

Magnolia Community Council
Board of Trustee Meeting
Open meeting on Zoom

February 16, 2021 | minutes final

Present: Trustees Stephanie Ballard, David Kaplan, Leslie Helm, Carol Burton, Lynn Hogan, Mary Hoverson, Alison Grevstad, Steve DeForest, Janis Travenç, Pat Craft, David Moehring, Stephen Faciszewski, Bruce Carter, Don Schlosser, Lisa Barnes, Cheryl Jacobs, and Valerie Cooper.

Guests: Eden Mack, Parker Dawson, Fred Rappaport, Jessica Keller/QA News, Ben Broesamle, Marie Vendettuoli.

Meeting called to order at 7:00pm by Stephanie Ballard, President

Housekeeping request to please mute microphones unless you are speaking.

For attendees by phone: *6 to mute/unmute and *9 to raise your hand to the moderator w/questions.

Trustee Meeting:

Eden Mack, Guest Speaker – ex-School Board Trustee, recently resigned.

School Board and Superintendent missing resources to run the district. McCleary did not get fixed. We are not fully funded. Called for intervention from the state Superintendent. She has submitted a six-page letter with recommendations.

Valerie C – questions Eden’s thoughts on the problems of capacity and the hopes for an operations master plan for the district. Eden become involved with the district during the growth boundary fight in 2014 where there was an unexpected expansion and new boundary redraws. Levies were hoping to build more capacity. There is a problem of not having enough buildings for the number of students in the district. More comprehensive planning from the city and discussion about how to structure the system and enrollment is needed. She implemented policies and advisory committees to start studying how to address these problems. Enrollment dropped significantly this year (~ 2,000 students dropped out). It’s a problem for funding. Class size and funding for buildings will continue to be a problem. It is physically impossible to get all students back in the classroom together with social distancing during the pandemic. The district is really, really challenged to open up, needing twice the budget and twice the building capacity. Hoping things will settle back in the fall. Another school levy is coming up next year.

Lynn H –Do schools have the champions they need in Olympia? Reasonable class size, nurse in every building, counselors is not covered by the state’s prototypical school model. It is insufficient. There are legislators that understand the issues, there just aren’t enough funds. Traces it back to the state’s upside down tax code. McCleary was set aside, but not really solved.

Cheryl J – Superintendent Juneau seemed like a ray of light. She’s exiting after 2 years. Cheryl questions the relationship between her and the school board. Support or animosity? Eden said there is no one person that is at fault for the systemic problems in the district. It’s an impossible situation to vote and make decisions on things that are impossible to implement. The superintendent also has their hands tied. They get churned through and there is massive turnover in staff. She doesn’t feel it’s a personal or political issue. It’s challenging to have a seven member unpaid non-professional board overseeing a billion dollar budget with no staff, a system that was structured for an agrarian society which doesn’t work any more. She sees this structure as being irresponsible. It would be helpful if the board were supported with salary and staff, and were more professional. It is problematic having one

superintendent being asked to manage all of the administration of this large district without the support they need.

Janis T – thanks Eden for her work for district 4. Questions the difference in size of school boards for smaller districts compared to larger ones. Eden: Vast majority of districts are 1,000 students or smaller. 4 districts account for half of the school districts in the state. There are 54,000 students in the Seattle school district. Capping levies causes funding problems. Re: Appointed boards vs. elected boards. She doesn't think mayoral appointed boards will fix anything. Having pay and resources would make a great difference. It is impossible to handle the amount of work required with no support.

Eden calls on State Superintendent of Public Instruction, Reykdal to look at auditing – management performance audits to find out where are the problems that are broken in the system. There are things that have not been fixed for over 20 years. We need reparations for these problems, and we need to identify what needs to be fixed. This is the intersection of governance and management.

Val C – what are the 5 biggest issues that Eden sees?

Insufficient and disparate funding. Funds come in to fill gaps and it's messy, chaotic and complicated.

Who decides where money should be going?

Systemic issues in management and culture need intervention with performance audits by the state.

Differentiation and focusing on student need is a problem.

Citizens/families have lost faith in SPS as an institution.

Outdated systems. The district is still doing a lot of things manually rather than digitally.

Eden: How can you bridge the issues with the concept of how the district can serve the range of students that it serves? Working around the edges isn't going to make enough of a difference.

Intervention is needed to fix these problems.

Leslie H – why would the mayoral appointed board not work? Why not try it?

Eden really thinks people look at one part of the problem or one person – finger pointing - rather than seeing the whole. She doesn't see that being the answer to the bigger problem. She thinks an audit of the whole system would be more effective. Classes that are too large, buildings that are falling apart are harmful to the students. There are systemic issues on how the district handles students that are harmful. We need to keep the children safe. She would rather focus on where the systemic problems are and how do we fix them, rather than just changing up governance. We need to fix where the problems are. Success on the implementation side of things for a superintendent is impossible with the available funding.

Andrew Lewis – presentation 'It Takes a Village' initiative:

a concept of a private/public partnership regarding homelessness –Tiny house villages. A proposal to build 1,000 tiny house shelters in Seattle. Durkan, Bagshaw have pledged to achieve this goal. There are 3,738 unsheltered homeless in Seattle (tent, vehicle, doorway) from the one night count in 2020. 545 spaces were funded by the Council last year, and the mayor is putting these up (hasn't yet). King County is planning 720 units through permanent supportive housing.

Expand 8 villages/294 tiny houses to 20/480 tiny houses (2 phases of 240 houses each). Tiny houses can help provide an attractive alternative to a tent/unsheltered homeless. 2,800 people have been served over the past 5 years. 400-600K for a village startup. 800K for annual support/funding. By adding these 480 additional tiny houses it would reduce the new shelter spaces gap to 1,873. Map showing potential sites. Phase One has a 3.6 million fundraising goal for 240 houses/6 villages. LIHI has been using the model of private funding to create villages. 1.3 million has already been raised by development money. 4.2 million could be used for operations. 9.6 million in the fall would be necessary to maintain

operations for these villages.

How you can help: They are looking for 10,000 square feet of vacant property are needed for one village. Securing private contributions. Support legislation for expansion of tiny villages, budget support. They are receptive to proposed potential sites from the community.

Cheryl J – does every site have laundry, social services, etc. What quality of life is available to the residents? Andrew – portable sinks, toilets have been upgraded to hygiene facilities that are communal and plugged into the utility system/running water. Services/case management is at parity with the standard of permanent supportive housing. Severe cases (mental, substance abuse) would need services provided by enhanced shelters. They are in discussion with Catholic Community services might operate one to support a higher needs group.

Janis T – recommends that the case management piece be presented earlier in the presentation. She recommends considering Smith Cove and Fort Lawton, even though they might be controversial sites.

Andrew: sites need to be available for at least 3 years.

David M. – proposed looking at Portland’s DADU, builds backyard cottages for 5 years and afterward reverts back to owner. Carol B notes Seattle has something similar called the Block project.

Andrew Lewis – Magnolia Bridge update: in Olympia, Carlyle and Berry meeting with Strauss and Lewis working on projects in the Interbay area, including the Magnolia Bridge. Noelle is also supportive of this. The state legislature is working to renew and put some resources into the Magnolia Bridge. Andrew is asking to secure sufficient money to fund the type/place/location study, the EIS (environmental impact study) and resources for the initial design of the Magnolia bridge. A lot of this pre-planning work had already been done post-Nisqually. Unfortunately, federal infrastructure requirements have changed since that time and those studies are no longer sufficient. Hopefully the previous work will shorten the studies this time around. There will be a work session on the BIRT in the transportation committee next week. City resources (vehicle license fees fight over asset dedication to bridges) the council majority opted instead to divert that money to a SDOT stakeholder driven process on how to spend that money. It could lead to a recommendation to spend it on bridges, he doesn’t know that it will, though he’s optimistic. \$18 million is currently put into the bridge maintenance budget, which is less than half the audit recommends putting into maintenance. Andrew recommends MCC stay connected with the State delegation. Berry sits on the transportation committee and is putting a lot of work into this issue.

Janis T – has been pushing to have the 1:1 designated as the preferred alternative. Is it important and should we push to have SDOT and the Mayor to name the 1:1 as the preferred alternative? Andrew: thinks this will be covered by the type/place/location study. Once that is complete, that will be the moment where the decision point is going to come.

Janis T – could not moving the bridge 20 feet to the South eliminate some costs for land use? (~ 50 million.) Andrew: there seems to be less focus on cost by SDOT. It seems that the city will be able to get a federal (Build Back Better)/state commitment to make it work. He could flag that with SDOT.

Fred R – eight months ago the MCC issued a request for information from SDOT, and still have not received this information from Zimbabwe. Lewis has not been able to get the information at this date. He could have Jacob email Fred on where they are on that effort.

David M – asked Andrew to talk about the recent Land Use meeting where they discussed where the city is going to concentrate growth. Andrew: Neighborhood councils have been included prominently in the past for neighborhood based planning. We’re in limbo now that we don’t have these in place and new

systems are not in place for neighborhoods to be involved in planning processes. There was a neighborhood commission started by Ed Murray, he doesn't know if it still exists.

What structures would need to be in place to support density in Magnolia? How to have communities help shape and guide where density should be?

Janis T – Magnolia Bridge Awareness Campaign, supported by the Exec board
Planning to create a series of events to honor the Magnolia bridge and highlight the Nisqually earthquake that happened on February 28th 20 years ago. First three events will be: a disaster preparedness scavenger hunt, presentation of what items would be in an earthquake. Magnolia Historical Society, putting together 'Where were you?' stories when the earthquake struck. A contest for cocktail recipes by local restaurants and caterers. There will be future activities for all ages to create awareness of the bridge, such as a coloring sheet, etc. Janis will follow up and reach out via email for support in these endeavors.

Alison G – presented the action item list put together by the tech sub-committee. Recommendations and call for volunteers are attached. Topics covered were digital storage and community outreach platforms. Activities that involve all trustees will include posting events and committee information to the website and social media platforms along with archiving digital records where necessary. Utilizing and updating all of the platforms can happen concurrently with the outreach effort spearheaded by Janis for the Magnolia Bridge awareness campaign.

Ben B –to maintain the tunnel to Ballard option that raises funds to cover the extra cost to move light rail from 14th to 15th is covered by the HB-1304 updated bill (it was the monorail bill), being sponsored by several members in the State legislature. The ask is that the MCC at least sign in to the testimony and hearings that may occur as pro and in-favor. MCC trustees voted in favor to do this.

January minutes approved.

Meeting adjourned at 9:07pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Alison Grevstad, Recording Secretary