



MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor Roberts and City Councilmembers

FROM: Jessica Simulcik Smith, City Clerk

DATE: February 2, 2016

RE: Documents received at 02/01/16 Council Meeting

CC: Debbie Tarry, City Manager
John Norris, Assistant City Manager

Attached hereto are documents received from the public at your February 01, 2016 City Council Business Meeting.

- 1) Written comment regarding homelessness submitted by Brad Lancaster.
- 2) Written comment regarding Shoreline Cooperative Preschool submitted by Jessica Gesinger.

COUNCIL TALK
2.1.16

My name is Brad Lancaster. I live in Shoreline.

I have been talking about homelessness. Homelessness is epidemic in King County. The One Night Count last week found 4,500 homeless persons in King County. That is an increase of 19% over last year's count. The One Night Count conclusion is an underestimate. I have fifteen homeless people in my back yard who did not get counted.

Tonight I want to suggest the most important change that Shoreline can make to improve the life of homeless people in Shoreline.

The first and most important thing to be done is this. **Make a dedicated, year-round place for thirty homeless families with school age children.** Let the citizens of Shoreline who care collaborate to build thirty tiny houses to place on that permanent site. Let them, with the residents, fashion a neat, clean village of families whose children can benefit from uninterrupted attendance at Shoreline's excellent schools. Until those houses are built, erect platforms on which families with children can pitch their tents, up off the wet ground. Provide some power and Honey Buckets. Let the homeless families contribute to those expenses. Do not require families to move from this village so long as they have school age children.

Children are our most valuable resource. The nurture of children is our most critical task. Those children will become Shoreline little more than a decade from now. Children learn to live as do their parents. No Shoreliner wants any child to learn that life is transient, that no one really cares, and that whatever one begins is likely to languish uncompleted.

I spent a few late evenings last week helping a twelve year old and a ten year old, both students at Ridgecrest, with math homework. Neither understood their math problems. I explored the texture of their mathematical knowledge. Each had missed small, but critical, topics in math along the way. These children had moved from the Marshall Islands to Arkansas to Oklahoma to Auburn to Shoreline. At each transition, they lost little pieces, being thrust into classes at different locations on the map of mathematics. So, these children were always befuddled. This week, those children will move yet once more, to Federal Way. They will join yet another math class. They will undoubtedly drop another fragment of math in the transition.

Make a permanent transitional housing location for homeless families with school age children here in Shoreline.

February 1, 2016

Good evening. My name is Jessica Gesinger. I live in Shoreline and I'm the Co-Director and Teacher of Shoreline Cooperative Preschool, a state recognized 501(C) 3, and a program of Shoreline Community College. I am here today to update the City Council on our current situation. Approximately 400 families with young children are still in danger of losing their early intervention and educational programs which have been thriving in the City of Shoreline for the past 50 years.

Our programs are extremely affordable non-profit organizations. We charge a fraction of what traditional pre-schools do and provide critical social/emotional and problem solving skills which build a foundation for strong community members and for continued academic success. Our programs are run by Master level instructors, who create caring communities of families that support all of our children, including English language learners, those with special needs, families from any race or cultural, religious, and socio-economic background. We do many things in our programs, but this act alone, early intervention and instruction with at risk populations helps dramatically reduce the preschool to prison pipeline. Our parents go on to be room parents and PTA presidents. Even Senator Patty Murray got her political start as a parent fighting for coop preschools. Some parents drive from as far away as Bellevue, Kirkland, Bothell, Lake Forest Park, North Seattle, Mountlake Terrace and Edmonds to attend our schools.

As you certainly know, three cooperative preschools, North City, Shoreline, and Shorenorth, along with Wonderland Developmental Center and Tessera Arts Preschool are housed together at the North City Learning Center. Our growing city, along with planned smaller class sizes, has filled our Shoreline schools, which, for the first time in our coops' history, no longer have surplus space to rent to us at a very affordable price.

Shoreline School District has offered us some space to rent at the Shoreline Center for just one year. They have also extended our move out date until August 31, 2016. These developments are good, but they are not a permanent solution for our schools. We are finding as we search local real estate offerings, church and community spaces, that what is available is either vastly out of our budget, and may include major investments to change zoning categories, or it is a small shared space which may not serve all our families.

Directors and teachers at these impacted schools meet regularly to discuss developments and strategies for our future. We are dreamers and have high hopes for our city. While we are self-sufficient, strong and continually growing non-profit businesses, we do need support with obtaining financing for our dream project.

Our dream includes staying in the City of Shoreline. It also includes the creation and building of a Center for Families/Early Learning and Intervention Center. We envision a place where our three coops, Wonderland, and Tessera can be housed permanently; this building could also include meeting and classrooms for parent education and support groups. It could include a natural outdoor play area, which we know is vital to development. This Center for Families would be a major asset to Shoreline.

We are currently exploring King County's Best Starts for Kids initiative, and planning to write a proposal to fund this building. We are thrilled that this initiative which will raise \$64 million per year is closely aligned with our programs. From King County's website:

Best Starts for Kids is an initiative to improve the health and well-being of King County by investing in prevention and early intervention for children, youth, families, and communities.

The levy will generate about \$65 million per year and cost the average King County property owner an estimated \$56 per year, which is about one dollar per week.

It will be the most comprehensive approach to early childhood development in the nation, starting with prenatal support, sustaining the gain through teenage years, and investing in healthy, safe communities that reinforce progress.

We ask that the City of Shoreline, Shoreline Public Schools, Shoreline CC and our SCC cooperative preschools work together to build this dream for our community. As you know, my colleagues and I are very experienced educators. We have devoted parents working hard to help us through this relocation. We do not, however, have expertise in obtaining levy monies. Any support the City of Shoreline can provide is requested and appreciated.

Thank you for any support the City of Shoreline might provide and thank you for your time tonight.

I will leave you with copies of my letter.

Jessica Gesinger

Teacher/Co-Director, Shoreline Cooperative Preschool

www.shorelinecooperativepreschool.org

206 459 5338