

LYNNWOOD

TIMES



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Real News Real Impact

Lynnwood Council considers sensitivity training after investigation falls flat



Lynnwood City Council Vice President Jim Smith. Lynnwood Times | Mario Lotmore.

By MARIO LOTMORE

LYNNWOOD—At its Monday meeting, the Lynnwood City Council commenced the 2023 biennium budget process and decided to take sensitivity training workshops after allegations of racial and sexual discrimination by two staff members. All councilmembers were present for the meeting.

Will Cena, Information Technology Director for the City of Lynnwood, presented the recent accomplishments of his department. The City’s Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system was upgraded, along with improvements to remote connectivity tools for all City staff and conference rooms.

Steve Steward was unanimously confirmed to the Board of Ethics for the city of Lynnwood and Computer Support Specialists Demetrius Lee and Anita Hudson were recognized for their efforts in supporting over 400 staff with on-call issues that included hardware and software assistance.

**PUBLIC HEARING:
2023-2024 BUDGET**

Michelle Meyer, Finance Director,

presented the status of compiling the preliminary 2023-2024 biennium budget that focused on the General Fund only. Enterprise and Capital along with updates to the general Fund will be included in the Preliminary Budget update on October 10, 2022.

The current \$127.4 million General Fund portion of the budget calls for additional funding for one Municipal Court Marshall, reclassifying two Municipal Court positions, special event funding, four Custody Officers to staff the Community Justice Center, and additional custodial staff. When compared to the City’s previous biennium budget, the proposed new budget is projecting a 10.75% increase in revenues.

Former councilman Ted Hikel during public comments cautioned the mayor’s budget as being “overly optimistic” recalling the 2008 recession and the recent downturn in financial markets.

The next formal step in the biennial budget process is scheduled for October 10 with the next public hearing on November 14. The council is scheduled to vote to adopt the budget on No-

vember 21, 2022.

A positive from the budget presentation was that Sales Tax revenues have exceeded budgeted expectations for the 2021-2022 biennium and are forecasted to continue growing in the next biennium, although at a slower pace.

**INVESTIGATION DISCUSSION
INTO JIM SMITH**

This agenda item was led by Council President George Hurst. It was overwhelming agreed upon by a majority of councilmembers to move forward without action any against Council Vice President Jim Smith regarding the allegations of racial and sexual discrimination. Council President Hurst’s recommendation to strip Smith of his Vice President leadership title went nowhere.

Hurst, who is the Council Liaison for the DEI Commission, accused Smith of “attack[ing]” the DEI Commission and allowed talk show host Jason Rantz of KTTH to “verbally bullying” Leah Jensen.

“That talk show host called her claim

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15-year CASA volunteer for abused children honored

By KIENAN BRISCOE



Christine Osburn

LYNNWOOD—For the last 15 years, Christine Osburn has volunteered her time working as a Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA), advocating for the best interest of children

experiencing abuse or neglect. Recently, Osburn was recognized for her extraordinary contribution by receiving CASA’s, first ever, President’s Volunteer Service Award (PVSA). But recognition isn’t what keeps Osburn coming back; it’s being a consistent figure in children’s lives and incorporating improvements to the child welfare system.

“For me, I would still volunteer without this but it’s just another way that I think the people that run the program show how important it is – what we do – and that it’s appreciated and valued,” Osburn told the Lynnwood Times.

A formal ceremony was held at one of CASA’s annual volunteer appreciation events on August 28, where volunteers, like Osburn, were treated to a barbecue before an Everett Aquasox game. Although Osburn was out of town for a family reunion and was unable to attend, she did, however, receive her award – along with a letter from President Joe Biden – recognizing her achievement in the mail.

Osburn’s long-running volunteer work for CASA began in 2006 after she completed an internship for a degree in Human Development. At that time, a probation supervisor working for the adult drug court where she was interning, approached her and asked if she had ever considered being a Court Appointed Special Advocate. The CASA building was just across the street from the drug court and children’s wellbeing had always been important to Osburn – being a mother of two herself and a former High School basketball coach. The rest, as they say, is history.

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My View From the Back of the Bus, an emotional and critical glimpse of racism and discrimination

By KIENAN BRISCOE

MUKILTEO—About 70-years ago Merritt D. Long rode his first public bus in Alabama. He surged with excitement - looking snazzy in his brand-new suit, his Busto Brown shoes, and his neatly parted hair. He distinctly remembers the bus driver seeming cold that day - hesitating to pick him, his mother, and older brother up, and not returning the smile he gave him once they stepped on board.

After his mother paid their fare, Long chose a seat up front but felt his mother apply pressure to his left arm, guiding him to the back. He wondered what was wrong with the seats upfront. They didn't seem dirty. They didn't seem in disrepair. So why couldn't he sit there?

When Long was working as Director of the Washington State Lottery, 55 years later, he was asked to prepare a presentation for Black History Month by the Liquor Control Board. Although this was not the first time Long had made a presentation like this, covering historic figures like Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and Rosa Parks, something about this request caused him to return to his bus ride that day and growing up Black, in the 1950's and 1960's South, in general.

After gaining positive reception for his presentation Long realized his perspective was an important one and began laying the groundwork for his memoir, My View From the Back of the Bus - a deeply moving journey through Long's life growing up through Jim Crow Laws, segregation, and the Civil Rights Movement to-

ward establishing himself as an educated, successful, professional.

"Over the years I have come to the conclusion that I tend to learn better through stories than facts or figures especially stories that have a meaning to them," Long told the Lynnwood Times.

Long approached writing his book like you would "eat an elephant" - one piece at a time. Without any experience writing prose, he originally intended to use a voice recorder and hire a typist later but ended up writing his first few manuscripts by hand himself. 15-years, and three editors later, he had a product he was proud of and published the book in 2020 to high praise.

"Merritt Long's tale belongs to us all. This is not just personal memoir. This is a history of a country. It gripped me from the first word to the last. Engrossing. Poignant. And ultimately triumphant," Dolen Perkins-Valdez, author of the New York Times bestseller *Wench*, wrote.

Surprisingly, Merritt is not an avid book reader although he does frequently read the New York Times, Forbes, and a series of magazines. He joked with the Lynnwood Times he has about "half a dozen books he's started but hasn't finished." In some ways Long believes the newspapers and magazines he reads influenced the simple language of his memoir that many find is so effective.

"It's not a blame or shame book," Long said. "It was my goal to just tell my story as factual and not to try and make judgements one way or

other about individuals. I do make comments about individuals but not to the point of burning them at the stake and I have consistently gotten the message that that has come through and people are attracted to read the book because of it."

My View From the Back of the Bus is told in a series of vignettes that place readers in the shoes of an African-American man coming-of-age in a world where the color of his skin dictates which doors he could walk through, where he could eat, and which water fountains he could drink from. Along the way he met and was inspired by the likes of Muhammed Ali, Rosa Parks, and Julian Bond.

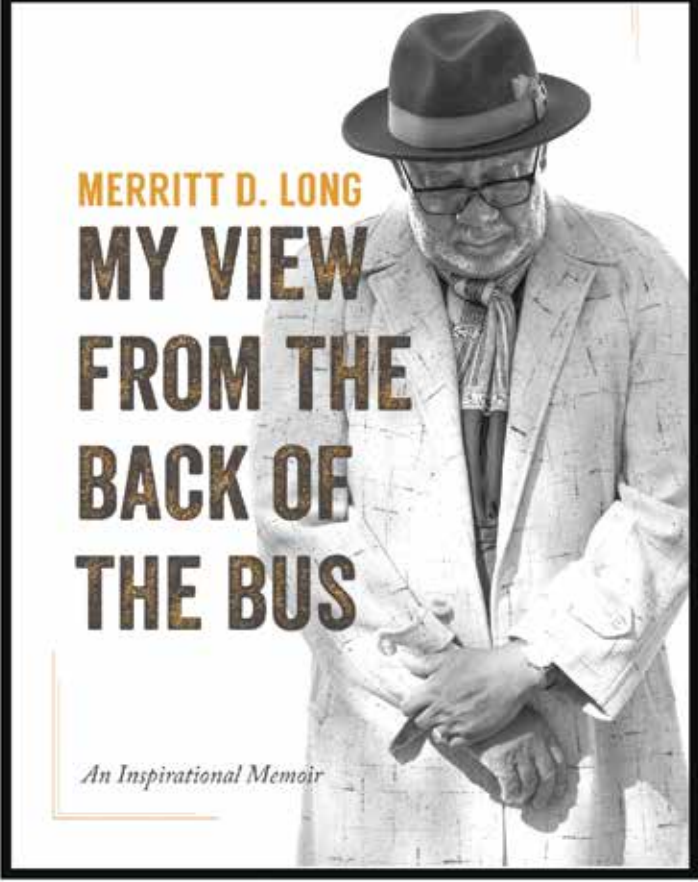
Long decided to tell his story in vignettes for two reasons; the first is that he has a short attention span when reading and believed if he could entertain himself in a small amount of time, the chances of doing the same with his readers would be greater. The second reason is by each "episode" being its own, self-contained, story he believed readers could have the creative freedom to jump in anywhere they wanted.

Merritt D. Long grew up in a loving family in Alabama and followed his brother to the Pacific Northwest in 1968 to have a broader range of career opportunities. One of the biggest differences, as it relates to racism, in Washington compared to Alabama, Long said, is Seattle is much more "nuanced."

"You might have a great meeting with someone with smiles all around but you still might not get the opportunity that

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maybe you thought you should get given the qualifications you have and what's required," Long said. "It was more covert and nuanced discrimination in Seattle verses being direct and overt in Alabama - at least you knew where you stood."

Since relocating to Washington, Long has served as Chair of the Washington State Liquor Control Board, sat on the Human Rights Commission for four years, was head of the state board for Vocational Education, and currently serves on the Board of Directors for Olympia Feder-

al Savings and Director of Union Bank in Lynnwood.

Out of all of his involvement, in both the private and public sectors, one of Long's proudest achievements is founding the Learning Seed Foundation with his wife, Marsha Long, which has awarded over half-a-million dollars to 103 students since its inception in 2001. An overwhelming 80% are students of color, and the other 20% are White students undergoing financial hardships.

Through this foundation, the average award

is \$2,500 for up to four years, as long as students are making reasonable progress, and 98 cent of every dollar donated goes toward helping these students obtain a successful education. The other two cents are for administrative agency that allows for the funds to be tax deductible.

Merritt will be reading excerpts of his book at Rosehill Community Center in Mukilteo this October 13, from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. To RSVP or learn more, visit MyView.eventbrite.com as seating is limited.

LYNNWOOD TIMES

CONTACT INFORMATION

<p>PUBLISHER Mario Lotmore publisher@lynnwoodtimes.com</p> <p>MARKETING SPECIALIST Michele Mitsuchi-Stork sales@lynnwoodtimes.com</p> <p>REPORTERS Kienan Briscoe kienan.briscoe@lynnwoodtimes.com</p>	<p>Bo John Brusco bo.brusco@lynnwoodtimes.com</p> <p>George Ftikas Jr. george.ftikasjr@lynnwoodtimes.com</p> <p>Olivia Thiessen olivia.thiessen@lynnwoodtimes.com</p> <p>Gerti Katro gerti.katro@lynnwoodtimes.com</p>
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12918 Mukilteo Speedway C23, PMB-162 Lynnwood, WA 98087
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To be considered for publication, letters must include a *first* and *last name*, *address* and *phone number* for verification purposes. We also reserve the right to edit letters as necessary for brevity, grammar and decorum.

Seattle Credit Union opens branch at the Lynnwood Crossroads shopping center

By KIENAN BRISCOE

LYNNWOOD—Seattle Credit Union’s Lynnwood branch celebrated its ribbon cutting ceremony Friday, September 23, commemorating a new location for the not-for-profit financial cooperative.

In addition to moving 1.5 miles down 196th Street Southwest, the Lynnwood location has undergone a few changes – namely removing its traditional teller line. Instead, the branch is taking a more personal approach with comfortable seating to facilitate conversations between members and staff, returning to its philosophy of forming relationships first.

“We try to focus on helping people, going beyond the transaction,” Richard Romero, President and CEO of Seattle Credit Union told the Lynnwood Times. “Let’s say you need a mortgage. Let’s say you have bad credit and you need to sit down and talk to someone. That’s what we want our staff to really focus on because that’s what takes time and a lot of investment.”

Many of the traditional, over-the-counter, teller functions are still available to members through ATM’s, mobile banking, and a state-of-the-art Interactive Teller Machines (ITM) which cashes checks, makes loan payments, deposits and withdrawals cash, transfers money, and more. The ITM also allows members to speak with a live, local, teller through a video call to still have that personal, face-to-face, experience.

Romero informed the Lynnwood Times the goal is to free tellers up from over-the-counter transactions to sit down with members and really get to know them, and their needs, personally. If a member with bad credit needs a car or house loan, for example, they may be declined by several banks solely based on their score alone; but at Seattle Credit Union tellers will sit down with loan applicants to take the time to understand why their credit is bad.

“Maybe they had a car accident or have medical bills. We’re going to take a look at their credit. We’re going to try to understand. OK, look, that was an anomaly. Let’s give them a chance



Top: Lynnwood Mayor Christine Frizzell (center left) with Seattle Credit Union CEO Richard Romero at Friday’s ribbon cutting ceremony. Lynnwood Times | Mario Lotmore.

and give them a call. It takes time to sit down and get to know the person versus, you know, run your credit, sorry, you’re declined and out the door,” Romero said.

A typical experience of someone walking through the doors of Seattle Credit Union’s Lynnwood branch is firstly being greeted by a smiling employee who will try to understand what the mem-

ber’s needs are and what brought them in. Then the employee will try and find a time when they can sit with a teller to discuss these needs, Dale Morris, AVP Retail Operations for Seattle Credit Union, informed the Lynnwood Times.

“Something like a withdrawal or deposit is a pretty quick and easy transaction. What we’re looking for is to render more assistance to our members for

their deeper needs,” Morris said. The Lynnwood location is one of ten Seattle Credit Union branches in the state and the only branch within Snohomish County. However, members can carry out their banking operations at more than 5,000 credit union branches as part of the Shared-Branching network, or use one of the 30,000

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Snohomish County's first School-based Health Center opens at Meadowdale High School

By MARIO LOTMORE

LYNNWOOD—Community Health Center of Snohomish County opened a new school-based health center (SBHC) with a ribbon-cutting ceremony at Edmonds School District's Meadowdale High School at 2:30 p.m. Wednesday.

The Meadowdale High School health center is the first SBHC in Snohomish County. Representatives from the Edmonds School District, Community Health Center of Snohomish County, Verdant Health Commission, and the City of Lynnwood spoke and attended.

"Some students come with medical, dental, social, emotional health challenges," Principal Dave Shockley said. "This school-based health center will help us address those needs and make sure students can attend."

The Meadowdale High SBHC was made possible by a partnership between Edmonds School District and Community Health Center of Snohomish County. Verdant Health Commission supported the launch of SBHCs in the Edmonds School District and worked with partners on implementation plans. The SBHC will also partner with other community-based service providers currently serving students at Meadowdale High School.

SBHCs provide age-appropriate primary care services, integrated



Edmonds School Board Director Nancy Katims cutting the ribbon at Meadowdale High School for the County's first school-based health center. Lynnwood Times.

behavioral/mental health services, and health education to students in school. The Meadowdale High SBHC will offer many of the same services that residents receive at a community-based clinic and services will be available to all Meadowdale High School students during the school day.

Meadowdale High School was selected by Community Health Center (CHC) of Snohomish County and Edmonds School District in part due to their distance from existing community

health center access points and the surrounding community's lower income levels compared to other high schools in the district. An SBHC meets students where they are, in schools.

Lynnwood City Councilwoman Julieta Altamirano-Crosby said although the SBHC is the first of its kind in the county, she hopes that it's just the start to provide equitable services to all students in Snohomish County.

"We all know that students must be

physically and mentally healthy before they can learn, grow, and thrive," Councilwoman Altamirano-Crosby said. "This center will go a long way in that effort."

The SBHC plans to initiate community Town Hall events at Meadowdale High School to learn more from the community about their needs and the services they would like to see in the SBHC. Communication will be sent out through Edmonds School District via town hall events.

The time is now! Local mayors and law enforcement plea for help

By MARIO LOTMORE

To watch the video associated with the article, scan QR code to the right.



SNOHOMISH COUNTY—A video released today by the Snohomish County Sheriff's Office featuring local mayors, police chiefs and county council members seek the public's help in urging their Washington State Representative to allow police more authority to engage in pursuits.

In 2021 the Washington State Legislature banned most police pursuits with the passage of ESHB-1054 along party lines that, according to the video, has emboldened criminals and lead to an 88% increase in auto theft in Washington state.

The 5 minute 15 second video opens with Sheriff Adam Fortney sharing the aftermath local law enforcement is dealing with on the field. From vehicles being used as weapons assaulting police officers to officers being dragged by vehicles. Washington Association of Police and Sheriffs Executive Director Steven Strachan said that lawmakers "made the specific decision to continue

to allow for blatant disregard for the law" after mayors and law enforcement asked for help.

"My fellow Snohomish County mayors and I share a deep and growing concern for the safety of our communities due to the tide of rising crime we are seeing," Everett Mayor Cassie Franklin says in the video. She was joined by Mayor Barbara Tolbert of Arlington, Mayor Brett Gailey of Lake Stevens, Mayor Jon Nehring of Marysville and Mayor Russell Witta of Sultan.

Violent crime in Washington State increased 12.3% in 2021, according to a report released in July by the Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs (WASPC), while the number of commissioned officers able to respond decreased 4.4% (a 495 net loss statewide). Washington State retains its ranking as the lowest in the nation for commissioned officers per thousand residents. Local officials criticize this exodus on the laws passed by the state legislature and are concerned that victims will twice suffer – initially from the incident then from the inability to apprehend the perpetrator.

"Fewer police officers means less ability to provide justice for victims," Edmonds Police Chief Michelle Bennett shares in the video.

"There is a victim behind every one of these crimes," Sheriff Fortney added. "They need us to take action so their voices can be heard."

Councilman Nate Nehring criticized the State vs. Blake decision of February 25, 2021, which ruled that the statute governing simple possession of control substances as unconstitutional, making it difficult to get those suffering from drug addiction into treatment.

County Councilman Sam Low shared that the state of New Jersey reversed its restrictions on police pursuits earlier this year as a result of sharp increase in auto thefts.

According to a National Insurance Crime Bureau (NICB) press release in March, "cities across the United States have experienced an unprecedented rise in auto thefts and carjackings in recent years." NICB, which collects data on auto thefts nationally, found that car thefts nationwide increased by 16.5% in 2021 compared to 2019 and

nearly 29% compared to 2017.

According to the King 5 segment in the video, in the first two months of 2021, car owners in Washington state reported 4,552 vehicle thefts, however in 2022, that number is 8,320 within the same period. The law restricting pursuits make it more difficult to apprehend car thieves and the criminals know this.

With car insurance rates going up in general, the potential for increase in auto insurance premiums may soon add to the financial burden many are experiencing during the post-COVID recession. Insurers treat an auto theft claim as if the vehicle was totaled. Comprehensive coverage will typically pay the actual cash value of your car, minus one's deductible.

Overall, the NICB reports that there were 880,595 vehicle thefts nationwide in 2020, about one stolen vehicle every 36 seconds, up from 794,019 in 2019.

All persons in the video urge the public to contact their state legislature at Leg.wa.gov/legislature or call 800-562-6000 to demand justice to victims and change the laws to allow police more authority to engage in pursuits.

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Council passes resolution recognizing the urgent need for youth sport officials in Snohomish County



Snohomish County Councilman Sam Low (center-right) with sport officials at the passage of his youth sport officials resolution on Wednesday, September 28, 2022. Photo courtesy of the Office of Sam Low.

By OFFICE OF COUNTY COUNCILMAN SAM LOW

EVERETT—On September 28, the Snohomish County Council unanimously passed a resolution recognizing the urgent need for youth sports officials in Snohomish County, as well as calling for all parents, coaches, and athletes to display sportsmanship both on and off the field. All councilmembers were present for the meeting.

Washington Officials Association (WOA) officiating numbers have been on the decline for many years. Reasons include an aging workforce, COVID, and most notably the toxic nature of the climate of today’s youth sports. It is of vital importance that all coaches, athletes, and parents display good sportsmanship, respect referees, and recognize that it is more important for kids to leave the playing field having learned important life lessons about integrity, dedication, and teamwork, than it is to enjoy a win.

“I brought this resolution forward because clearly this is an issue people need to know about,” said Snohomish County Councilmember Sam Low. “I hope by bringing awareness to the critical role officials play in youth sports, other counties around the state will join Snohomish County in helping recruit people to this worthwhile profession and also call upon the public to work together to show our youth what sportsmanship should look like.”

According to a 2017 survey conducted by the National Association of Sports Officials (NASO), the vast majority of youth sports officials began due to their love of the game, but 87 percent of the roughly 17,000 officials who were surveyed said they suffered verbal abuse in their role as officials. Thirteen percent said they had been physically assaulted before, during, or after a game.

“I have coached high school level athletes for over a decade. Working with thousands of athletes, their families, and the staff has been an honor,” stated Michael Bumpus, Sports Analyst with Seattle Sports Radio, Seahawks and PAC-12 Network, CEO of Elite Training Academy.

He continued, “Over the years I have witnessed firsthand the integral role referees play in youth sports. While often a thankless job, refs sign up, show up, and therefore ensure, youth athletic competitions are made available for all student athletes. It is my hope that we begin to look for ways to come together as a community, dig deep, and move forward in this work so that we can continue to make athletics available for all. The call from County Councilman Low for a resolution recognizing the need for youth sports officials is a big step in the right direction.”

“On behalf of the Washington Officials Association, I would like to thank the Snohomish County Council for their resolution of support for youth officials in the county,” added Dean Corcoran WOA Executive Board President. “Officials are vital to the continuing availability of athletic contests for kids of all ages. We are at a critical stage where games and matches are being canceled due to the lack of officials. I hope that this resolution will raise awareness of the issue to the broader community and be the start of a coordinated effort to recruit and retain officials through improved sportsmanship.”

Recognition is in dire need for youth sports officials and a need to call upon parents, coaches and athletes in youth sports to demonstrate a proper perspective on youth sports and to display respect for those doing the difficult job of officiating.

“The adults in the room are charged with exemplifying what good sportsmanship is,” added Jennifer Bumpus, Monroe School Board President. “We are responsible for executing integrity, practicing self-control and being respectful spectators and participants. It is our duty to support athletes, referees and our communities in ensuring that all persons have equitable rights to participation, protection and safety.”

“Thank you to Sam Low and the Snohomish County Council for raising awareness of the challenges youth sports officials are facing in today’s environment,” added Jeff Mattson, WOA Executive Board Member – Region 1 Representative. “I hope this resolution

sparks ongoing conversations between schools, parents, and officials on ways we can all improve sportsmanship and return officiating to the point where officials are appreciated and respected. Without officials, there are no games.”

The public is encouraged to join many speakers showing their support

on Wednesday, September 28, at the Snohomish County Council’s General Legislative Session. The meeting takes place at 9 a.m. at 3000 Rockefeller Ave., Everett, WA 98201 on the 8th floor of the Robert Drewel Building or can be viewed online at <https://zoom.us/j/94846850772>.



SNOHOMISH COUNTY COUNCIL
Snohomish County, Washington

RESOLUTION NO. 22-055

SNOHOMISH COUNTY COUNCIL RECOGNIZES THE URGENT NEED FOR YOUTH SPORTS OFFICIALS AND CALLS ALL PARENTS, COACHES, AND ATHLETES TO DISPLAY SPORTSMANSHIP

WHEREAS, sports officials fill the critical role of making sure sports are fairly played, well-managed and safe environments for all participants and spectators; and

WHEREAS, there is a critical shortage of youth sports referees both locally and nationally; and

WHEREAS, the National Federation of State High School Associations says roughly 50,000 high school referees — 20 percent of all prep officials — quit between 2018 and 2021, and Washington Officials Association (WOA) says its down 800 sports officials; and

WHEREAS, WOA officiating numbers have been on the decline for many years, reasons include: an aging workforce, COVID, and most notably the toxic nature of the climate of today’s youth sports; and

WHEREAS, the average officials age is 54.18, new officials take 2-5 years to mature to a varsity level official and 70% of new officials won’t last for a second year due to the unsporting environment; and

WHEREAS, according to a 2017 survey conducted by the National Association of Sports Officials (NASO), the vast majority began officiating for the love of the game, but 87 percent of the roughly 17,000 officials who were surveyed said they suffered verbal abuse in their role as officials. Thirteen percent said they had been physically assaulted before, during, or after a game; and

WHEREAS, the survey also reported 40% of officials believe that parents cause the most problems with sportsmanship, and over half of all officials argue that coaches are responsible for improving sportsmanship; and

WHEREAS, the NASO survey revealed that 47.94% of men and 44.74% of women have felt unsafe because of administrator, coach, player or spectator behavior; and

WHEREAS, according to the Washington Interscholastic Activities Association (WIAA), over the last year, there have been 508 player and coach ejections from games, nearly double the amount of the previous two years, though 2020-21 was a shortened season, due to the pandemic; and

WHEREAS, currently there are 22 states, including Oregon, where there are specific charges for touching an official but not in Washington; and

WHEREAS, there are active recruiting efforts for officials and WIAA is offering high school athletes free training to try to recruit young officials; and

WHEREAS, Snohomish County Council encourages all coaches, athletes, and parents to first and foremost display good sportsmanship, respect referees, and recognize it is more important for kids to leave the playing field learning important life lessons about integrity, dedication, and teamwork, than enjoying a win;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Snohomish County Council recognizes the urgent need for youth sports officials and calls upon parents, coaches and athletes in youth sports to demonstrate a proper perspective on youth sports and to display respect for those doing the difficult job of officiating.

APPROVED this _____ day of _____, 2022.

<p>_____ Megan Dunn Council Chair</p>	<p>_____ Jared Mead Council Vice-Chair</p>
<p>_____ Sam Low Councilmember</p>	<p>_____ Nate Nehring Councilmember</p>

ATTEST:

Debbie Eco, CMC
Clerk of the Council

Escalating tensions in Europe: Nord Stream sabotaged

By MARIO LOTMORE

To watch the videos associated with the article, scan QR code to the right.



LYNNWOOD—The Nord Stream, a pair of offshore natural gas pipelines in Europe that run under the Baltic Sea from Russia to Germany, has been sabotaged according to European commission president Ursula Von der Leyen.

At approximately 2 a.m. GMT and 5 p.m. GMT on Monday, a seismograph on the Danish island of Bornholm, near where the leaks occurred, recorded spikes. Currently, upwards of 5.2 million cubic feet of natural gas is spewing into the Baltic Sea and, according to The Guardian, creating a kilometer-wide area of bubbling gas.

The steel pipe of the Nordic Stream has a wall of 1.6 inches and is coated with steel-reinforced concrete up to 4.3 inches thick. Each section of the pipe weighs 11 tons, which goes to 24-25 tons after the concrete is applied. Sections of the pipelines are between 260-ft to 360-ft deep.

In August, Russian state energy giant Gazprom cut all deliveries through the Nord Stream 1 pipeline citing maintenance issues. However, earlier this month, Gazprom said it would not resume flows through the pipeline because of an oil leak at its Portovaya compressor station.

“Until the issues on the operation of the equipment are resolved, gas supplies to the Nord Stream gas pipeline have been completely stopped,” Gazprom said in a statement.

Since February, Russia has been in an energy standoff with Europe – specifically Germany – since it launched its military action against Ukraine.

The apparent sabotage of the Nord Stream gas pipeline will add to Europe’s increasing energy crisis as it heads into winter. Energy prices were the single biggest driver of record inflation in Europe (approximately 9.1% across the 19 countries that use the euro), rising to 38% in August.

According to a recent article in the Wall Street Journal, “More than half of German retailers see their economic existence threatened by energy costs, according to a survey this week by the German Retail Association, a trade group.”

US national security adviser Jake Sullivan and NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg have now both characterized the incident as an act of sabotage, but European officials have not yet publicly identified a culprit.

Without any proof, a senior Ukrainian official blamed Russia for the sabotage. However, The Kremlin has said claims that Russia is behind the attacks on the Nord Stream gas pipelines are “stupid and absurd”.

Forbes reports that former Polish Defense Minister, Radek Sikorski, blames the United States for sabotaging the two pipelines. Back in February during a joint news conference with German Chancellor Olaf Scholz, President Joe Biden told reporters, “If Russia



Location of Nord Stream gas pipelines underwater explosions in the Baltic Sea.

invades, that means tanks or troops crossing the border of Ukraine again, then there will be no longer a Nord Stream 2. We will bring an end to it.”

When asked how, the president says with a smirk, “I promise you, we will be able do that.”

Norway announced that it will strengthen security at its oil and gas installations in the Baltic Sea the Nordic country’s energy minister said on Tuesday.

The sabotage comes during the referendum votes in the Ukrainian eastern provinces of Luhansk, Donetsk, Kherson and Zaporizhzhia that began on Friday. Vote tallies from complete results on Tuesday in the four provinces ranged from 87% to 99.2% in favor of joining Russia.

The administrators of Ukraine’s Luhansk and Kherson regions have formally requested of Russian President Vladimir Putin to incorporate their territories into Russia. Annexation of all four regions would result in Russia annexing 15% of Ukraine overnight.

US secretary of state, Antony Blinken, vowed that the west will never recognize Russia’s annexation of Ukrainian territory, which he called part of a “diabolical scheme” by Moscow, AFP reports.

President Putin is scheduled to address both houses of Russian parliament on Friday, September 30, to what analysts suspect, to formally announce the annexation of these provinces into Russia. If Russia declares the four Ukrainian regions part of its territory, Putin could portray any Ukrainian attempt to recapture them as an attack on Russia itself, justifying a potential war.

Last week, during an address to his nation on September 21, Russian President Putin announced the mobilization of 300,000 reservists and threatened nuclear retaliation if Russia’s “territorial integrity” is threatened.

“I would like to remind you that our country also has various means of destruction, and for some components more modern than those of the NATO countries,” Putin said.

“And if the territorial integrity of our country is threatened, we will certainly use all the means at our disposal to

protect Russia and our people. This is not a bluff.”

European Commission president Ursula von der Leyen today proposed a new \$6.7 billion package of Russia sanctions, designed “to make the Kremlin pay” for escalating the conflict in Ukraine with what she called a “sham” referendum in occupied territory.

“We do not accept the sham referenda and any kind of annexation in Ukraine, and we are determined to make the

Kremlin pay for this further escalation,” she told reporters in Brussels.



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from page 1 **CITY COUNCIL**

ludicrous, despicable, and part of a smear campaign,” Hurst said.

After some discussion from other councilmembers, a trivial back and forth spat ensued between Smith and Hurst.

Four councilmembers – Altamirano-Crosby, Decker, Smith and Sutton – definitively sided with Councilwoman Sessions’ sentiments that this event is disheartening yet Smith followed the procedures to request information of Jensen.

“While [the] councilmember’s tone wasn’t great or kind, he did follow the procedures we have to gather information,” Sessions said.

She reminded her fellow councilmembers that there is very little disciplinary action that can be done against Councilman Smith and other councilmembers for inappropriate behavior. She also called on the council to consider communication classes to “improve its way of thinking.”

On a side note to readers, Councilman Joshua Binda is currently under a formal investigation by the PDC for several thousand dollars in campaign financial violations from his 2021 election run.

Councilman Decker shared that there is now some ambiguity in communicating with City staff based on the complaint and that some training may be needed.

Councilwoman Altamirano-Crosby shared how didn’t feel welcome to the council when she began serving in 2020.

On a side note to readers, Council

President George Hurst recently did not support Councilwoman Altamirano-Crosby in her bid to be nominated to the Snohomish County Council for District 3 a few weeks ago, nor did he condemn actions by Altamirano-Crosby’s former opponent Rosamaria Graziani and others who allegedly verbally assaulted her during that bid.

Councilwoman Shirley Sutton, agreed with her fellow councilmember to communication sensitivity training.

“We need to move on as a group and we need to stay as a group,” Sutton said. “We need to act grown up about this.”

Council Vice President Smith claimed that there were security violations of Executive Session and presented a motion for the Council to declassify the three Executive Sessions which was seconded by Councilman Decker.

The Executive Sessions were called under RCW 42.30.110(i) to meet with legal counsel to discuss either potential or pending litigation. The City attorney said that in her professional opinion, the “Executive Session privilege contains no provision for waiver whether by an individual or the council.”

The motion failed 2-5 with Councilmembers Smith and Sutton voting in the affirmative.

Smith accused Mayor Christine Frizzell of violating Executive Session privilege with the sending of an email on May 16 about the incident that included Assistant City Administrator Julie More, former Lynnwood DEI Chair Naz Lashgari, and the two complainants – City Executive Assistant Leah Jensen and City of Lynnwood Race and Social Justice Coordinator Douglas Raiford.

Smith also Insinuated an attempted “Wrap Up Smear” with the release of the 19-page report into the allegations of racism by the City Attorney without first obtaining approval by the Council. He also questioned if two members of the council violated Executive Session privilege by telling the Everett Herald that neither of them were under investigation.

A “Wrap Up Smear” tactic is used to demonize political rivals. The tactic utilizes the media by alleging falsehoods to be “merchandized” against one’s political rival. It is then picked up in media outlets and repeated. The public then unintentionally believe the falsehoods because it is repeated by media outlets to “validate” the claims.

Smith then addressed each of the allegations against him of racial and sexual discrimination documented in the investigation that was conducted by Kathleen Haggard, cofounder of Haggard & Ganson LLP. He reminded councilmembers that Haggard’s conclusion was, in his opinion, a “witch hunt” that contained inaccuracies and derived from four emails over several months this year that politely requested information of DEI applicants.

“So much of this is centered around questioning a person that applied to the DEI commission,” Smith said. “Because the information was that the person was not on the voter registration file – they were not even registered to vote in the place that they’ve been living according to them in the last five years, yet they voted elsewhere.”

Smith, critical of Mayor Frizzell’s handling of the complaint, called on her administration to “come up with a better solution” for managing complaints.

“It really bothers me that the administration didn’t handle this in a different

way,” Smith said. “There are ways to make things work where people can get along but instead of that we have, from what I’m seeing...we’re getting the administration that’s trying to make trouble... That’s not a good idea. It’s not good business. It’s not good policy.”

Smith then requested for the Council to approve \$15,000 for a “fair and balanced” investigation into the complaint by another attorney. His request went unanswered.

Council President Hurst clarified a few items for the record. The first being that the prearrangement of an attorney in the amount of \$20,000 to lead the investigation against Smith.

According to Hurst, the investigation was requested by WCIA, the City’s insurance carrier through its pre-defense review service, and not by Mayor Frizzell. The City’s insurance carrier was concerned about potential litigation from complainants. He also clarified that the WCIA paid for half of the \$15,537 legal bill and that the City did not pay \$20,000 to Haggard & Ganson LLP for the investigation. The City was only responsible for the legal services in the amount of \$7,768.

The council agreed to review dates at its next Work Session in October to decide when to attend sensitivity training as a result of racial and sexual discrimination allegation from City Executive Assistant Leah Jensen and Race and Social Justice Coordinator Douglas Raiford.

from page 1 **CASA**

“I tend to gravitate toward opportunities where people are under privilege, at risk, and they’ve sort of lost some of their power,” Osburn said. “Oftentimes the kids I do advocate for have support but their support doesn’t know how to navigate the system, so you can be the help they need to succeed longterm.”

Throughout Osburn’s fifteen years of volunteering her primary role has been a court-appointed advocate but she has also helped facilitate training for new volunteers, helped at recruitment events and information sessions, and has served on a Task Force for Washington CASA to write its strategic plan and implement their Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee. Helping the CASA program broaden its diversity is one of Osburn’s priorities as she continues her volunteer work with no plan of slowing down.

“We welcome all volunteers, one of goals of our program is to become more diverse and have more people that better represent the children and family’s that we serve,” Osburn said. “If you have a child that sees someone that looks like them, or dresses like them, it’s easier to form a relationship with them and maybe takes away some of that [anxiety].”

One particular case really stands out to Osburn. She was working with a couple parents who were still involved in their child’s lives but could not safely

parent their kids. As a result, the children were adopted by a licensed foster home. Being both huge baseball fans, when the children were born, the parents, and delivery staff, signed a couple baseballs intending to gift them to their children but they were lost. The parents approached Christine to ask if there was any way she could track down these baseballs so, when the children were older, they could have that part of their history. Through some persistent investigative work, Christine was able to track the baseballs down which, she said, really “shows certain things [she does] that are out of the box.”

“I think we give an independent perspective and we can do the little things like that with the baseball but our focus is on the children, while the department focuses on the family. I know that if mom and dad are doing well it directly benefits the kids. We can put a lens on where everything that we look at is how is this affecting the best interest of this child and that’s the perspective we always put in.”

Christine Osburn grew up in Edmonds but has called Lynnwood home for the past 30 years where she lives with her husband. She is a big sports fan, having season tickets to the Seattle Storm and attending sporting events every chance she gets, and helps out with the Edmonds School District Athletics Department when she’s not volunteering or working her full-time job as a Vendor Manager for PEMCO Insurance.

from page 3 **SEATTLE CU**

surcharge-free ATM’s through the Co-Op or Accel networks.

While the Seattle Credit Union has been helping its members with their personal financial needs for the past 89 years, they also strive to be a community partner with small, local, businesses and a voice for the underprivileged.

“My heart is with small businesses. I’ve been self-employed as an accountant for over 40-years and you see the challenges of small businesses. To see an organization like this who is geared toward small businesses, and know the challenges, it’s great that they’re in my neighborhood,” Mayor Christine Frizzell told the Lynnwood Times.

Seattle Credit Union has over 52 community partners throughout Washington State. With a commitment to supporting its community through volunteering, providing free educational workshops, partnering with local non-profits, and creating products built to help those who have traditionally been underserved by their financial system.

Notably, the credit union has partnered with the City of Seattle to help finance immigrants’ paths to U.S. citizenship, as a Juntos Avanzamos credit union that provides trusted financial services to the local Latino community. The credit union has also donated over \$233,838 to local non-profits through

its Feel Good Checking Program.

Seattle Credit Union began in 1933 when seven City of Seattle employees pooled their resources to allow each other, and their co-workers, an opportunity to take loans out they couldn’t get from the banks.

“Our members are the reason we exist. Our number one job is to make sure that they are able to borrow money, grow their savings, and take advantage of special benefits as they travel on their journey toward prosperity, however they choose to define it,” their mission statement states.

“We are proud to have been founded in Seattle and to have grown up with the city that created us. We’ve been here for nearly a century, and we look forward to providing the people of this amazing region the financial knowledge and tools they need to continue to unite the communities of the Puget Sound into the world-class destination Seattle has become.”

The Lynnwood Seattle Credit Union is located at 19718 Highway 99, Ste. 101, and is open from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday through Saturday and closed on Sundays.

WHAT MATTERS TO YOU?

The Lynnwood Times wants to know what issues you would like us investigate Email editorial@lynnwoodtimes.com.