



## Mayor's Neighborhood Advisory Commission City of Bellingham

**September 21, 2022**

**Remote Meeting** [video timestamps noted in brackets]

### **Call to Order**

Meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. by Janice Keller due to Mayor Fleetwood attending an event at Northwest Youth Services. He has received the Open Meetings Act trainings on many occasions and sends his regrets for missing the meeting.

### **Attendance**

Present: Louise Bjornson (Birchwood), Mary Lou White (Birchwood), Sheryl Russell (City Center), Sachin Pai (Columbia), John LaSpina (Cordata), Nick Kelly (Cornwall), William Beer (Edgemoor), Barbara Ryan (Edgemoor), Jake Charlton (Happy Valley), Brianne O'Hare (Lettered Streets), Kevin Jenkins (Puget), Molly Foote (Samish), Jack Wellman (Sehome), Christopher Grannis (South), David Frankel (South Hill), Annie Sorich (Sunnyland), Chris Roselli (WWU), Teagan Hudson (WWU), and Tom Scott (York).

City Representatives: Janice Keller, Communications Director and Alan Marriner, City Attorney

## **MINUTES**

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### **Open Public Meetings Act (OPMA) Training and Q & A [09:27:00]**

*Alan Marriner, City Attorney*

- Alan explained the City's decision that all boards/commissions practice open government and comply with the Open Meetings Act (OPMA).
  - Alan showed a video from AWC under state law for the Open Meetings Act.
  - MNAC members should be aware of the following:
    - When MNAC members are sending emails to the MNAC group, they should state "for information purposes only. Do not reply all."
      - An alternative to an MNAC member sending out an email to the group would be to send the email directly designated staff member (Janice) and ask them to provide hard copies or email the documents for you to the MNAC group.
    - A violation to the OPMA would be a quorum of MNAC members attending a series of meetings, texting, participating in social media, etc. and talking about a matter that MNAC is considering (such as prior to a formal action by MNAC/Example: if MNAC were to formally vote on a Comp Plan Amendment or Neighborhood Amendment). Action taken is defined as a quorum of members having deliberations and discussions, which could be done via email, texting or social media and if this happens, it is considered a violation of the OPMA.
  - In-person/hybrid meetings will begin soon and having a physical location is required in the OPMA and the provision needs to be made for others to attend virtual and have public testimony.
  - Questions from members about the City requiring boards/commissions to be attended in-person. Discussion of possible options and Janice encourages feedback.
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**Reminder from Janice [01:13:03]**

As we move to in-person meetings, all boards/commission members are required to provide proof of their first two COVID vaccine shots via the portal that is located online.

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**Meeting Minutes Update [01:14:51]**

We have been behind on providing written meeting minutes and in the OPMA requires there to be record. Ellie in ITSD has been working very diligently on getting the MNAC minutes up-to-date.

Minutes were sent out with the agenda and Janice asked for feedback.

**Feedback re: July 20, 2022 Minutes:**

- Tom Scott had revision to the York Neighborhood Round Table to the wording from beautifying to “removal of the entryway...”.

*MOTION from Tom Scott to move by unanimous consent to approve as presented and amended / Chris Roselli 2<sup>nd</sup> / Motion Passed*

**Feedback re: June 15, 2022 Minutes:**

- Prior to the MNAC Meeting, David Frankel provided feedback to Janice add to the South Hill round table additional clarifications. Janice showed group via screen share the additions.
- Additional feedback was shared re: “After group discussion, during which several representatives asked for clarification of the legal concept of “threat” from parties openly displaying firearms...”
- Louise Bjornson’s last name is misspelled and needs to be changed from Bjornsen to Bjornson.

*MOTION from Tom Scott to move by unanimous consent to approve as presented and amended / Christopher Grannis 2<sup>nd</sup> / Motion Passed*

**Feedback re: April 20, 2022 Minutes:**

- Louise Bjornsen is misspelled and should be changed to Bjornson

*MOTION from Tom Scott by unanimous consent to correct Bjornsen to Bjornson throughout all minutes / Christopher Grannis 2<sup>nd</sup> / Motion Passed*

*MOTION from Tom Scott to move by unanimous consent to approve minutes as presented and amended / Christopher Grannis 2<sup>nd</sup> / Motion Passed*

**Feedback re: March 16, 2022 Minutes:**

*MOTION from Tom Scott to move by unanimous consent to approve as presented and amended / Chris Roselli 2<sup>nd</sup> / Motion Passed*

**Feedback re: February 16, 2022 Minutes:**

*MOTION from Tom Scott to move by unanimous consent to approve as presented and amended / Louise Bjornson 2<sup>nd</sup> / Motion Passed*

**Feedback re: January 19, 2022 Minutes:**

- Tom Scott had a friendly amendment to change the Attendance to include that he was at the meeting.

*MOTION from Tom Scott to move by unanimous consent to approve as presented and amended / NO 2<sup>nd</sup>*

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## Neighborhood Round Table [01:34:40]

- **Birchwood**

The helicopter problem is much better. Would like to thank the Police and the Mayor for help with the drug problems. The Police will be giving an update at the next neighborhood meeting. The International Festival was fun and they already preparing for next summer's International Festival. Would like to thank all those that are growing extra food in Birchwood and sharing it with their neighbors.
- **Cordata**

Working on getting some public art on a roundabout on Cordata Parkway. Final artists were narrowed down from 30 to 5 and finalist will be selected in December with installation next summer. Had a well-attended community meeting last week with the new Police Chief with lots of questions about crime in the neighborhood and state legislation. Another community meeting is scheduled in October with Superintendent from Bellingham Public Schools and Meridian Schools.
- **Cornwall**

There was another child hit by a car on his bike going to Parkview today and the neighborhood is quite concerned. There is awareness of permanent infrastructure that is coming and scheduled, but wondering if there is a stop-gap that can be done in between.
- **Edgemoor**

There is interest about the mud flood cliffs and remains an ongoing educational process and involvement in the neighborhood.
- **Happy Valley**

Resumed the monthly community meals. Had their monthly meeting and Blake Lyon attended. In August, the Happy Valley Park had a meeting with Nicole Oliver re: acquisition. He votes to continue some kind of Zoom options for MNAC meetings.
- **Lettered Streets**

Bri introduced herself as the new representative. She's also very interested in the safety issues that Cornwall neighborhood brought up. Salmon are coming back to Whatcom Creek, but from photos it didn't look like there was enough water and they were dying. Neighbors have been following the development of the Lighthouse Mission and there are a variety of opinions about having the homeless have shelter but also having the neighborhood feel safe for families and anyone to walk down the street. Had a successful ice cream social in August. Happy to have participated in the First Congregational's Recycling and Reuse Fair; it was a great event.
- **Puget**

The neighborhood is very concerned about the man that was hit on Lakeway Drive. Just welcomed all WWU students back to the neighborhood.
- **Samish**

Had the Samish picnic and had about 50-60 attendees and it went very well. The neighborhood is also having conversations about how to do their meetings hybrid. Hoping the general meeting in March will be in-person and hybrid to make it as accessible as possible.
- **Sehome**

Had a successful yard sale and shout out to Annie with Sunnyland for sharing her knowledge of how to use Google maps and add QR codes. There was truck that drove around the arboretum that caused some damage. The neighborhood is working with Parks and the Arboretum Board on how to address it in the future. He's not sure if the \$500 neighborhood reimbursement is being used in his neighborhood, but he will check. He's also not sure if the \$500 is enough to cover all of the expense his neighborhood does and wondered if the Mayor/City Council has discussed an increase. Getting pickleball at the armory in October.

Concern about tree loss due to new construction, etc. Doing their first in-person/hybrid event at McKay's Taphouse on Tuesday at 6:30.

- **South**

Not much happening in the neighborhood. Someone saw a sign in front of the mobile home park and asked about the COB Meeting on September 12<sup>th</sup>. Janice commented back that there was a public hearing on the 12<sup>th</sup> in reference to the ordinance that had some mobile home related changes and directed Christopher to the COB website and Council Meetings to look for the work session in October.

- **South Hill**

The neighborhood is having its meeting at the same time as MNAC. He's hoping to hear about it and report next time at MNAC.

- **Sunnyland**

Had their neighborhood picnic and the Mayor and Police Chief attended. They competed in a potato sack race and Chief won. Sunnyland Elementary's school is complete and having a community open house tomorrow at 4:00. The Neighborhood Association is doing a trick-or-treat map similar to what was done for the yard sale map. They have a fall neighborhood clean-up day that is still being put together.

- **WWU / Student Liaison**

Teagan introduced herself as the student rep for WWU. Everyone's back to school. It's busy and had the info fair for all freshman and getting them all connected.

- **WWU**

It's Hispanic Heritage Month from September 15<sup>th</sup> to October 15<sup>th</sup>, so starting tomorrow on WWU's main webpage there are a bunch of events celebrating our Hispanic community. WWU has been very fortunate to have students back and they're attendance is better than their 2019 pre-COVID numbers. Most universities are really struggling with the return of students. WWU is educating students on how to be good neighbors.

- **York**

Had the neighborhood picnic that was postponed due to the air quality issue and had a great turnout. Social media has expanded over the last few months, and they are working on other broad internet functions in the background. Board members participated in the two town hall meetings and spoke about budget and other issues.

MOTION by Tom Scott [02:11:17] – Whereas hybrid meetings are by nature more inclusive such as for mobility reasons, visual impairment, hearing impairment and other limiting issues and whereas participants may more readily present information using their own automation, thereby promoting more paperless presentation and waste reduction and whereas participants may more readily be available due to constraints and to reduce travel costs and emissions; I would therefore move that MNAC recommend and request that once in-person meetings resume for MNAC, that we standardize on hybrid meetings

2<sup>nd</sup> by Jake Charlton /Discussion – hybrid meetings take additional staff time and that should be considered of what the City is capable of doing; Janice commented on the difference between Zoom and hybrid and the relationship effectiveness and quality; Question was raised of whether anyone could volunteer to help the City to make the hybrid option work

David Frankel, South Hill = No; Kathryn Rismond = abstain; Everyone remaining who was still in attendance (14) = yes (unable to note which neighborhoods were remaining)

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**Future Topics Brainstorming Session [02:25:40]**

- Public Art Opportunities
- Budget and Support for the Neighborhoods
- Public Safety Concerns
- Traffic Safety in Neighborhoods
- PostPoint Upgrade Update

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Meeting adjourned by Janice Keller at 9:02 p.m.

**The next meeting will be October 19, 2022**