that seem to generate the most accolades or criticisms from neighborhoods.”

Participants have included architectural and design professionals, urban planners and members of the general public, who seem to find many positive features in the code’s proposed lowrise updates. They believe these updates should provide such
improvements as: a more transparent and streamlined public process when neighborhood projects are proposed; housing with more attractive streetfront footage or “curbside appeal” (including buildings with streetfront entrances); better use of open space on housing-development properties. Obviously, citizens and lawmakers alike hope the proposed updates will lead to higher-quality housing design that contributes to, rather than detracts from, a neighborhood’s traditional character.

While supporting these and other positive code updates, some observers nonetheless fear the current legislation does not go far enough to promote housing affordability. They believe additional changes must be included to help make future housing less costly and, consequently, more available to a greater percentage of the population.

Specifically, there is a call for changing density limits to allow smaller units to be built, and changing the parking rule that requires developers to provide one off-street parking space for each housing unit on site.

Advocates for changing the density limit and parking requirement include residential architects and designers from the Congress of Residential Architecture Northwest (CORA NW), who have worked on MFC issues for the past three years, and were among the consulting teams hired by the city last year to test proposed code updates for any unforeseen weaknesses.

Those proposing changes in density limits contend that such changes would not lead to micro-module or cracker-box homes dotting the landscape because too many forces would mitigate against that. These include design review thresholds; requirements for fee-simple ownership; parking needs; condominium liability issues; buyers’ demands; and bank lenders’ ideas of what makes a project saleable in a given market.

Likewise, those who favor relaxing the parking rule believe that these same factors would also prevent any dearth of off-street parking. And in any case, they propose changing parking regulations only in those neighborhoods that already/soon will have light rail and other public transit, and are designated as “urban villages,” where greater density is allowed and encouraged.

Proponents of code density and parking changes also suggest that such changes will lead to more innovative, better designed housing. For example, enabling developers to make a profit on smaller projects should create buildings that blend with, rather than overwhelm traditional neighborhood architecture; an added benefit would be more room to provide at least some landscaping on the property. Or older homes could be subdivided into two units and still retain a front yard that can be enjoyed by both occupants and passersby rather than being converted into parking spaces.

And most importantly, change advocates say, these code updates would help increase Seattle’s supply of affordable housing without creating unwanted density by reusing existing housing structures, and targeting new units in areas already designated to handle future growth.

One CORA NW member, architect David Neiman, predicts that allowing lower density and relaxing the off-street parking rules could result in housing-unit sizes and prices that are 25 to 35 percent below today’s costs and, therefore, more affordable to a greater number of people. (For a more complete presentation of Mr. Neiman’s and CORA’s views, please see his opinion piece in the Seattle Times of March 18, 2010, or access the CORA NW position paper “Density Limits, Parking, and Affordability” at http://coranw.blogspot.com/2010/03/density-limits-explained.html)

You can make your views known from now through June at the City Council’s COBE meetings, and at public hearings in various Seattle neighborhoods. For a complete schedule of Council subcommittee meetings and future public hearings on the Code’s proposed updates, please contact Sally Clark’s office at (206) 684-8802, or go to www.cityofseattle.net/council/Clark/.
The speakers for the March meeting of the Transportation Committee were Daniele Dunjic of the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) and Kristen Dean of Enviroissues, who provided a Power Point discussion of the current status of the SR520 bridge project, particularly the three design options for the Montlake Interchange. These options are the result of many meetings and considerable investigation and controversy, including 1700 written comments, since the draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) was released by WSDOT and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) in 2006.

The three Montlake alternatives are labeled A, K and L. All three remove the current SR520 ramps in the Arboretum, including the ramps to nowhere. There is an A+ option that proposes rebuilding the ramps (not the ones to nowhere, however).

The three options differ in cost, the location of the interchange itself and the construction of the ramps to and from SR520.

Sections marked by quotation marks come directly from the executive summary of the supplemental draft EIS, released in January 2010, pages 12 and 13.

**Option A:** $2-2.3 billion. It “is most similar to today’s configuration, but with six lanes instead of four” and adds a second bascule (draw) bridge across the Montlake Cut, parallel to and of the same design as the existing Montlake bridge. Its profile rises from the west shore of Union Bay to a height of 15 to 20 feet over Foster Island, descends to the east of Foster Island and rises again to meet the west transition span.”

**Option K:** $4-4.17 billion. It “includes a new single-point urban interchange (SPUI) about a half-mile east of the existing Montlake interchange [about at Pacific and Montlake]. The profile of Option K remains low throughout the west approach area. On Foster Island, the roadway would be excavated to about four feet below the existing grade to accommodate construction of the land bridge over the top.

Option K would require tunneling under the Montlake Cut and very steep ramps down and up.

**Option L:** $2.56 to 2.64 billion. It “would also include a SPUI with a similar alignment to Option K [interchange at Pacific and Montlake]. However, instead of being beneath the SR 520 mainline, the interchange ramps would rise above it. The northern leg of the interchange would cross the Montlake Cut on a new bascule bridge [longer than any built yet, anywhere]. The west approach would rise at a constant slope from the west shore of Union Bay to the west transition span, with an elevation of approximately 10 to 15 feet above Foster Island.”

The new bridge will be constructed 100 feet north of the current bridge. WSDOT will begin collecting tolls on 520 for the new bridge in spring 2011.

If you would like more information, visit the Department of Transportation website at www.wsdot.wa.gov.

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**THANK YOU FROM THE EDUCATION FUND**

By Laura Weese, Co-President

A big thank you from the League of Women Voters of Seattle (LWVS) Education Fund Board to the many volunteers who made the April 1st event at Town Hall a great success! Over 150 people attended, many of whom had not previously attended a League event. The three speakers were excellent. Jerry Large’s column in the Seattle Times on Monday, April 5, focused on Paul Loeb and civic activism, plus added a plug for the League!

The motivating force behind the “Making Democracy Work” event was the League’s Civics Education Committee, chaired by Dana Twight, who also helped emcee the forum.

Julie Kempf provided major assistance: soliciting wine from the Washington Wine Commission, buying coffee and bringing three “industrial sized” coffee urns to Town Hall, designing the insert in the donation envelopes, and, most importantly, handling ticket sales that night.
Jackie Wall helped with the planning from Day One and served as “Flow Captain” at the event. Kelly Powers put us on Facebook. Maria Brusker coordinated volunteers and helped organize the reception and the email and print flyers, with design assistance from our resident graphic artist, Lily Reid. Kris Bushley chaired the reception committee, with a major assist from Brigitte Ashley.

Jean Carlson coordinated publicity and worked with Ginna Owens to keep reminding us that this was a fundraiser. Ginna created the concept of the Council of 90 and designed the large poster for display at Town Hall. Jean ordered LWV 90 pins from the national League office for all founding members of the Council of 90.

Thanks to Allison Feher, LWVS President, for her role as moderator of the forum, especially during the contentious question and answer period. Thank you to Lindsay Cummings, our staff person, who organized donor lists, typed thank you notes, designed the printed program and recruited volunteers.

Thanks to the following organizations for their generous contributions and support:
The Seattle Times
Radio KTPK AM 1090 Seattle
Washington State Wine Commission

LWVS Education Fund Board:
Co-Presidents: Denise Smith, Laura Weese
Secretary: Kris Bushley
Treasurer: Lucy Gaskill-Gaddis
Members: Dorothy Sale, Allison Feher

Thanks to Dorothy Sale, Allison Feher

Thanks to the founding members of the Council of 90:

Thanks to the following donors for their support of “Making Democracy Work”:
Margaret Austin, Ellen Barton, Johanna Bender, Victoria Bennett, Ellen Berg, Elaine Birn, Linda Brown, Mary Burki, Brita Butler-Wall, Jean Carlson, Heidi Carpine, Patricia Cirone, Judy Coskey, Fred Cox, Beatrice Crane, Joanna Cullen, Nancy Ellingham, Marcia Ellis, Julianne Endres, Margaret Fisher, Marsha Freeny, Fred Frevert, Adeline Gold, Betsy Greene, Lenore Hale, Ellen Hanly, Margot Hill, Linnea Hirst, Dorothy Hopper, Bettina Hosler, Cynthia Howe, Reed Jarvis, Betty Jones, Susan Jones, Martha Jordan, Lucille Kempf, Eleanor Laxdall, Anne Lester, Madalene Lickey, Judy Love, Theodora Mace, Sally Mackle, Elizabeth Mark, Dorris Martin, Toby Miller, David Missen, Joan Newman, Judith Ostrow, Kathleen Randall, Adele Reynolds, Cheryl Ricevuto, Susan Schwasnick, Alice Siegal, Ada Simmons, Mary Slotnick, Rosalma Smith, Diane Snell, Frank Stackhouse, Judy Sterry, Betty Sullivan, Cathleen Taylor, Inge Theisen, Hazel Thomas, Dana Twilight, Penney Van Vleet, Janet Ward, Anita Warmflash, Constance Wentzel, Ethel Williams, Gerry Williams, Peg Williams, Gail Winberg, Mary Ann Woodbury.
STATE LEGISLATURE ACTION ON EARLY LEARNING AND K-12 EDUCATION

BY LUCY GASKILL-GADDISS, CHAIR, EDUCATION COMMITTEE

The State Legislature passed and the Governor signed a number of bills relating to early learning and K−12 education. Here is a summary of the key bills.

Early Learning

• SHB2867 instructs the Department of Early Learning to develop a comprehensive birth- to-three plan to provide education and support to parents. The plan should include a continuum of options with associated costs. This is another effort at making sure children are ready for school at age five. Over the last few years, there has been a great deal of work on preschool for children four–five, but the area of birth-to-three is also critically important for child development. This report is due December 1, 2010.

• SSHB 2731 establishes a program of early learning for three–four year olds who are educationally at risk. The program is to begin Sept 1, 2011. Educationally at risk children include those from low income families and those children who are developmentally disabled. Once fully funded, this would be an entitlement program. It will initially be patterned after the existing Early Childhood Education and Assistant Program (ECEAP), which provides preschool services for children from low income families. This bill was developed after Governor Gregoire vetoed in 2009 a section of HB2261 that concerned early learning.

• SSB6759 focuses on how to develop a voluntary early learning program for all children. At issue is whether this program should be done through including early learning in the definition of basic education or as a separate entitlement program. The recommendations are due November 1, 2011. This is different from the previous bill as this would look at providing for all children, not just a specific part of the population.

K−12 Education

• ESSB 6696 “Race to the Top” includes key provisions that are need for Washington State to apply for federal education reform funds known as Race to the Top. The state can apply in June for the second round of funding. The key provisions include: development of a four-tiered evaluation system for teachers and principals; changing the provisional status for new teachers from two to three years; expanding the types of organizations that can provide teacher preparation programs which currently reside in four year colleges; providing for alternative routes to certification so that teachers who participated in Teach for America or The New Teacher project could be certified in the state; adopting one of four federal intervention models for schools that are consistently low performing; adopting common core standards; and requiring schools to seek parent and community feedback and include it in the school’s report card.

• SHB2776 advances forward some of the requirements in the education reform bill (SHB2261) that passed last year. One of the new requirements is that student transportation costs be included in basic education formula. HB2746 also modifies the work defined in SHB2261, here specifically related to funding options for basic education.

• SHB 2893 changes the amount of money that local levies can raise from local property taxes. Currently, a local school district can raise an amount equal to 24% of its basic education allocation (state and federal dollars). Some districts were grandfathered in at a higher rate. Seattle can collect up to 32% of its basic education allocation. All districts will now be able to collect 4% more: thus from 24 to 28% or for Seattle from 32 to 36%. This change is
allowed for the years 2011-2017. The legislature anticipates and states in other laws that the state should fully fund basic education by 2018. This increase in the levy lid is seen as a stopgap measure in the meantime. This bill also revises the way the levy base is calculated and increases the amount of levy equalization money given to districts that are unable to raise money from local property taxes.

The impact of all these changes will not be known for awhile. For example, many school districts just passed levies in February based on the old levy lid amount. Whether they will be able to collect more now is unclear. What impact do the bills related to early learning have on the current ECEAP program? Of course, the key thing is that most of these bills call for recommendations which will require additional funding in the future. Stay tuned.

UPDATE ON 2010 LEGISLATIVE SESSION TRANSPORTATION ISSUES:

By Janet Winans, Chair, Transportation Committee

SB6279 clarifies that any regional transit authority (like Sound Transit) is “an essential public facility.” This means that local governments cannot “preclude the siting of” something like Sound Transit’s light rail project through Bellevue. This bill was passed by the legislature and signed by the governor.

ESSB6392 clarifies the use of bond funds for SR 520. It broadens the use of SR 520 tolls beyond just bridge construction to include the entire I5 to Medina corridor. It establishes work groups to study transit issues and design refinements, and it includes a requirement for an Arboretum mitigation plan. The bill was passed by the legislature and sent to the governor. However, the governor vetoed section 1, which outlines the legislative intent of the bill, because of susceptibility to conflicting interpretation, and section 3, which has to do with bridge design. She approved the remainder of the bill.

Opening Day for the bridge is scheduled for 2014!
What a joyful celebration at Town Hall! Congratulations to the Ed Fund and the Civics Education Committee. It was heartening to hear the speakers confirm that we can do vital work at the League to make democracy work. Don’t you feel re-energized to get back to work on issues such as civics education and civic involvement?

Look what we have accomplished in the past two months – two full-house events at Town Hall with terrific programming.

Thanks from Membership
It takes many helpers to pull off an event like this and we just want to thank the volunteers who turn out to help out.

A big thank you to Maria Brusher and Lindsay Cummings for recruiting and coordinating the volunteers.

To get on the list to help with future events, contact Lindsay and she’ll get you signed up. Lindsay@seattlelwv.org, (206) 329-4848

Ticketing & Will Call: Ann Brand, Andrea Carey, Angela Henry, Dorothy Hopper, Betty Jones, Julie Anne Kempf, Anne Lester, Ginna Owens, Jaclyn Wall—thanks for so ably handling the crush of ticket buyers!

Speaker Escorts: Gail Winberg, Susan Jones, and Victoria Bennett
Greeters: Jean Carlson, Juno Griswold, Anne Lester, Kelly & Ruby Powers
LWV Table: Ellen Berg, Anita Warmflash

Book Sales: Victoria Bennett
Runners: Mike & Sheria Rosenthal
Photos: Christal Wood
Clean-up: Maria Brusher, Kris Bushley, Terry Gaddis, Lucy & Hillary Gaskill-Gaddis, and Julie Anne Kempf

Reception
Reception Coordinators: Kris Bushley, Brigitte Ashley
Food Prep: Kris Bushley and Leah Reuben-Werner
Food Servers: Erikka de Bronac and Joel Pottala
Flowers: Estelle Wertheimer and Leah Reuben-Werner

Reuben-Werner
Wine Servers: Karen Adair, Lucy Flynn
Program
MCs: Allison Feher & Dana Twight
Timers: Paul Prociv & Christal Wood
Donation Collections: Jean Carlson & Hazel Thomas
Mic assistants: Carol Goldenberg & Peggy Saari

The 90 for 90 campaign runs all year – it’s not too late to join in and honor the League with a $90 donation to the LWVS Education Fund.

See you at the Port Forum!
In Memory—Audrey Gruger
BY KAREN MCFADDEN

In her rose sweater, Audrey Gruger, sitting on her legs in her cozy Lake Forest Park home, chatters about her three children, and welcomes us, the newest members of the Shoreline League of Women Voters unit. But when we start discussing the appointed issues, we see an astute political observer who has done her homework.

Audrey didn’t spend much time on her sofa. She served in the State House of Representatives from 1976-1981. She worked hard to get elected, writing to the absentees, plus several mailings to the 1st District, and, with husband Ed’s help, putting up signs (before GPS). She enjoyed her campaigns and could even step over my three-year-old on the floor who was “employed” to stamp return addresses!

She once told me that one of the hardest things about the state government was that so much happened in the late evenings and she really missed her sleep. Perhaps that was one factor in her decision, in 1982, to run for King Country Council where she served from 1982-1993! The first campaign, against the incumbent, was fiercely fought. There were many who helped her assemble campaign materials, sometimes into that dreaded evening time. But we had a good time, and there were parties to celebrate her wins too.

She was a determined person, who managed to accomplish a great deal while laughing and enjoying friendships. She kept a file for her adult life that contained everyone’s vital information, and so there was a ready-to-use campaign list. Even calling people she knew over 20 years ago produced contributions to the campaign coffers.

Audrey practiced the art of consensus building, as she explained that in order to get the necessary votes to get her special projects approved, she had to support the other council members’ projects too, which sometimes was hard to do. But if you don’t have the votes, she used to say, you are not going anywhere.

Audrey and Nancy Rust, a former State Representative, joined Ruth Kagi, our current representative, at our December unit meeting, where we caught up on all the news (and there was much to say) as well as discussing our current situation in Olympia. Audrey was walking buoyantly on her new knee replacements, laughing and chattering away in her long blue raincoat. It is a wonderful way to remember her.

Audrey Gruger died on March 24. For a complete obituary, see the Seattle Times, April 4, 2010.
BOOK REVIEW by Vicky Downs

The Highest Tide by Jim Lynch

I am grateful to Carol Goldenberg for encouraging me to read this book by a local writer, award-winning journalist and son of long-time League of Women Voters of Seattle member Janet Lynch. Though I knew it was a coming-of-age story, it wasn’t until I started reading that I realized it provided a remarkable view of Puget Sound ecology, and that I was quickly falling for the young protagonist, Miles O’Malley.

Miles is a thirteen-year-old who looks closer to nine; he has memorized much of Rachel Carson’s book Silent Spring, and is passionate about the sea creatures he finds on the mud flats near his hometown, Olympia. One night while out collecting starfish, snails, hermit crabs and other tidal creatures for sale to aquariums, he heard a sound “like a stranded whale.” A minke whale found near by two years earlier had made a similar sound.

As he moved his headlamp back and forth, it suddenly crossed something unusual: perhaps an octopus. “Puget Sound has some of the biggest octopi in the world…Even…Jacques Cousteau himself came to study them,” Miles tells the reader. But “the long tubular shape of its upper body and the tangle of tentacles below it” made him realize it was something else. Slowly, he realized “the dark shiny disc in the middle of the rubbery mass was too perfectly round to be mud or a reflection.” “Its eye was the size of a hubcap.” Instantly realizing what he was seeing, Miles raced home to telephone Professor Kramer. “It’s a giant squid!” he yelled.

Giant squid don’t show up in places like Puget Sound: they are deep-water animals found in whale bellies or more rarely, on the beaches of places like New Zealand, Norway or Newfoundland. When the media arrived, they learned from Kramer that the squid was dead and that Miles had discovered it. Quickly the reporters turned to Miles and asked questions. Finally, one asked, “why do you think this deep-ocean creature…ended up in this little bay near your house?” Miles’ answer might well have come from Rachel Carson: “Maybe the Earth is trying to tell us something,” he said.

In this wonderful story written for anyone from 13 to 113, Lynch helps us to understand that the land-ocean environment is a whole, and each of us is part of it. He does this by introducing us to Miles, and lets us see the world through his eyes. I found it a fascinating perspective on Puget Sound in particular.

The opinions in this review are personal and do not represent those of the LWV.
This book is large and comprehensive, an historian’s view of major world civilizations coping with water issues (e.g. the Tigris-Euphrates, the Yangtze, the Nile). The author considers water for drinking, growing food, transportation, flood and drought control and manufacturing, as well as effects on politics, power and wealth. In reading the first few chapters I had assumed the author was an historian, but in fact he is a journalist who has written for *The New York Times*, *Business Week*, *The Economist* and *Forbes*, and commented on NPR’s Marketplace. His journalism experience shows in the writing, which I found quite good. For a book which contains so much material (500 pages), it nevertheless flows along.

Much of the book covers history, but I want to bring the League members’ attention to the problems we need to address for now and the future.

Some of modern industry is catching on to conservation. Not only does water productivity enhance their competitiveness, but it also creates economic benefits by freeing water and lowering its cost for other productive uses.

The biggest problem is that agriculture often is responsible for over three-quarters of total water usage. And because of inefficient irrigation techniques, as much as half of the water fails to reach the crop’s roots. Proven technologies already exist to correct this. “The problem, at bottom, is political—how to promote rapid adoption and how to level the subsidized playing field...” American irrigators are mining groundwater aquifers beyond replenishable rates. Artificial fertilizers and pesticides are pollutants seeping into groundwater, wetlands and rivers, then coastal fisheries. “It is a classic tragedy of the unmanaged commons, where the producer of an environmental problem is exempted from bearing the full responsibility of its costs and thus of incentive to rectify it.”

“Inertia and long-rooted institutional forces are formidable impediments to innovative change...” Powerful water bureaucracies cling unimaginatively to approaches forged in previous eras. Farm subsidies and protective tariffs are so firmly entrenched in the political landscape that our Congress has pushed to extend subsidies to biofuels, diverting water from food production.

Australia is perhaps the only country with a positive story. In response to their crisis they “radically restructured their water policies by emphasizing ecological sustainability with market pricing and trading. All irrigation subsidies were ended; farmers now pay for maintaining dams and canals; a scientist-calculated baseline controls how much water has to be left in each river (or aquifer) to ensure the health of the ecosystem. Water rights are separated from private property. Governance is managed by a new river basin commission.” Think of the uproar and resistance if our government made such radical changes.

In his closure the author says: “...all history’s water breakthroughs fell into four traditional categories of use—domestic needs, economic production, power generation, and transport or strategic advantage. .... Now civilization faces an imperative fifth category..... environmental repair and sustainability.”

The opinions in this review are personal and do not represent those of the LWV.
To aid discussion at units, we are including the current League positions on the Port.

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF SEATTLE (LWVS) POSITIONS ON PORT DISTRICTS


Support public port districts as authorized by R.C.W. Title 53.04.01 (as of 1985) with emphasis on coordinated planning, public accountability, purposes of the port and environmental sensitivity.

A. Cooperation and coordinated comprehensive planning with a regional, state or international agency to facilitate orderly planning and public accountability.

B. Enforcement of the Shoreline Management Act and other environmental regulations.

C. Attention to community recreational needs.

D. Improved relations between public port districts and citizens by:
   1. Better publicity of port activities and plans
   2. Increased citizen involvement and input, and
   3. Responsiveness to citizen concerns.

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF WASHINGTON (LWVWA) POSITION ON PORT DISTRICTS

The powers of and limitations on Washington’s public port districts should be clearly defined and appropriate to their functions. Mechanisms for accountability must exist and responsibility for oversight must lie with the public. Local options should be made available to voters for greater control over major policy and expenditure decisions of local port districts. State enabling legislation may be required to create these mechanisms, and they should be flexible in order to reflect the particular needs and characteristics of different ports and their communities. For purposes of marketing and advertising, we support a unified strategy. Local autonomy should be maintained in the areas of operations and administration. In all areas cooperation should be encouraged. (1989, 1993)
May Program: Port of Seattle Study

PORT STUDY: UNIT DISCUSSIONS FOR MAY

Questions for discussion only:

1. (10 minutes) What did you know about the Port District and its governance before reading the study? What were your impressions of the Port?

2. (15 minutes) What have you based your decisions on when voting for Port Commissioners? What information is useful to you in making these decisions? Where do you get your information?

3. (10 minutes) What do you think the qualifications of a Port Commissioner should be?

4. (20 minutes) One of the primary responsibilities of the Port Commission is to represent and protect the public interest/public good in all aspects of the Port District’s operations. How would you describe the public good in relation to the Port? How would you evaluate the commission’s performance in representing the public good? (For example, what kinds of things would you consider when deciding if Port District activities are in the public interest?)

5. (15 minutes) As elected representatives, Port Commissioners are expected to make the business of the Port and the work of the Commission transparent to the public and to be accountable to the voters of King County. How well do you think the Commission is meeting these expectations? Are there barriers to transparency and accountability?

6. (15 minutes) Do you think a part-time Commission can effectively oversee a complex, multinational entity like the Port of Seattle? If so, what factors make it possible? If not, what might be a more effective approach to governance?

OPTIONAL QUESTION IF TIME PERMITS

7. Are there upcoming projects and/or issues with the Port that you are interested in and would like to follow?
THE SEATTLE PORT COMMISSION:
CHALLENGES, RESOLUTIONS, AND PUBLIC ACCOUNTABILITY

A League of Women Voters of Seattle Study

May 2010

Study Committee
Linda Brown, Chair
Ellen Barton
Cynthia Howe
Chuck Roxin

Reading Committee
Allison Feher
Nora Leech
Sarah Luthens

Editorial Assistance
Ellen Berg
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I. INTRODUCTION

Looking out across Elliott Bay with its huge orange cranes off-loading boxy containers from ships from Asia, ferries arriving and departing from Pier 52, cruise ships slipping in and out of the new Smith Cove Cruise Terminal on Pier 91, and planes flying low as they prepare to land at Sea-Tac Airport, one realizes that the Port of Seattle is a major portal to the Pacific Rim. Seattle’s port is an international port; as such it is a major player in the global economy, and in the economic life of King County, the region, and Washington State.

In 2008, the Port of Seattle provided over 200,000 jobs to the region and brought in $12 billion in revenue as well as paying $867 million in local and state taxes. It is listed as one of the top ten container ports in the U.S., handling 12.2 million metric tons of exports in 2008. The Port’s cruise ship terminal served 875,000 passengers with 218 vessel calls last year and generated $312 million in revenues.1

Once only a maritime term, with the advent of flight the definition of a port expanded to include airports; since 1941, port districts in the state have operated both maritime and air ports. Sea-Tac airport serves more than 32 million passengers per year, and Seattle’s cargo terminal is a major trade gateway from Asia to the rest of America. Clearly, the Port of Seattle is no small player on the economic stage; it is a complex, public, global mega-business.

Despite being such an important public entity, the Seattle Port District is poorly understood by many King County residents, although they pay property taxes to support it, and elect Port Commissioners to govern it. The relationship of most county residents to the Port has been characterized by quiet periods of relative inattention punctuated by crises of public trust and confidence, the most recent having occurred with the findings of the 2007 State Auditor’s performance audit, which was sharply critical of the oversight and contract management related to the airport’s third runway project. This was followed by the McKay Report of 2008, detailing ten cases of civil fraud.

While the publicity related to the audit findings and the McKay Report raised public awareness and led to a number of changes in Port governance and operations, it did little to educate the residents of King County about the complexity of the Port and its critical role in the region, or about the oversight and governance necessary to ensure that the Port operates with the accountability and transparency expected from a public resource. Without a clear understanding of these issues, it is difficult for residents of King County to knowledgeably elect Port Commissioners and interact with their elected officials in ways that ensure that the Port District of Seattle is managed for the public good.

This League of Women Voters update on the Port was approved at the 2008 Annual Meeting of the League of Women Voters of Seattle and seeks to provide information to League members and the larger public on the Seattle Port District and Port Commission. In 2008 and 2009, Port Study Committee members attended meetings of the Port Commission, and of expert panels of stakeholders and community representatives as part of the Port Century Agenda. In addition, the committee interviewed Port Commissioners, senior Port staff members and relevant community

*“The Port” refers to the whole Seattle Port District; hereafter the seaport and airport will be so specified.
members, and reviewed Port Commission and Port staff documents and reports. Appendix A lists individuals who were interviewed. Washington Public Ports Association documents and staff members were also important sources of information. The League has studied various aspects of Port Districts in Washington, in 1973, 1988, 1989, and 1992. The titles of the earlier studies are available in Appendix B.

II. HISTORY OF PORT DISTRICTS IN WASHINGTON

Harbor Line Commission and Port District Act
The creation of port districts in Washington State began when Washington entered the Union in 1889. At that time, the state took title to all tidelands, beds and shore lands within its boundaries, with the exception of a few which had been sold by the United States prior to statehood. Up until that time, many of the tidelands were privately occupied and developed, primarily by the railroads, which held a monopoly over shipping rates and the products that passed over their wharves. At that time, many ports in the United States were in private hands, in contrast to Europe where waterfronts were publicly controlled.2

In 1890, against strong resistance from private owners and operators of tidelands (primarily railroad companies), the Washington legislature created the Harbor Line Commission in order to restrict the powers of private entities which had been occupying tidelands despite the state constitution, which reserves ownership and control over the lands to the state. This commission established permanent harbor lines throughout the state, within and in front of incorporated towns and cities. The harbor lines effectively served as the government’s first land use zoning tool, as they delineated certain areas around harbors for industrial and trade use.

In 1911, as part of a populist reform reflecting a desire to give the public more control over its waterfronts, the Washington State Legislature passed the Port District Act (RCW Title 53.04.010), which put the state’s ports under public ownership and management, allowing citizens to create port districts and elect their commissioners. The end purpose was to promote and protect all trade in Washington ports – as opposed to just that favored by specific business interests.

The Port District Act was significant, as it authorized the creation of public port districts in any county by approval of a majority of the voters. The Act created a unique hybrid: a “public entity with a profit motive.”3 The primary goal of port districts is fostering commerce, but unlike private commercial enterprises, they are also an arm of government which is accountable to the public. For their ninety-nine year history, port districts have wrestled with the tensions inherent in this hybrid identity.

Roles and Responsibilities of Port Districts
Currently, there are 75 public port districts in 33 counties in Washington, the earliest being Seattle and Grays Harbor, created in 1911, and the latest being Grapeview, created in 1990. Sixteen are engaged in international marine trade, with 90% of the trade moving through Seattle and Tacoma.4 Originally, most ports were located on bodies of water; thus, port districts were authorized to regulate shipping and provide facilities for shipping and industrial use. However, since those early days, their responsibilities have greatly expanded.
In 1941, port districts were authorized to acquire, maintain, and operate airports; in 1955 they were given the power to establish industrial development districts (IDDs) – special areas within port districts acquired specifically for industrial development; in 1959 port districts were authorized for areas lacking any bodies of water; in 1966, through a constitutional amendment, port districts were permitted to conduct promotional hosting to attract trade, and in 1984 such promotion was also allowed to attract tourism. In the 1960s port districts moved into the area of recreation, with authority to build and operate marine park and recreation facilities. Powers also extended to participating in world fairs and operating foreign trade zones (RCW 24.46), as well as to using public funds for industrial development and promotional hosting.

In the 1980s, port districts expanded into tourism and economic development. They were authorized to acquire and operate passenger vessels (RCW 53.08.295), engage in economic development programs, and establish export trading companies. The 1990s saw port districts investing in new infrastructure with authority to repair any street or road serving port facilities and to install sewer, water, and waste disposal systems. In 2000, port districts moved into the area of constructing, purchasing, or improving telecommunication systems in rural areas, watershed management (2003), and providing ferry service (2008).

In sum, public port districts’ primary responsibilities are to plan, acquire, develop, operate, and maintain facilities for all forms of transfer—air, land, and marine—within the state of Washington. These facilities include: terminal facilities, airports, warehouses, elevators, canals, locks, tidal basins, rail and truck freight facilities, and passenger terminals. Under this mandate, port district powers include the power to:

- Acquire land by cash, condemnation or right of eminent domain;
- Improve district lands by dredging, filling, bulk heading, or developing such lands for sale or lease for industrial and commercial purposes;
- Improve navigable and non-navigable waters;
- Acquire and operate toll bridges, tunnels, railroads, and some highways;
- Acquire, build and operate airports;
- Install industrial waste disposal, sewer, water and other utilities in the absence of adequate municipal facilities;
- Install pollution abatement facilities for new or existing business firms;
- Create and maintain foreign trade zones;
- Establish local improvement districts and industrial development districts (IDD’s);
- Develop and maintain marine related public parks and recreational facilities;
- Expend funds for promotional hosting;
- Advertise facilities and services to attract tourism and new industry;
- Fix the rates of wharfage, dockage, warehousing, port and terminal charges on all facilities owned by them;
- Levy property taxes;
- Sell general obligation and revenue bonds.\(^5\)

All port districts are subject to local, state and federal regulations ranging from local building and zoning permits to the Shoreline Management Act, the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), and the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) regulations.
Port District Financing
The Port District Act of 1911 authorized port districts to impose property taxes of $2 for every $1,000 of assessed value to provide initial capital to construct facilities and create reserve funds. Since then, the legislature has reduced the rate to $.45 per $1,000 of assessed value for general purpose use by the port; this tax does not require voter approval. Additionally, the law authorizes special property tax levies, to be approved by the voters and not to exceed $.45 per $1,000 valuation, for dredging, canal construction, land-leveling and filling. Further special property tax levies, not to exceed $.45 per $1,000 of assessed value, can be imposed by the port for up to 12 years for the creation of an industrial development district. Such levies do not require voter approval.

Apart from levying taxes, port districts may issue general obligation bonds to finance capital improvements. The bonds are repaid with revenue from property taxes. Ports may also issue revenue bonds that are guaranteed by revenues from a particular activity. The bonds typically provide funds for long-term investment in infrastructure. Airport financing includes two additional sources: Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) grants for capital improvements and passenger facility charges (PFC) of $4.50 per ticket. The use of FAA grants and PFC revenues must meet FAA requirements.

Taxes and bond issues derive from the public side of Port Districts – but their hybrid character is very important in considering funding. Lease rental payments and user fees provide substantial revenue streams from the business side of Port Districts. Look again at the list of activities in which Ports can engage, and the myriad sources of income they have is apparent.

Port District Governance
Port districts in Washington are governed by nonpartisan port commissioners who are elected in the district. In many cases three commissioners serve six-year staggered terms, but in districts with a population of more than 500,000 the law allows for five commissioners – which is what Seattle and Tacoma have. Port Commissions have a great deal of autonomy in establishing the mission, policies, and priorities that guide the development and operation of all port facilities and functions within the district.

Commissions hire the Port Chief Executive Officer (CEO), approve the operating budget and are responsible for ensuring that the mission and policies are implemented in all aspects of the Port operations. Washington is unusual in that few other ports in the United States operate with locally elected commissions. Most port governing bodies are appointed by the governmental unit responsible for ports—usually a state or municipality. A brief discussion of other governance models is available in Appendix C.

Port commissioners are accountable to the voters in the local community from which they are elected and from which the port draws some of its revenues. As ports have grown more complex and become major players in international trade, oversight by the electorate has declined. Many citizens do not know what their ports do or how they are governed. Many do not understand the hybrid nature of ports: that they are public entities which must comply with public disclosure laws and be transparent while at the same time they must operate as private businesses competing in a global economy. To avoid being at a competitive disadvantage, businesses sometimes make decisions in private, executive session—which is lawful, albeit not transparent. By contrast, public policy decisions must be made in the public eye. Obviously,
balancing the needs for privacy in business decisions and transparency in public policy can be a matter of tension within commissions as well as between commissions and the public they serve.

III. SEATTLE PORT DISTRICT

The Seattle Port District was created in September 1911 by a vote of the residents of King County, who at the same time approved a bond measure to develop the waterfront with the goal of stimulating economic growth in Seattle and the county. By 1916 Seattle was the leading port on the West Coast and the second largest in the country. The Port of Seattle remained an innovator throughout the 20th century as it became a major player in the North Pacific fishing industry, built Sea-Tac Airport in 1944, and became, in the 1960s, one of the first ports to move into the containerized cargo trade. In the 1990s the Port moved into the passenger cruise industry and led the redevelopment of Seattle’s central waterfront and other properties.

While these initiatives have made the Port a national leader in trade, transportation and tourism and a regional force that generates over 200,000 jobs and billions of dollars in business and tax revenues, they were not accomplished without significant public controversy. As the Port continues to address the present opportunities and challenges, public controversy remains an important part of the process. Now, as in the past, it is the responsibility of the Port governing body, the elected Port Commissioners, to address the conflicts in ways that balance competing interests and protect the sometimes difficult to define public good.

IV. SEATTLE PORT DISTRICT COMMISSION

Organization and Structure
The Seattle Port Commission is a five-member, nonpartisan body elected at-large by King County voters for four-year, staggered terms. In most Port Districts in Washington, commissioners are elected by districts rather than at-large, and the question of creating commissioner districts within the Seattle Port District has been raised several times by various groups, but the proposal has never received the support needed to bring it before the voters. Proponents of electing commissioners by districts argue that it would create a more representative body than the present at-large approach.

The commission elects a president, vice-president and secretary each January to serve one-year terms. Regular meetings are held on the first, second and fourth Tuesday of each month and special meetings may be called with appropriate public notice. All meetings must meet the requirements of the state Open Public Meetings Act. Closed executive sessions are limited to two per month and must be recorded electronically, with the records kept by the Port General Counsel.

Bylaws and Procedures
The commission has bylaws and rules governing the transaction of business. Major changes in the bylaws were made in 2008 and 2009 in response to the findings of the 2007 State Audit Report and growing public concern about commission practices and its oversight of the Port. The revisions directly addressed the public service responsibilities of the commission and instituted procedures to ensure public accountability and transparency in all commission business. The essence of these revisions is reflected in this statement from the preamble to the bylaws: “Commissioners shall abide by the principle that ‘public service is a public trust.’
Commissioners shall uphold the integrity, impartiality and independency of the Commission and shall encourage and promote accountability, transparency and public confidence by their actions.” For the commission’s organizational chart refer to Appendix D.

Specific changes made to improve commission accountability and transparency include the following:

- All commission meetings must be public and meet all the requirements of the state Open Public Meetings Act. This ended the common practice of “working sessions” in which the commission met and transacted business without public notice.
- Executive sessions, closed to the public, are limited to two sessions per month and the sessions have to be recorded electronically and the recordings must be filed with the Port General Counsel.
- All official commission business must have a quorum of at least three members. Approval of any proposed action must have three affirmative votes.
- Commissioners must sign and abide by a newly implemented Commission Transparency Code of Conduct that affirms a commitment to transparency and expanding citizen participation in Port discussions.
- Membership on Port-related corporate or community boards is assigned by the commission president and reviewed annually with the expectation that membership on any board will not exceed four years.9

Role of the Commission
The commission establishes broad policies for the overall direction and long-term objectives of the Port. Ideally, the policies reflect the values, priorities and needs of the community as well as providing the direction the Port needs to be as competitive as possible. It hires a Chief Executive Officer (CEO) to implement Port polices and objectives, and to administer and operate the Port. The commission determines the type of business activity in which the Port engages; identifies short and long-term business strategies and sets financial policies; and approves labor agreements, adopts positions on legislation, and establishes the extent of use of powers of taxation and eminent domain.

Financial Management
The commission has a non-delegable fiduciary duty to provide oversight of the expenditure of public funds. The commission engages in long-term planning, including necessary capital expenditures. In doing so, the commission balances income vs. public benefit of any project and makes decisions based upon (a) financial return, (b) community issues and (c) environmental concerns. The commission adopts a finance plan, and then determines the amount of tax levy that will be adopted to support the plan. The annual budget reflects the commission’s priorities and financial policies.

Relationship of the Commission and the Port
While the commission is responsible for setting policy and providing oversight to ensure that the policies are implemented throughout the Port, the working relationship of the commission and the Port is through the CEO. Commissioners describe their relationship as, for the most part, that of a Board of Directors to the CEO of a large corporation. However, as elected officials charged with protecting the public interests and resources, commissioners are accountable to the public in ways a typical corporate board member is not. Corporate boards are responsible to the stockholders for the profitability of the company, while the commission’s responsibility is to ensure public benefit and the careful use of public dollars.
The relationship of the commission and the CEO is the crucial variable in how the Port District works. Maintaining the balance between their oversight responsibilities and ceding the authority and autonomy necessary for the CEO to function effectively is a constant challenge.

V. CHALLENGES FACING THE COMMISSION

1. Accountability. Accountability to the public is a principle as important as transparency. It has been addressed by the current commission and CEO in their response to the 2007 State Performance Audit and the 2008 McKay Investigative Report.

2007 State Auditor’s Report
In 2007, the State Auditor’s Office (SAO) audited the construction management program of the Port from 2004-2007, focusing primarily on the Third Runway Project at Sea-Tac airport. It revealed a Port culture of “get it done at all costs”. The audit uncovered $97.2 million in unnecessary costs, preferential treatment given to favorite vendors in terms of contracts, circumvention of Port Commissioners and stonewalling of the audit investigation by Port staff.10

The report recommended 51 changes, one of which was that the Port establish a Central Procurement Office headed by an officer reporting directly to the CEO. Other recommendations included revising its delegation of authority, reassigning the Port’s Internal Audit Manager to report to the commission instead of to the CEO, implementing ethics reforms and training Port staff in these reforms.11

Led by a commission sub-committee, the Port implemented the recommendations in a new Delegation of Authority Resolution (Resolution 3605), first passed by the commission in 2008 and revised in 2009. The resolution strengthened the commission’s oversight of the Port’s Capital Construction Program by requiring approval of any spending over $200,000 and commission review of all projects three times prior to approval. Resolution 3605 is considered a major reform milestone for the Port. It created checks and balances and set in motion a new Port culture.12

At the same time, working with the commission, the new CEO reorganized the Port structure, adding six new leadership positions answering directly to the CEO. A new Real Estate Division focused solely on the Port’s real estate—marinas, commercial properties and parks—and development. A Capital Development Division included the newly formed Central Procurement Office as well as Engineering Services, Port Construction Services, Airport and Seaport Management. Also new was the Office of Social Responsibility, which includes a Ship to Shelter Program that sends excess cruise ship supplies to shelters instead of landfills, the first such program operated by any port in the country. This office also oversees a Veteran’s Fellowship Program which hires three new veterans every six months. The Port organizational chart is available in Appendix E.

2008 McKay Report
The Port Commission took further steps to investigate whether fraud had been committed by authorizing a thorough internal investigation of Port practices. The Special Investigative Report (the McKay Report), released in December 2008, found ten cases of civil fraud. It also found that Port staff tolerated suppressing information from Port Commissioners and an “arrogant disregard for open government.”13
In response to the McKay report, CEO Yoshitani declared that he had “zero tolerance for fraud,” suspended four staff members and reprimanded three others. Two project managers resigned. Since that time, the Port has implemented the recommendations in the McKay report. They include:

- Develop a code of conduct, reporting mechanisms and whistleblower protection;
- Review the procurement process;
- Increase involvement by legal counsel in the procurement process;
- Document all requests for legal advice and the responses;
- Implement a centralized procurement document management system;
- Standardize project manual provisions used in construction contracts;
- Review small works roster program contracts; include enforceable audit provision;
- Take appropriate personnel action.\(^\text{14}\)

2. **Competitiveness.** When considering the challenges faced by the Port and commission at this time, the restoration of public accountability following the damaging reports of 2007-08 looms very large. It goes to the heart of the Port as a public entity. But, as noted, the Port is a hybrid, and in the present harsh economic realities the business of the Port also faces challenges. International developments figure in: widening of the Panama Canal may divert cargo now coming from Asia to Pacific Rim ports to others in the Southeast U.S. and the Gulf of Mexico; and to the north, the development of the Port of Prince Rupert, Canada will also divert cargo.\(^\text{15}\)

A domestic drain on revenue is a mandatory federal fee on every container unloaded at the Port, which subsidizes other U.S. ports that require extensive dredging.\(^\text{16}\) As the best natural deepwater port system on the west coast, Puget Sound does not need dredging, but Los Angeles-Long Beach does and so, via the federal fee, the Seattle Port District subsidizes a major competitor. Another challenge to the bottom line is the obligation for both the seaport and airport to adjust to stricter environmental standards. Both must respond to the traditional business demands of a bottom line that is at least somewhat profitable, while meeting the growing demands for environmental stewardship—demands that can be costly. And finally, there is the challenge of increasing both air and sea cargo as the recession eases.

In meeting these challenges, the Port of Seattle enjoys the benefit of having a diverse portfolio of maritime activities, including a major fishing facility alongside container, cruise and pleasure craft services. Public recognition, understanding and support of these resources will be necessary to maintain the Port’s competitive position—and this support needs cultivation. The seaport has few natural advocacy groups outside of the maritime industry itself. And the airport, while used by many residents throughout the year, shares with airports everywhere an uneasy relationship with those who resent living near a large, active transportation hub.

3. **The Challenge of a Part-time Commission**

   A. **Commissioner Qualifications:** There are no formal qualifications for the position of Port Commissioner. Thus, any voter in King County is eligible to run for the position. Nor is there a commonly accepted set of qualifications or criteria that voters can use to evaluate candidates. Without some knowledge of the Port and the role and responsibilities of the Port Commission, voters have few objective criteria by which to evaluate candidates and make informed voting decisions.
When interviewed, commissioners identified both personal qualities and professional knowledge and experience as important qualifications. They also felt that the concept of public service and a commitment to protect the public interest were essential. Other personal attributes most commissioners considered important were:

- Open-mindedness;
- Willingness to learn and to consider multiple perspectives;
- Ability to work as a team member; and
- Willingness to dedicate the time the position required.

While the ability and willingness to work as a team member was consistently identified as an important quality, there was no mention of the critical importance of the ability to think independently and be willing to challenge a colleague as the commission deals with complex issues in which many conflicting interests and perspectives must be represented, explored and resolved. It is to be hoped that robust discussion among the commissioners and with the public characterizes the process of examining issues and reaching decisions.

Professional experience and knowledge the commissioners considered important were:

- Business experience (not necessarily related to maritime matters or aviation);
- Knowledge of corporate governance, fiduciary responsibility, corporate finance and budgets; and
- Experience with labor force issues and contract management.

Commissioners felt that the specific business of the Port could be learned on the job if an individual entered the position with the knowledge and skill sets identified above.

Commissioners considered diverse backgrounds and experiences among members important to the ability of the commission as a whole to represent the diverse public of the Port District.

Seattle Port Commissioners have had, and continue to have, diverse backgrounds. Commissioners have brought experience in community activism; in marine-related activities such as trade, fishing, and labor; and in professions relevant to Port issues such as international trade and real estate. Some commissioners have come with an interest in public oversight and reform of the Port. Membership has, in the past, been relatively stable with significant longevity of several of the five members at any time.

By contrast, all of the present Port Commission members were elected in 2005 or later. Thus, this is a “young” commission with an opportunity and mandate to examine Port District priorities, make changes in commission practices including their oversight and governance of Port, and ensure public accountability and transparency. The mandate, in addition to fulfilling the basic mission of the Port to encourage the economic vitality of the region, is the job description of the part-time commission.

B. Time Requirements: Commissioners serve on a part-time basis with no clear guidelines for the time required to do the job. The minimal requirements include attendance at the three monthly commission meetings and appropriate participation on commission committees. The preparation time necessary for commission meetings and committee work varies with the issues under discussion, the tasks of the committee, and the experience of the commissioner. Beyond these requirements, the amount of time devoted to commission business is largely a matter of personal choice. The average time commissioners reported spending on commission business
ranged from 10 to over 40 hours per week. Most reported spending at least 20 hours weekly to meet the obligations of the position.

Those who spent the most time emphasized the legal aspect of the fiduciary responsibility the commission has for the use of public money and the time necessary to understand the complexity of Port businesses, knowledge they considered essential to provide appropriate fiduciary oversight. These commissioners also felt that community outreach was a critical responsibility of the role. Those who spent less time were concerned about the risk of micro-management of Port staff and projects if commissioners spent too much time and became “over-involved” in Port business and operations. They also pointed out that the Port had a Public Relations Department that was responsible for public education and outreach.

When commissioners were asked if a part-time commission could adequately discharge the responsibilities of the commission, most thought it possible if appropriate governance structures were in place and the Port CEO and the commission worked well together. However, several commissioners were concerned about the ability of a part-time commission to provide appropriate policy and fiduciary oversight of a complex, multi-million dollar business and ensure public accountability under any circumstances.

C. Reimbursement: Commissioners receive a base salary of $500/month and a per-diem of $90 for any day or portion of a day that is spent on official commission business. Per-diem payments are limited to $16,000 annually. Other benefits include office space and staff support, as well as health and life insurance. Commissioners also receive a Port credit card for commission-related expenses and free travel for Port-related business.

The part-time nature of the position, combining uncertain time demands with modest compensation, influences who can “afford” to consider seeking election to the commission. As several commissioners pointed out, it would be difficult to serve as a commissioner without a primary source of income and/or support that allows the flexibility and time commitment the position demands. This raises an interesting question of representation on the commission that has received little public attention.

VI. CHANGES IN COMMISSION PROCEDURES

In addition to the bylaw changes discussed earlier, the commission made a number of other significant changes to address the relationship of the commission and the Port—issues that are central to the ability of the commission to provide oversight and governance. The most important changes included: (1) creating an independent commission staff, (2) clarifying the structure and duties of the commission committees, and (3) revising the commission’s delegation of authority throughout the Port organization.

1. Independent Commission Staff. Until January 2008, when the commission transferred the Office of the Commission Clerk to the authority of the commission from Port administration, the Port Commission had no independent staff. Until this change, the commission had to depend on staff reporting to Port officials for such basic services as agenda management, notice and recording of meetings, and records management. The commission was also dependent on Port staff for the information about Port
District business they were supposed to oversee—a situation that left the commission poorly prepared to function independently and provide appropriate oversight.

The commission now employs five full-time staff members, including a research and policy analyst who reports to the commission president and investigates issues of concern to the commission related to the operation of the Port. Thus, the commission now controls its own business, and can independently investigate and access information. These changes enable the commission to more adequately oversee Port operations and ensure public accountability and transparency.

2. **Committee Structure.**

In 2008, in response to the state audit findings, major changes were made in the operation of the commission Audit Committee, which until then had functioned sporadically. The changes, formalized in a new Audit Committee Charter, granted the committee review and oversight authority on all matters related to the Port auditing and made all Audit Committee meetings public. Two commissioners serve on the committee along with one public member who is a non-voting advisor. The committee meets in open public meetings at least quarterly, reviews all Port audits and works with the Port’s internal Auditor Manager, who reports jointly to the commission and the CEO, and external auditors. The committee also works with the State Auditor’s Office on Port matters.¹⁷

3. **Delegation of Authority.**

The commission may also form temporary ad hoc committees to address more immediate, time-limited issues. In January 2008, an ad hoc committee was appointed to develop a new Delegation of Authority Resolution. As they developed the resolution, the committee sought input from a number of citizen panels and asked for public comment on how the commission could more effectively govern the Port. In November 2009, the commission adopted the final version of Resolution 3605 clarifying the authority of the commission. The resolution strengthened the commission’s oversight of Port expenditures, clarified the duties of the Port CEO and the commission, and improved the quality and quantity of information available to the public so that spending priorities were clear.¹⁸

The last two years have been a period of substantial change for the commission, as commissioners have responded to the serious governance issues exposed by the State Performance Audit and the McKay Investigation. It has been a time of reexamination of commission practices and the relationship between the commission and the Port administration. The changes have clarified both the duty and the commitment of the commission to protect the public’s interest in the Port, to be accountable to the public, and to make commission business transparent and accessible to the public. With a new CEO and a number of new commission members who were elected on the pledge to correct past practices, many of the governance issues have been addressed or are in the process of being addressed.

VII. **RELATIONSHIP OF THE COMMISSION WITH THE PUBLIC**

Who is the “public” the commission serves? It is diverse, comprised of groups with different interests and agendas, some of whom, such as customers, clients, and tenants, do business with the Port. These include airlines; terminal operators; cruise lines; truckers; unions; cold storage
and marina operators; the fishing industry, from large conglomerates to small family operators; and recreational boaters.

There are those who are interested in the Port’s real estate, others in its environmental practices such as those which affect air and water quality. Some have concerns about its human rights issues such as ethnic diversity and equal opportunity for contracts among small and disadvantaged businesses; still others are concerned about the Port’s financial discipline.

And then there is the large general public whose tax money helps to sustain the Port and whose votes decide who will sit on the Port Commission. Often this “public” knows little about how the Port works or what it actually does, and less about the qualifications needed for an effective Port Commissioner.

Given the diversity of interests and needs among the various “publics” that make up the voters of King County, the question of managing the Port for the public good becomes a complex and multi-faceted question. While there is not a clearly articulated, or broadly accepted, definition of the public good/public benefit in relation to the Port, the following parameters are usually part of the discussion: 1) creation of living-wage jobs; 2) environmental stewardship; 3) business practices that provide equal access to opportunity for all businesses; and 4) financial practices that ensure the appropriate use of public resources and do not unduly burden Port District taxpayers.

A number of groups with common concerns about the Port and its governance watch the Port closely and work diligently to inform the public of the issues and problems they see in the operation of the Port. These groups provide critical perspectives that can help citizens assess the many issues related to the Port and its governance. Information about some of the port watch groups can be found in Appendix F.

The challenge for Port Commissioners is to reach out to these different “publics,” not only to provide transparency into the Port’s activities, but to earn the public trust. As current commissioner Gael Tarleton stated in regard to the commission’s responsibility to the public, “Go early. Go often. Go deep.” Her sentiments were echoed by many of the other commissioners as well as by CEO Yoshitani, who stated at a Century Agenda panel meeting in 2008 that “everything the Port does revolves around public trust,” and that the way to gain that, he felt, was to involve stakeholders in the process so they feel ownership of the final results.

This approach is quite different from that of the previous era, when public outreach and involvement was actively resisted and when the commissioners themselves had difficulty obtaining information on activities and contracts in which the Port was involved. Current commissioners are free to choose the extent and manner of their outreach to the public.

Engaging the Public

A. Public Meetings: Because the publics are so diverse, different strategies are required to engage them. Some commissioners sit on boards. Others feel that an essential part of being a commissioner is to go out to the community and hold town hall style meetings explaining what the Port does, or working collaboratively on particular issues. Such an approach was employed in the Highline Forums dealing with third runway issues at Sea-Tac airport. Port commissioners
met monthly with stakeholders addressing their concerns about noise and other matters. Similarly, a commissioner met with the Seattle City Council, the Seattle Police Department, and community groups to find a solution to idling trucks and diesel particulates in Georgetown and South Park.

Commissioners are expected to be the visible face of the Port and to work with the public to solve problems. One challenge in doing this is balancing competing interests. It is sometimes difficult for a group with a specific interest to understand the obligation of the Port to serve the greater good. The commissioners find themselves doing a delicate balancing act.

B. Port Website: Because the Port is a public entity, it is paramount that the commission’s actions be transparent and accessible to the public. The Port website, www.portseattle.org, serves as one vehicle to accomplish this. All commission meetings are open to the public, but can also be viewed live on video. The briefing book provided to the commission prior to meetings is published on the website, as are minutes of all commission meetings. There are, however, exceptions to transparency, one of which arises during contract negotiations. Some commissioners feel that public input and transparency can jeopardize negotiations. During those times they feel that the commission should put on its business hat and meet behind closed doors.

C. Century Agenda Process: Another form of outreach to stakeholders has been the Century Agenda process. Because the Port will celebrate its 100th anniversary in 2011, the commission felt that it would be an opportunity to involve stakeholders collaboratively in the development of an updated Port-wide strategic plan for the next 25 years. The Port invited key expert stakeholders to a series of 11 workshops between July and December of 2008, with the goal of getting public input to develop guiding principles and policy recommendations in the areas of a green Port, social responsibility, real estate and land use, and funding strategies.

The panel members were chosen for their experience in certain areas, their leadership abilities, diversity and balance. The participants included representatives from such diverse groups as the Bullitt Foundation, REI, Puget Sound Clean Air Energy, University of Washington Business School, the Muckleshoot Tribe, Manufacturing Industrial Council, Teamsters Union, Seattle Chamber of Commerce, Queen Anne Community Council, Friends of the Earth and Puget Sound Energy.

The panels were asked to listen and learn from each other, and to give the Port Commission feedback on the Port’s direction. In turn, Port Commissioners, who headed each topical discussion group, agreed to listen, to give the panelists information and support, and to document the proceedings. Final recommendations were given to the Port Commission in 2009, with promises to include review by the broader public through 2010. The commission adopted 22 guiding principles in August, 2009. One of the principles adopted was: The Port is obligated to sustain the public trust through an ongoing commitment to transparency, accountability and equity, and to effectively communicate its core activities to industry, the regulatory and environmental community and the people of King County.

Although the expert panels represented many important stakeholders, their selection by the commission and Port staff for their past Port involvement as well as their expertise limited the representation of the general public—individuals interested in the Port District who have had no formal connection to the commission or Port leadership. This seems a missed opportunity to
engage the general public early in building consensus about the mission and direction of the Port District. That said, overall the Century Agenda process demonstrates the intent of the commission and Port leadership to seek community input in setting the policies and priorities of the Port. Additional public input will be invited in public hearings as the new Strategy Plan is developed. A chart showing the Century Agenda stakeholders is available in Appendix G.

VIII. RESTORING PUBLIC TRUST

Historically, King County voters have been largely content to elect commissioners and trust the commission to oversee the Port in ways that protect the public interest and ensure the prudent use of taxpayer resources. The commission has depended on this reservoir of public trust and support to carry out their mission of overseeing the Port.

Public trust, however, began to erode early in 2007, when the proposed retirement compensation of the CEO became public and raised serious questions about the commission’s transparency, decision making and team work, and the appropriate balance of power between the CEO and the Commission. Although the immediate problem was resolved and a new CEO was installed in March 2007, the aftermath included a fractured commission and a skeptical public. Voters replaced two commissioners with reform candidates in the November election.

Public trust was further challenged in December 2007 when a performance audit report by the State Auditor’s Office (SAO) found that the commission had provided insufficient oversight of contracting practices and that the Port lacked adequate systems to protect taxpayer dollars. The auditor explicitly recommended that the Port Commission reassert its responsibility for Port management and take back much of the decision-making responsibility that had been delegated to Port management.

Rebuilding public trust with a commitment to put the public interest first and ensure the wise use of public resources was a high priority for the commission as they addressed these problems. Finding ways to help the public understand the complex nature of the Port and the work of the commission and to provide opportunities for real public engagement became an explicit part of the commission’s agenda. To accomplish this agenda, the commission initiated a number of efforts to engage the public, including the previously discussed Century Agenda.

Working with the commission, the Port CEO finalized in December 2009 a new Workplace Responsibility Program which integrates accountability standards and a Code of Conduct for Port staff. A Workplace Responsibility Officer, reporting directly to the legal counsel, was hired to implement the program. Every Port employee is expected to learn about, understand and agree to the Code of Conduct policies by the spring of 2010. The current leadership seems to be taking its accountability to the public seriously by systematically addressing the many problems that were prevalent during the previous decade.

Working with the Port staff, the commission has also supported a number of other efforts to educate and engage the public and to demonstrate their commitment to transparency and public accountability. These efforts are discussed below.

Port 101: To foster public engagement with the Port, the commission supports the Port staff in offering a number of community-based educational opportunities. Port 101 is a series of tours
of Port facilities including the airport, the Smith Cove cruise terminal, a container terminal and the Duwamish River. Residents of King County are invited to sign up for the educational tours and learn about the Port from the front line.

**Citizens Academy:** The Port Police offers a Citizens Academy, a ten-week series of lectures about the work of the Port Police in safeguarding the public in all of the Port facilities. Citizens can sign up and learn first-hand about the law enforcement and security challenges facing the Port.

**Speakers Bureau:** The Port sponsors a Speakers Bureau with services available to any community group. Senior Port staff members are available to speak about almost any topic of interest related to the Port.

**Sea-Air School:** In addition to these programs for adults, the Port offers a Sea-Air School for grades three through twelve. Any school in King County can participate in this program which introduces students to the Port and the role it plays in the County. The experience includes a seaport tour, a class on international trade, and an introduction to career possibilities related to ports. It is hoped that early exposure to the Port will foster an ongoing interest in and engagement with the Port.

**Port of Seattle Website:** Information about all of the above opportunities may be found on the Port website, [www.portseattle.com](http://www.portseattle.com). The Port’s website is the citizen’s guide to the Port. Citizens can follow commission business through meeting notices, agendas, and minutes. Staff briefing material for commissions is also available on the website which means that citizens, if they wish, can access the information necessary to understand the issues the Commissioners are confronting. All resolutions and motions considered by the commission are also available, with the associated briefing papers.

The website also makes the Port operations visible to the public with both immediate and archived information available about the major divisions of Port operations. Internal and external audits are available. Individuals are invited to sign up to receive Port emails on topics of interest.

While the question of what is not being disclosed can always be asked, at this point the commission and the Port appear to have a very strong commitment to reach out to the public and to provide the information the public needs to be an active and well-informed partner with the commission in making sure that the Port operates in the public interest.

IX. **RESPONSIBILITY OF THE PUBLIC**

The responsibility of the Port Commission to protect the interests of the residents of King County in all aspects of their oversight of the Port has been well established. The reciprocal responsibilities of King County residents to the commission and the Port are less clear and rarely considered. Given the ubiquitous presence of the Port in King County and the fact that it is a public entity governed by elected officials, residents have a civic duty to be informed about the Port and its governance.

**Informed Participation**
Given the large and complex nature of the Port and the many related policy and governance issues, what does an ordinary citizen need to know to be Port-literate? The basic Port primer would include:

- The mission of the Port District;
- The role and responsibilities of the Port Commission;
- The business of the Port and how the business supports the mission; and
- How the commission provides oversight and represents the public interest.

Knowing something about these basic aspects should prepare residents to be informed participants in matters related to the Port. Ways to access this information have previously been discussed and include the Port website, attending commission meetings, participating in Port outreach opportunities – or joining the League.

Elected Port Commissioners

Elected Port Commission is one of the most important civic responsibilities citizens have in relation to the Port District. Making well-informed voting decisions is complicated by the fact that there are neither formal qualifications for the position nor any well-articulated, commonly accepted criteria for candidate evaluation—which leaves voters vulnerable to campaign rhetoric. Given these challenges, how then should voters evaluate commission candidates? Arguably, the best criteria available are the characteristics and skills identified as important by Commissioners holding office. Those include

- Understanding and experience with public service;
- Understanding the role of the commission and the Port District;
- Ability to work as a team player;
- Experience with corporate finance and an understanding of fiduciary responsibility and corporate governance;
- Commitment to represent the diversity of King County.

Demanding Accountability

Finally, the citizens of King County have a civic responsibility to hold commissioners accountable for representing and protecting the public interest. To do this, citizens must keep themselves informed about the issues facing the Port and how the commission is representing the public interest. Among the many ways citizens can get the information necessary to evaluate commissioner’s performance are:

- Attending commission meetings or following them on the Port website (www.portseattle.org);
- The Port and other relevant websites such as the State Auditor Office (www.sao.wa.gov).

The ultimate way citizens hold commissioners accountable is with their vote. The 2007 and 2009 elections clearly demonstrated the willingness of King County voters to hold commissioners accountable as they voted for candidates whose campaigns promised reform of commission and Port District practices.
REFERENCES


APPENDIX A

PERSONS INTERVIEWED

AUGUST 2008-JULY 2009

Bryant, Bill – Seattle Port Commission President; elected 2007

Copass, Lucy – member, League of Women Voters of Seattle, past Port Study committee member

Creighton, John – Seattle Port Commissioner, elected 2005; reelected 2009

Davis, Patricia – Seattle Port Commissioner; 1985-2009

Hara, Lloyd – Seattle Port Commissioner; 2005-2009

Kenworthy, Lise – Seattle maritime attorney

Kirangi, Joyce – Internal Auditor, Port of Seattle

Miller, Paige – Seattle Port Commissioner; 1987-2005

Strout, Linda – Deputy CEO, Port of Seattle; 2004-

Tarleton, Gael – Seattle Port Commissioner; elected 2007-

Yoshitani, Tay – CEO Port of Seattle; 2007-
APPENDIX B

PREVIOUS LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS PORT STUDIES


APPENDIX C

OTHER MODELS OF GOVERNANCE

Ports throughout the US are owned and operated under a variety of arrangements. The form of ownership affects how decisions are made, the level of public involvement, and the funding of port operations and capital improvements.

The most common form is as a department of government, usually a state. For example, all ports in Virginia and Maryland are responsible to a department of the State government as are all ports in Louisiana and Alabama.

Both municipal and county ownership is also common. The Ports of Huston, TX, Tampa and Port Everglades, FL, are responsible to departments of county government while the port of Anchorage, AK is part of the municipal government. Special port districts are found throughout the US including Albany, NY, Cleveland, OH and Duluth, MN. Special port districts are governed in a variety of ways.

Few ports in the US operate with elected commissioners who campaign for office, with Port issues being debated as a public function. In Washington State, this is the norm. To highlight the contrast, when the Port of Baltimore needs a capital improvement it submits a request to the Maryland legislature, which debates and assesses the request. In Seattle, capital improvements are debated by Port elected commissioners, and funded through local Port financing mechanisms.

APPENDIX F

PORT WATCH GROUPS

Coalition for Clean and Safe Ports  www.cleanandsafeports.org

This is a national organization with local affiliates, focused on promoting good jobs and green growth in ports, with a particular emphasis on clean air and the port trucking industry. This is a very pertinent issue in the Seattle Port District at this time.

King County Citizens for Port Reform

This local group has been active in promoting and supporting candidates for the Commission who are interested in reform and improved transparency and public accountability.

The Port Observer  www.theportobserver.com

This local website was started in 2001 by Christopher Cain, an unsuccessful candidate for the Port Commission. A number of people contribute articles to the website on a broad range of issues related to Port businesses and the work of the commission.

Portwatchseattle.blogspot.com  This wide-ranging blog devoted to Port issues requires individuals to register as blog members in order to access the website.

This is not intended to be an exhaustive list of web resources that provide critical perspectives on the Port and its governance, but should help citizens who are interested begin to explore the complex and always interesting subject of the Port.
Century Agenda Stakeholder Outreach Process

Strategic Planning for Lines of Business

- Aviation
  - Stakeholder Outreach
- Marine
  - Stakeholder Outreach
- Real Estate
  - Stakeholder Outreach
- Corporate
  - Stakeholder Outreach

CENTURY AGENDA
- Stakeholder Outreach
- Public Outreach
- Employee Engagement

CONCURRENCE POINTS (Commission Action)

Expert Panels
- Scoping Process & Policy Framework
  - Public meetings
  - Web outreach
  - Survey
  - Stakeholder meetings
  - Policy working groups

Management Summit

Scenarios and Forecasting

Aviation
- Stakeholder Outreach

Marine
- Stakeholder Outreach

Real Estate
- Stakeholder Outreach

Corporate
- Stakeholder Outreach

2008  2009  2010  2011

Early Implementation

Ongoing Employee Engagement
APPENDIX H

BIBLIOGRAPHY


Seattle Port Commission (August 26, 2008). Delegation of Authority. Resolution No. 3605


Unit Meetings

JUNE UNIT INFORMATION

Some units begin their summer break in June; others plan social get-togethers, which may include speakers, potluck meals and/or informal fundraising.

Plans for some units are listed below. For all others, please call your unit leader for information.

Regular unit meetings will resume in September.

The Mercer Island Unit will hold a potluck luncheon with speaker (to be determined) on Thursday, June 10 at 11 a.m. at the home of unit co-chair Cynthia Howe, 6 Holly Lane, Mercer Island. For more information, contact Cynthia at howe.john@comcast.net or (206) 329-4848.

The Southend Unit’s custom for a meeting in June is to hold a “Fracas” - an unscripted gathering over potluck featuring Mimosas and devoid of serious discussion of voting or governing. They ‘pass the hat’ and usually exceed $300 for LWVS.

The Ballard/Magnolia/Queen Anne unit will meet at the home of Joan Weisenbloom. The format of the meeting has not yet been determined.

MAY UNIT INFORMATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Email</th>
<th>Phone</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Location</th>
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**Monday, May 10**

**Ballard/Queen Anne/Magnolia Day** - Kerry Peterson

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**Capitol Hill/Montlake** - Jan O’Connor

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**First Hill** - Jeannette Kahlenberg

---

**Issaquah Evening** - Ann Thornton

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**Southend** - Sam Scharff

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**Tuesday, May 11**

**Bellevue** - Bonnie Rimawi

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**West Seattle Day** - Ethel Williams/Ann Bowden

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<table>
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<tr>
<td><strong>West Seattle Eve</strong> - Barbara O’Steen</td>
<td><a href="mailto:barbarajosteen@yahoo.com">barbarajosteen@yahoo.com</a></td>
<td>7:00 pm</td>
<td>Eleanor Laxdall 3525 SW Secola Lane</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bayview</strong> - Peg Williams</td>
<td><a href="mailto:p07williams@yahoo.com">p07williams@yahoo.com</a></td>
<td>3:30 pm</td>
<td>Bayview Retirement Center 11 W Aloha St, 4th Floor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Wednesday, May 12</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>North End Afternoon</strong> - Jo Dawson</td>
<td><a href="mailto:warrenandjo@comcast.net">warrenandjo@comcast.net</a></td>
<td>12:30 pm</td>
<td>Ann Conkle 12526-39th Ave. NE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Magnolia/Queen Anne/Ballard/Fremont Eve</strong> - Bettina Hosler</td>
<td><a href="mailto:glencoe1985@aol.com">glencoe1985@aol.com</a></td>
<td>7:30 pm</td>
<td>Mary Burki 8706 40th Ave. SW Apt. 2B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>View Ridge</strong> - Gail Winberg</td>
<td><a href="mailto:winbergeng@comcast.net">winbergeng@comcast.net</a></td>
<td>12:45 pm</td>
<td>Nan Moore 5741 60th Ave. NE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Issaquah Day</strong> - Margaret Austin</td>
<td><a href="mailto:barrie.austin@comcast.net">barrie.austin@comcast.net</a></td>
<td>10:00 am</td>
<td>Issaquah City Hall &amp; Police 130 E. Sunset Way, Coho Room (upstairs)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Kirkland/Redmond</strong> - Sheila Hoff</td>
<td><a href="mailto:srhoff123@yahoo.com">srhoff123@yahoo.com</a></td>
<td>7-8:30 pm</td>
<td>Liv Grohn 338 10th Ave., Kirkland Call for directions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mercer Island</strong> - Lucy Copass/Cynthia Howe</td>
<td><a href="mailto:lucycopa@speakeasy.org">lucycopa@speakeasy.org</a></td>
<td>9:15 am</td>
<td>Mercer Island Prebyterian Church 3605 84th Ave. SE, Mercer Island</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>North Central</strong> - Jan Orlando</td>
<td><a href="mailto:orlanre@aol.com">orlanre@aol.com</a></td>
<td>7:30 pm</td>
<td>Ginny Barker 6509 46th NE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Shoreline</strong> - Juliet Beard</td>
<td><a href="mailto:juliet@windermere.com">juliet@windermere.com</a></td>
<td>4:30 pm</td>
<td>Richmond Beach Congregational Church, NW 195th St. and 15th Ave. NW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>University House - Wallingford</strong> - Barbara Denis/ Judy Coskey</td>
<td><a href="mailto:bdenis340@comcast.net">bdenis340@comcast.net</a></td>
<td>10:00 am</td>
<td>University House 4400 Stone Way N</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Wednesday, May 19</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>North King County</strong> - Rejean Idzerda</td>
<td><a href="mailto:idzerda@comcast.net">idzerda@comcast.net</a></td>
<td>9:30 am</td>
<td>Lake Forest Park Third Place Books 17171 NE Bothell Way</td>
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Board & Committee Contacts

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Executive Committee</th>
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<tr>
<td>2009–2011</td>
<td>President</td>
<td>Allison Feher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><a href="mailto:president@seattlewv.org">president@seattlewv.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008–2010</td>
<td>1st V.P. Outreach</td>
<td>Maria Brusher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><a href="mailto:outreach.seattlewv@gmail.com">outreach.seattlewv@gmail.com</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>2008–2010</td>
<td>2nd V.P. Program</td>
<td>Nora Leech</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><a href="mailto:nleech2002@yahoo.com">nleech2002@yahoo.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008–2010</td>
<td>3rd V.P.</td>
<td>Sarah Luthens</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><a href="mailto:luthens.seattlewv@gmail.com">luthens.seattlewv@gmail.com</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>2009-2011</td>
<td>4th V.P. Voter Editor</td>
<td>Beatrice Crane</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><a href="mailto:votereditor@seattlewv.org">votereditor@seattlewv.org</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>2009–2011</td>
<td>Secretary</td>
<td>Brita Butler-Wall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><a href="mailto:babutlerwall@gmail.com">babutlerwall@gmail.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009–2011</td>
<td>Treasurer/Unit Coordinator</td>
<td>Judy Bevington</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><a href="mailto:gbeving@eskimo.com">gbeving@eskimo.com</a></td>
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<th>Term</th>
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<td>2009–2011</td>
<td>Membership</td>
<td>Kelly Powers</td>
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<td></td>
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<td><a href="mailto:membership.seattlewv@gmail.com">membership.seattlewv@gmail.com</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>2009–2011</td>
<td>Director</td>
<td>Christal Wood</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td><a href="mailto:gimme_steam@hotmail.com">gimme_steam@hotmail.com</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>2009–2011</td>
<td>Public Relations</td>
<td>Jean Carlson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><a href="mailto:jean.carlson@att.net">jean.carlson@att.net</a></td>
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<th>Term</th>
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<tr>
<td>2009–2011</td>
<td>Co-President</td>
<td>Denise Smith</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><a href="mailto:issaquahsmith@msn.com">issaquahsmith@msn.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009–2011</td>
<td>Co-President</td>
<td>Laura Weese</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><a href="mailto:laura899@earthlink.net">laura899@earthlink.net</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>2008–2010</td>
<td>Treasurer</td>
<td>Lucy Gaskill-Gaddis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><a href="mailto:terrylucy2u@comcast.net">terrylucy2u@comcast.net</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>2009–2011</td>
<td>Secretary</td>
<td>Kris Bushley</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td><a href="mailto:abushley@earthlink.net">abushley@earthlink.net</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>2008-2010</td>
<td>Officer</td>
<td>Dorothy Y. Sale</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td><a href="mailto:salesdy@comcast.net">salesdy@comcast.net</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Off-Board Positions

CIS Coordinator

Cynthia Howe
howe.john@comcast.net

Committees

Civics Education
Dana Twilight
dctwright@u.washington.edu

Economics & Taxation
Nora Leech
nleech2002@yahoo.com

Education
Lucy Gaskill-Gaddis
terrylucy2u@comcast.net

Social Justice Committee
Jayne Freitag
mjfreitag@comcast.net
Kathleen Randall
kathleenr8@gmail.com

Immigration
Barbara Reid
barbereid@yahoo.com
Barbara Yasui
daruma52@msn.com

International Relations
Ellen Berg
ellenberg@msn.com

Land Use
Karen Kane
kanek@iopener.net

Transportation
Janet Winans
janetwinans@earthlink.net

Port Study
Linda Brown
brownlj@comcast.net

Privatization Study
Nora Leech
nleech2002@yahoo.com
LWV SEATTLE: MAY FORUM

Port Study

Seattle First Baptist Church
1111 Harvard Ave. (Harvard & Seneca)

Thursday, May 6
6:30   Unit Briefing
7:30   Program

All forums are open to the public.

Speakers include

➢ Fred Felleman, Marine Consultant, Friends of the Earth
➢ Paul Marvy, Attorney, Change to Win
➢ Andrea Riniker, Retired Executive Director, Port of Tacoma
➢ Gael Tarleton, Commissioner, Port of Seattle
➢ Tay Yoshitan, CEO, Port of Seattle

Moving? Let us know!
Call the League office at (206) 329-4848 or email info@seattlelwv.org