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## Hundreds of Meadowdale alums gather to sing for retired teacher's 90th birthday



Former music teacher Robert Burton at the Edmonds Waterfront Center on June 24 to celebrate his 90th birthday. Photos courtesy of Barbara Burton.

By KIENAN BRISCOE

**EDMONDS**—Approximately 250 Meadowdale High School alums gathered at the Edmonds Waterfront Center on June 24 to celebrate the 90th birthday of former music teacher Robert Burton; taking the risers one last time to sing songs Mr. Burton had taught them over 30 years ago.

In many ways Robert Burton kickstarted the Meadowdale Music Department, as the school's first-ever music teacher when it opened in 1964. Until his retirement in 1989, Burton taught band, music theory, wrote the school's fight

song, adapted the alma mater, formed the first MHS choir, and founded the jazz choral group, "The Impressions" – which is still active to this day and won a jazz competition in Gresham, Oregon, in 1969 under Burton's leadership. Burton also joined his fellow MHS faculty and staff in recognizing MHS's first graduating class in 1965.

Choirs were a standard feature of many high school programs at the time Burton's career began but jazz ensembles weren't as popular. According to Burton's daughter, Barbara, the success of The Impressions' paved the way of inspiring and generating jazz vocal

programs in other parts of the region for years to come. Meadowdale High School vocal music programs, led by Jeff Horenstein today are among the more highly regarded programs in the state, she added.

Burton's music class was beloved by many for his eccentric teaching style and memorable impressions he left with his, approximately, 2,700 students throughout his career. Circus Days, for example, were just one way he engaged with his students to enflame their creativity – which were spur-of-the-

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## The District accuses fellow board member Vivian Dong of planning spa protest

By KIENAN BRISCOE

**LYNNWOOD**—In a shocking decision, the Lynnwood Public Facilities District (otherwise known as The District) unanimously approved a vote of no confidence, Tuesday morning, July 11, of its newest, and only Asian American member, Vivian Dong, for her support of Olympus Spa — a District business currently entangled in a legal battle regarding a Human Rights Complaint.

"Personally, I wasn't really prepared. I felt ambushed, set up and possibly discriminated against," Vivian Dong told the Lynnwood Times. "It's been a shock, a total shock."

As part of that vote, which was originally phrased as removing Dong from her position, something the Board may not have the authority to do, became a recommendation of her resignation. Dong declined to do so.

In June, Western Washington District Court Judge, Barbara Jacobs Rothstein, ordered the Lynnwood-based Korean spa to allow pre-op transwomen access to its female exclusive facility after a complaint filed with the Washington State Human Rights Commission. A rally in support of the spa was held on June 17 at the Lynnwood Convention

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## Alano Club recovery center forced to relocate when needed most

By KIENAN BRISCOE

**LYNNWOOD**—For 26 years the Lynnwood Alano Club has offered a safe space for those recovering from drug and alcohol addiction but now they're being forced to move in a time the city needs their services the most.

Glen Cunningham, President of the Lynnwood Alano Club, informed the Lynnwood Times he was notified by the property owner, Echelbarger Properties Inc., the building is going up for

sale. "There's an interest," he said, but whether or not that interest results in a sale is unclear at the moment. He continued that a construction firm has already begun drilling for soil samples and suspects, if a sale goes through, the Alano Club could have anywhere from six months to two years to find a new location.

Lynnwood Alano Club (LAC) is located in the middle of the Lynnwood City Center redevelop-

ment spurred by the pending opening of the Lynnwood light rail station opening in 2024. Properties adjacent to, and surrounding, the LAC have been identified as necessary for new roadway and other construction now being developed or planned. The non-profit has already commenced their search for a new building but are striking out on affordable options.

"There's no retail space that we can afford in Lynnwood," said Cunningham. "We're trying



Front entrance of Lynnwood Alano Club. Lynnwood Times | Mario Lotmore.

to find a property big enough to put a building and have 50 parking spaces, or an existing building that would meet  
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# Snohomish County invests into 360 new child care slots thanks to ARPA funding

By KIENAN BRISCOE

**EVERETT**—Snohomish County Executive Dave Sommers announced the county's investment of \$7.6 million from its American Rescue Plan Act dollars to fund nearly 360 new child care slots fulfilling one of the key priorities community members identified in the countywide Pandemic Recovery Roadshow. These dollars are expected to fund access for high-quality child care benefiting families over the next 20 years.

Snohomish County is one of the worst areas for child care access in Washington State, comparative to the number of children who need them, according to Somers. An estimated 80% of residents live in an extreme "child care desert," Somers said during a July 6 presser. According to Child Care Aware, there are 62 slots of child care in the county for every 100 infants, toddlers, or preschoolers which is far below the state average of 79 slots per 100 children.

Even if parents can find child care options in the county it's seldom affordable, costing approximately \$14,000 per year—more than an entire year of tuition at both the University of Washington and Washington State University.

"A major barrier to people joining or returning to the workforce is the lack of available and affordable child care. The effects of child care deserts across our county impact all of us, but they have an even more acute impact on women, who are pushed out of the job market at higher rates due to the extremely high cost of child care," said Executive Somers. "That's why we are expanding access for communities across our county, particularly in places where child care is already extremely scarce."

The announcement took place on July 6 at Rise Up Academy — an early learning for Pre-Kindergarten and Elementary students that also offers after school programs. Rise Up Academy will be receiving \$2 million of the county's ARPA funds to expand its services and serve a larger number of children with high-quality education. It also hopes to secure additional federal funding in the amount of \$24 million to fund an expansion that will add two stories to its learning center. The result will be nearly 65,000 square feet making room for affordable housing, ear-



Snohomish County Executive Dave Sommers announcing on July 6, 2023, at Rise Up Academy, the county's investment of \$7.6 million of its American Rescue Plan Act dollars to fund nearly 360 new child care slots. Lynnwood Times | Mario Lotmore

ly child care, and expanding services from 75 to 165 children.

Mike Shaffer, member of the Rise Up Academy's building Committee, informed the Lynnwood Times that an estimated 20% of those living in the affordable housing units would have children in need of child care. The project is seeking a conditional use permit currently and hopes to begin detailed design this fall. If fundraising efforts go according to plan, the expansion will be breaking ground next Spring, Shaffer said.

"We are honored to be recipients of this federal American Rescue Plan Act allocation," said Dr. Paul A. Stoot Sr., CEO and Executive Director of Rise Up Academy. "Each one of us that are recipients of this have an integral part with dynamic networking, of fostering and nurturing the diamonds of the children that we are given responsible care to in this county. This grant is not just a sum of money to us but it represents a tremendous opportunity to transform lives and to shape the future of our community."

Seattle-born professional football player Terry Metcalf, now Curriculum Specialist at Rise Up Academy, drives up to Everett every day to teach his curriculum to both children and teachers alike but the academy's link to professional

sports does not end there. In honor of receiving \$2 million of the county's ARPA dollars, NBA Hall-of-Famer Lennie Wilkens, who was a member of the 1992 U.S. Olympic Dream Team and carried the Seattle Supersonics to a championship victory in 1978 as head coach, was also brought to the podium to share a few words.

"Young people are receptive, they can learn, they can make a difference. With the world we live in today we gotta make a difference or else we're not going to be here," said Wilkens. "This is our future here and [the children] are going to be those doctors, those lawyers, those truck drivers — they're the future."

Dominique Gibson, Rise Up Academy volunteer, shared with the Lynnwood Times her reading level was below average when she began attending Rise Up as a child. The Academy raise her reading level above standard and is now an avid reader. Dominique now gives one-on-one instruction to children for reading at Rise Up and will be attending Seattle Pacific University this fall to study Computer Science.

"It feels like a loving family to give back to an environment where so many people are so caring," said Gibson about returning to volunteer at an institution which gave her so much. "My favorite part about coming here is the children. They're nice, they're lovely, and they're almost like your younger sibling in a way."

Rise Up Academy was just one of six awarded projects along with Volunteers of America's Lynnwood Neighborhood Center (awarded \$2 million), Housing Hope's Tomorrow's Hope Child Development Center, Camp Fire Snohomish County's Camp Killoqua Child Care Center (awarded \$1 million), Boys and Girls Club of Snohomish County's Edmonds Club Child Care (awarded \$1 million), and Latino Educational Training Institute's Incubators for Families' Success (awarded \$656,193).

Five out of six of these projects are located in extreme "child care deserts" which is a Census term to indicate an area has at least 50 children under the age of five that contains either no child care providers, or so few options that there are more than three times as many children as licensed child care slots. Additionally, these areas largely serve families that are at, or below, 65% the area median income.

The programs were chosen by a county-led competitive process with 15 different organizations applying. The decision criteria were available child care slots, financial need, and an organization's ability to complete projects within a short timeframe.

"Four of the five county districts are within a five-minute drive of Rise Up Academy," County Councilman Sam Low told the Lynnwood Times. "I grew up less than a mile from the school, so this opportunity to give back to my old stomping grounds is humbling and heartfelt."

The allocation of the county's ARPA funds were approved by the Snohomish County Council, particularly Council President Jared Mead and Vice Chair Nate Nehring who worked closely with Executive Somers on appropriating the funds, Somers said Thursday.

On the federal side, Representative Rick Larsen (WA-02) was instrumental in spearheading the effort for the American Plan Act Fund allocation to Snohomish County in 2021.

"[With these dollars] 360 more children will have an opportunity to succeed in Snohomish County; not just in the county but across the state there are child care deserts and this investment in child care access is very critical," Rep. Larsen told attendees. "We know that the pandemic exasperated an already existing child care access shortage but we also know that these ARP dollars will help close that gap...The county is putting those dollars to work as they should be put to work."

## LYNNWOOD TIMES

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# Mukilteo Council update on Future of Waterfront Development Project

By MUKILTEO CITY COUNCIL

**MUKILTEO**—Council Vice-President Louis Harris and Councilman Tom Jordal, members of the Mukilteo Port of Everett Agreement Negotiating Team, provide the following update to the latest progress to the Waterfront Development Project.

As the City Council appointed liaisons to the Port of Everett we want to ensure that the process of partnering between the City of Mukilteo and the Port of Everett is one that edifies the vision and intent of the development of Mukilteo's waterfront for residents. In preparation for the first meeting with the Port of Everett, of the port negotiation team, Council Vice President Harris, Councilmember Jordal, Mayor Marine, and City Administrator Powers, met to ensure that we were all in alignment with the purpose of partnering with the Port of Everett. Those conversations concluded that the purpose of partnering with the Port of Everett is to leverage the strengths of the port to support the expedient development of the Mukilteo Waterfront. The following highlights the outcomes of the first meeting with the Port of Everett.

The Mukilteo community wants a vibrant waterfront with access to the water, walking trails, dining, culture, and a place to enjoy magnificent views of the sea, islands, and mountains. The community created the Downtown

Waterfront Master Plan which was finalized in 2015. Since then, several components of the master plan have changed, whether due to feasibility, or due to changing ownership and interests. While this is the case the city still references the Waterfront Master Plan and uses it as a foundational document to direct the continued and changing development of the waterfront.

Since the opening of the new Washington State Mukilteo Ferry Terminal renewed vigor to complete the waterfront development has been prominent. Within the last two years the port has worked to re-coalesce energy and interest in the development of the Waterfront. This is what residents told us in responses from more than 800 people in the 2022 community survey. Beautification and development need to be economically feasible for the city, the port, and developers, while maximizing utility for the community with a long-term horizon.

Here are some of the focal points of the waterfront's development:

- Lighthouse Park's usefulness and beauty can be enhanced by expanding the grass and park space near the lighthouse to provide more space for walking, picnics, sports and playing. (WFMP)
- Due to the need to address parking on the waterfront, especially

with the development of lighthouse park adding an aesthetically pleasing two- or three-story parking building behind Diamond Knot.

- Possibly changing the configuration and location of the boat launch to offset the reduction in surface parking.
- A mile long waterfront promenade from Lighthouse Park to Edgewater Park at the far east end of the Mukilteo waterfront will allow access to the beach, parks, play areas, shops and restaurants.
- Building out the area between the Silver Cloud and the ferry terminal with a promenade, retail and/or dining, and residential units on a second floor. This will provide access to the areas for beachcombing, scuba diving, public restrooms along with restaurants and potentially other retail services. This area could include public gathering spaces with family friendly features, perhaps a splash park, cultural exhibits or art. This area has about eight acres of waterfront currently owned about 50/50 by the City of Mukilteo and the Port of Everett. The Port of Everett is well suited to take the lead on a coherent development of this portion of the waterfront as they have expertise in waterfront projects and the ability to lease

- facilities to restaurants and other retailers. The city will control the character of the development to ensure it meets the community's wishes including the promenade and public gathering spaces.
- Near Edgewater Beach includes eight acres of waterfront owned by the Tulalip Tribe and about two acres of waterfront owned by the city of Mukilteo. The City has long planned to restore the creek and estuary to a more natu-

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# Councilman Binda tells PDC he doesn't know how to write checks to pay fines

By MARIO LOTMORE

OLYMPIA—During a Brief Adjudicative Proceeding on Thursday, July 6, with the Washington State Public Disclosure Commission (PDC), Lynnwood Councilman Josh Binda was found in violation of failing to file his Personal Financial Affairs Statement (F-1) timely and fined \$300 that will be suspended with the condition that he pays \$1,250 (and all additional collection fees) in fines from two previous violations — one as recent as January of 2023 — and that he not commit another violation within four years.

“The deadline is the deadline and there are thousands of people in the state of Washington who also have to file F-1s, and it is incumbent upon you to make sure you observe the proper deadlines,” Washington State Public Disclosure Commission Chair Nancy Isserlis told Councilmember Binda during her ruling. “This is a second [F-1] violation.”

A case was opened on May 3 against Councilman Binda by the PDC after Recall Binda Committee spokesman Diodato Boucsiguez and investigative citizen journalist Glen Morgan officially filed two separate complaints against the councilman who is currently facing a recall effort.

Councilman Binda was sworn in under the laws of perjury to provide his defense to the allegations he violated RCW 42.17A.700 by failing to timely file a Personal Financial Affairs Statement (F-1 report) for calendar year 2022, due not later than April 17, 2023, the enforcement hearing memorandum reads.

For his defense, Councilman Binda, under oath, stated he didn't see any of the nine reminder notices sent to both his personal and city council email accounts by the PDC regarding the missing F-1 report.

“I get a lot of emails in my mail,” Binda told the PDC panel. “I had seen this mail about the F-1 report until about two weeks or so of the filing [unintelligible] once I saw it I meant to go in and file for the F-1 which was, I think May 6th or so was the day, and that was a little after the deadline.”

Councilman Binda then shared that he didn't realize filing his F-1 would be so “heavily scrutinized.”

“It is common I think for other politicians to or other people to have late F-1 filings. I didn't think it was something as severe as in the case of [unintelligible] especially if it was two weeks or so,” Binda said.

During the hearing it was disclosed that Councilman Binda has yet to pay any of the \$1,250 in mandatory fines imposed by the State of Washington for his numerous campaign finance law violations — a fine of \$250 for failing to file his F-1 statement in 2021 that was due in April of 2022, and a \$1,000 violation imposed on January 26, 2023, associated with previous cases 100589 (inspection of books) and 100348 (illegally using thousands of dollars in campaign funds for personal expenses).



Lynnwood Councilman Joshua Binda during his PDC Adjudicative Proceeding on Thursday, July 6, 2023. SOURCE: Washington State Public Disclosure Commission

“This might sound young of me,” Binda told the PDC panel, “I have never written a check or done a check before. I don't have a checkbook or any of that sorts. So, the whole checking process is fairly new to me. I usually do electronic or one of the sorts.”

Binda, under oath, explained that when he attempted to pay a \$1,000 violation associated with previous cases 100589 and 100348 in person back in early March of 2023, he was told by a “gentleman” at the front counter that the PDC only accepted payments for fines in check form and not electronic — e.g. not credit/debit card or other electronic funds transfer medium. The physical office for the PDC is located at Evergreen Plaza, 711 Capitol Way S #206 in Olympia, which is 77 miles or a one-hour-and-16-minute drive from Lynnwood.

Kim Bradford, Deputy Director of the PDC, under sworn testimony, confirmed that on all invoices for fines, it clearly states that the only forms of payment are a check or cashier's check.

“Right now, I don't have a checkbook with a bank or any of that sorts,” Binda told the PDC panel during Thursday's hearing.

He further testified that although he has an active bank account, he never made any further attempts after his March in-person encounter with a “gentleman” at the PDC, to pay the fines he owes to the State of Washington.

“I recently got my car stolen and there's a bunch of other financial burdens I have been put under that I have not been able to pay that since,” Binda told the PDC panel during Thursday's hearing.

PDC Board Chair Isserlis informed Binda that he can speak with his bank regarding issuing a cashier's check drawn from his bank account to pay his fines to the state.

Between the months of January through February of 2023, Councilman Binda received at least \$14,000 from local schools for his Love Conquers All Tour. According to emails reviewed by the Lynnwood Times from a public records request, Councilman Binda expensed \$2,009.70 on January 30, 2023, to secure the venue for his Black History Month Gala in February. The expense was just four days after his

PDC hearing where he was fined for illegally using campaign funds for personal expenses, and under oath, promised to pay the fine and not violate any further PDC laws for up to four years.

Councilman Binda was recently reimbursed \$1,190.80 by the residents of Lynnwood for his travel to Washington D.C. to attend the National League of Cities Conference. It was discovered by city staff that all councilmembers have a \$2,500 budget for city-related travel to use as they see fit.

During the Lynnwood Times investigation in 2021 into potential illegal campaign related activities associated with then-candidate Josh Binda, Andy Lo, listed as treasurer for the Binda campaign, confirmed with the Lynnwood Times that he separated with Binda just after the Primary Election in September of 2021. Lo, an experienced and prominent campaign Treasurer within the state of Washington, told the Lynnwood Times that he is aware of the questionable campaign expenses and did not want to share why he abruptly ended Treasurer services with the Binda campaign.

From September through November, Binda was listed as the Treasurer for his campaign. During this period, thousands of dollars were expensed, and thousands of dollars were received and recorded by then-candidate Binda in the form of checks.

## RECALL BINDA APPROVED BY COUNTY JUDGE

On June 27, Snohomish County Superior Court Judge Marybeth Dingley found sufficient reason to recall Lynnwood City Councilman Josh Binda for misfeasance, malfeasance, and violation of oath of office.

The approved counts to be on the official recall petition are as follows:

- From December 2022 to January 2023, Councilmember Binda violated Lynnwood Municipal Code 2.94.030.B by using the City of Lynnwood's email system to send and receive numerous emails on behalf of his private business arranging speaking engagements with school districts and entering City Council Chambers after

hours to film a video promoting a speaking engagement.

- In 2021 and 2022, Councilmember Binda failed to timely file a required Personal Financial Affairs Statements with the Public Disclosure Commission in violation of RCW 42.17A.700.
- Councilmember Binda violated RCW 42.17A.235 and RCW 42.17A.240 by failing to timely file a Post-General Election Summary Full Campaign Contribution and Expenditure report disclosing contribution and expenditure activities undertaken during his 2021 campaign. Between November 2021 and April 2023, Councilmember Binda improperly used \$2,742.49 in campaign funds for non-campaign related expenditures in violation of RCW 42.17A.445.
- On January 23, 2023, Councilmember Binda knowingly lied to the City of Lynnwood Council and the public by stating his private business contracts for speaking tours and appearances had been signed prior to December 2022. In March 2023, Councilmember Binda attended the National League of Cities Conference in Washington, D.C. without prior notice to the City Council. Councilmember Binda falsely claimed he was representing the City of Lynnwood at the conference. On April 24, 2023, when confronted, Councilmember Binda falsely claimed he was “keynote speaker” at the conference.

## DEMOCRATIC PARTY BACKS BINDA

During its Monthly Business Meeting on May 3, 2023, the 32nd Legislative District Democratic Organization, voted unanimously without objection, 25-0, to support a motion brought forward by Elizabeth Lunsford and seconded by Rosamaria Graziani to “Oppose the recall efforts against Lynnwood Councilman Josh Binda.”

Lynnwood Councilman George Hurst, Edmonds City Councilwoman Susan Paine, Edmonds School District Director Carin Chase, and her mother former Senator and now candidate for Olympic View Water District Maralyn Chase spoke in favor of the motion.

“We need to just oppose this and let him continue to grow as a councilmember,” Councilman Hurst said during the 32nd LD Democratic Party meeting.

“This is all ‘code,’” Councilwoman Paine said after commending Hurst's statement. “This is going to be discouraging younger candidates and candidates of color, [be]cause they are going to be seen as in ways that they don't know how to behave and that is the decorum false argument.”

After the vote of the organization taking an official stance opposing the recall effort against Councilman Binda, Chair for the 32nd LD Democratic Party, Chris Roberts, shared that he believes the recall is an effort to silence

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# City of Everett calls for Arlington to support its LGBTQIA+ community

By **KIENAN BRISCOE & MARIO LOTMORE**

ARLINGTON—To a standing room meeting, Arlington residents on both sides of the upcoming Pride Festival voiced frustration with their city council on Monday, July 17; with Festival supporters stating the council is enabling intimidation of the LGBTQIA+ community, whereas opponents criticize the council for not protecting children from what they consider adult entertainment.

In response to members of the Arlington LGBTQIA+ community calls for support against the backlash, the Everett City Council unanimously passed a resolution of the “free and safe expression of First Amendment rights for the Arlington LGBTQIA+ community and pride events in Snohomish County,” at a Special Meeting held Monday, July 17.

“I am thankful for my colleagues’ words of support and action that followed in regards to the safety for the LGBTQIA+ community in Arlington as well as the entirety of Snohomish County,” Everett Councilwoman Liz Vogeli wrote in a statement to the Lynnwood Times.

The resolution was originally brought forth by Vogeli last Wednesday and has since undergone minor amendments by Nichole Webber, Engagement and Communications for the City of Everett. Vogeli motioned to approve the resolution Monday, that was seconded by Councilwoman Mary Fosse. There were no public comments.

“We are so proud that our City Council and Mayor unanimously approved this resolution, showing the City of Everett’s support for the LGBTQIA+ community,” Webber told the Lynnwood Times, speaking on behalf of the city.

Before the resolution was approved, Councilman Ben Zarlingo suggested that the title focus on protecting free expression of first amendment rights. He motioned for the change that was seconded by Don Schwab.

“I’d like to focus specifically on those free and safe expression of first amendment rights, that way we can gather the maximum support for something the most members of our community agree on,” said Councilman Ben Zarlingo.

Councilman Don Schwab expressed reservation for the City of Everett “getting involved with another city’s conflicts,” expressing preference the city does not have to “police” or make “opinion statements” on other cities while adding it is unfortunate that “any large group of individuals didn’t feel safe.”

Mayor Cassie Franklin agreed it is highly unusual to be concerned with another city when there is still “plenty of work to do here in Everett,” making the point that there are members of the LGBTQIA+ community in Everett that still do not feel safe. The city of Everett

held a recent pride event that did not receive a similar resolution, she noted.

“I would like to us to hold ourselves to the same standard that we do other communities,” said Mayor Franklin.

## TUG OF WAR FOR CAMP PRIDE

The City of Arlington plans to hold its second annual pride event this Saturday, July 22, at Legion Park which isn’t sitting well with some residents who are accusing the advertised drag performances as “sexualization of children” and “grooming young children.”

During public comments at the Arlington City Council on July 17, majority of the speakers, 9 of fifteen, opposed the City allowing the pride festival at Legion Memorial Park which lies directly across the street and is less than 40 feet away from Lifeway Church.

“I’d like to think that we will not be exposing children to inappropriate displays in a park that is across the street from a church as well as retailers where children are likely to be,” a resident said.

Sue Ward, a 13-year Arlington resident and member of Snohomish County Moms For Liberty, shared with the council her concerns that nudity and lude acts may occur at the festival citing an occurrence at Seattle Pride, a sentiment shared and reiterated by majority of the opponents.

“I would like to say once again, I am not a hater, I am not a bigot, I am not a homophobic, all the names we are being called because we oppose what’s going on,” Ward said. “We asked the [Arlington] council for a resolution to enforce RCW 9.68A regarding sexual exploitation of a minor.”

Ward shared with the Lynnwood Times that the City informed her that the RCW she is requesting to be enforced does not apply to the pride festival making it “not enforceable.”

Chris Edwards echoed Wards statements, “I am calling on the council to enforce that RCW 9.68A talking about the visual displays of sexuality in front of a minor.”

He continued, “Because of what happened at ReMyx’d, what happens at Seattle Pride every year in their big parade, the Solstice parade every year, and is what is definitely bound to happen in Arlington on Saturday. This is a pattern of behavior.”

Edwards was referring to a video published by Andy Ngo and authenticated to be true by Snopes of several men on bicycles fully nude in front of very young children at this year’s Seattle Pride. Ward was referring to a second video of nude men washing themselves near children at the International Fountain during the same pride event.

Caera Gramore, current Acting President of Arlington, WA Pride, told

the Lynnwood Times that there will be no nudity at Arlington’s upcoming pride event in Legion Park. She also confirmed that there was no nudity at last year’s event.

“I have spoken to all of the performers,” Gramore said. “I requested that you wear a full dress. So, I have spoken to all of the performers this year just to have our performances really cater to children more and I do see that as appropriate for a pride event.”

Gramore shared that she is concerned for the youth and feels those who are actively opposing the festival are using the excuse of children as a “decoy” to conceal their disdain for the LGBTQIA+ community.

“Music, dance...in every art form there are some ways to do art that is not appropriate for children and there was ways to do that art that is appropriate for children. Drag is the same as all of the other arts,” she said.

Arlington, WA Pride wants to make sure that gay youth in North Snohomish County know they are not alone, and that the organization is here to support them. The organization wants to show the greater community that LGBTQIA+ people exist and are not to be feared. The Board is considering how to expand their influence within North County to be an “anchor” for the for the gay community.

In a heartfelt statement, Kinsey shared how growing up in Arlington she endured bullying and emotional abuse just for being gay.

“That [anti-LGBT] rhetoric enabled people to enact violence on me because of the fact that I was gay,” Kinsey

said. “I was called homophobic slurs, and I experienced physical and sexual violence from the people that called me those things. Because this community allowing that type of speech creates a culture where child safety is endangered... We all want safety for our kids...please educate yourselves. We can make a difference. We can do better as a community than when I grew up here ten to twelve years ago.”

Gramore told the Lynnwood Times that Western State Center, a Portland-based nonprofit committed to diminishing “anti-democracy activity,” shared with her organization anti-LGBTQIA+ social media activity from known white nationalist groups that involve the upcoming Arlington pride festival. Because at last year’s festival counter protesters displayed firearms coupled with this new warning from Western State Center, she and the other organizers have been requesting the city of Arlington enforce RCW 9.41.300 which restricts open carry within 250 feet of the perimeter of a permitted demonstration.

“The purpose of open carrying weapons at protests and Pride events is to intimidate and silence those exercising their First amendment rights, and increasingly leads to unnecessary violence,” Mary Fosse, Everett City Councilwoman, told the Lynnwood Times.

However, Tom Howie, a staunch critic of the pride festival, stated that the RCW mentioned by Gramore and referenced in the city of Everett’s resolution on Monday only applies to demonstrations and not events.

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from page 1 **LYNNWOOD ALANO**

our needs [but] we're finding that everything is out of our budget."

LAC is primarily funded by the rent collected by its meeting organizers. They've attempted to secure operational grants but have only secured a single \$2,000 grant from the Biella Foundation since a grant writing committee was formed three years ago.

"We didn't get any COVID money [either] because we're all volunteers and most aren't willing to award operational grants," said Cunningham.

The LAC hasn't completely ruled out searching in a neighboring city so long as the location meets their primary goal of continuing to be "the stable community and human service organization that the Lynnwood and South Snohomish County communities need."

The Lynnwood Times reached out to Mike Echelbarger, owner of Echelbarger Properties Inc., but he said "under contractual obligation" he could not disclose any details inferring a contract, of some sort, has indeed been signed.

Since opening, the Alano Club has signed on to five-year leases at a time. Their last lease expired in 2021; since then, they've been operating on a month-to-month agreement.

Cunningham added that, given this month-to-month agreement, when the property owners give an official notice they could be required to relocate as soon as 30 days. He hopes to receive notice at least a few months in advance, however.

The Lynnwood Alano Club (LAC) formed as a 501(c)(3) in 1997 with the mission to be a membership-based non-profit that provides a location for addiction recovery meetings, events, and educational activities. The LAC was formed to assist individuals and families to overcome issues related to addiction by furnishing and maintaining physical facilities for educational and recreational purposes.

The LAC works in collaboration with multiple 12 Step programs. Overall, there are over 30 groups with over 60 recovery meetings a week that make use of the building's 4000 Square Foot current facility. Last year, weekly attendance was about 1400 and annual meeting attendance was over 72,000.

"You're going to find meeting that you can get to no matter if you work, what your schedule is; we have meetings that start at 6 a.m. and some running until 11 p.m. at night," said Cunningham. "It's a high availability, it's a central location, no matter if you're an alcoholic or what your drug of choice is you're going to be able to find a meeting here."

In addition to offering twelve step meetings, the club hosts clean and sober events which are family oriented, support individual recovery, and foster community connections. These include dances, picnics, holiday events, arts and crafts workshops, and recreational activities such as bowling and softball.

The LAC has also been active in community outreach, volunteering to assist in graffiti removal and clean trails within Lynnwood. Most recently President Glen Cunningham sat on the city's roundtable discussion on homelessness, substance abuse, and mental health.

During that roundtable discussion Sergeant Lindsay Pool, with the Lynnwood Police Department's Community Health and Safety Section, noted that the city's drug overdoses have doubled from last year. So far in 2023 there have been 19 incidences with 30 doses and in 2022 there were 10 incidents with 13 doses. By "doses" Pool means the Lynnwood PD standard of a "dose" is four milligrams and people typically need two to three doses.

Pool added that the Lynnwood PD has noticed the amount of fentanyl used has increased, there has been more of a need to administer CPR treatment with Narcan, and there has been an increase in individuals using drugs in public and "slumped over." The Department

has noticed more and more drug users are spilling over from surrounding cities such as Seattle and Everett. These individuals have informed the PD they have relocated to Lynnwood to utilize services such as the Hygiene Center, the Lynnwood Food Bank, and the Trinity Lutheran Church's free meals program.

The Police Department recently received a state grant for a Care Coordinator to work with individuals suffering from substance abuse, but a condition of the agreement stipulates that the services are restricted for Lynnwood and Mountlake Terrace individuals. Therefore, the influx of individuals coming in from Seattle and Everett, respectively, does not fall within the Department's grant funding.

The Lynnwood PD will be enforcing the state's new drug laws this upcoming August. In a special session on May 16, 2023, the state Legislature adopted a new permanent drug-related legislation in SB 5536 known as the "Blake Fix" which will go into effect this summer and re-criminalize the simple possession of drugs.

The Lynnwood Alano Club plans to have a representative on the city's Let's Talk About Safety panel this upcoming August 10 and is preparing to bring their concerns to the Lynnwood City Council and the Snohomish County Council, respectively, in the coming months.

President Glen Cunningham returned to recovery off an eight-year relapse in the December of 2015. Several months later he was encouraged to join the Alano board of trustees. He was nominated president of the club in 2017.

"When I first started recovery, I thought drugs and alcohol were the problem. Drug and alcohol are not the problem. They are people's solution to dealing with trauma, to dealing with adverse things that happened in their lives," said Cunningham. "What we do in recovery is we have this twelve step program where we help guide you through that...That's what recovery does, it helps you understand yourself - how

you think, how you react, and once you recognize that, you can address how you deal with life."

**WHAT MATTERS TO YOU?**

The Lynnwood Times wants to know what issues you would like us investigate Email [editorial@lynnwoodtimes.com](mailto:editorial@lynnwoodtimes.com).

from page 3 **WATERFRONT**

ral state and create an explorable estuary similar to the Meadowdale Beach park. The Tulalip Tribes are exploring options for clearing and cleaning up the site. Future uses will be dependent on the Tulalip Tribes.

- There's potential for commercial and some limited residential space in the area behind Ivar's. This could help to tie in various elements of the waterfront and enable it to become more of a year-round destination with community activities. The residential spaces will help to keep the area safe, especially in the evenings.
- Rebuilding of the 525 bridge over the train tracks (funded by Washington State), if done correctly, could facilitate connection of the water side of the railroad tracks with restaurants, businesses and the Rose Hill Community Center on the uphill side of the tracks.

When will we see some progress? Meeting the waterfront's parking needs is the first priority. Funding and design could take up to 24 months with permitting and construction further 24 months. Yes, that's a long time and the best way to finish sooner is for us to start sooner. The commercial development, which will include public spaces and a waterfront promenade, could get started around the same time pending City approvals.

By working together, we can deliver the waterfront you will enjoy and be proud of in a timely fashion.

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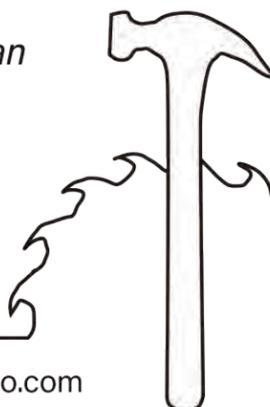
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from page 1 **PUBLIC FACILITIES DISTRICT**

Center, who's governing board owns the property of Olympus Spa.

Approximately 250 people attended the protest, by both groups in support of the spa and in support of trans rights, but projections were that up to 2,000 people were expected to attend. The District hired a private security team, Jones Lange LaSalle (JLL), of nine people for an 8-hour shift, plus overtime as needed to plan for the worst. Additionally, the LPD placed a riot team on the 13-acre site with other local police departments on standby.

Olympus Spa owner Sun Lee was not in favor of the rally, fearing it would hurt his business and reputation. Pope wrote in an email, on June 13, that Lee was "pretty angry with the Lynnwood Times for misquoting him," however in our original coverage of the spa incident we wrote "Lee declined to comment further on the incident, citing the controversial nature of the situation, and deferred all questions to his lawyer, Tracy Tribbet with Pacific Justice Institute."

Lee could not be reached for comment regarding what "misquote" Pope may have been referring to.

During Tuesday's meeting Janet Pope, Executive Director for the District, passed a note to Board Chair Mike Miller, after realizing the Lynnwood Times was covering the meeting. The note read: "The Lynnwood Times is here. You are free to say no to any interviews. You might want to adjourn before Jim speaks."

Lynnwood City Councilman Jim Smith, council liaison for the PFD Board, was not granted the opportunity to discuss the matter regarding Vivian Dong nor was he allowed to ask any questions regarding the vote. In the meeting's agenda the last 15 minutes were allotted for comments by Councilman Smith but the meeting abruptly ended before this could take place.

No where in the agenda was the vote regarding Dong included nor was she given prior notice a vote involving her were to take place.

After Board Chair Mike Miller read the accusations against Dong, the motion of no confidence against her was introduced by Miller and seconded by Wally Webster II and without objection and no discussion, the motion passed 4-0, with Vivian Dong muted on Zoom and unable to vote.

When asked why Dong's audio was muted prior to the motion and vote, Miller told the Lynnwood Times that Dong was "rambling" about the statement he publicly read. According to the video, Dong immediately refuted the accusations by Miller against her for approximately three-and-a-half minutes, at which time, Miller stated to the Lynnwood Times, he told Josh Cain to mute her audio.

The District's Board declined the Lynnwood Times' request for further comment on their decision and referred us to the statement read during Tuesday's meeting.

Pope cited Dong's "promotion" of the rally on her social media as a cause of her no confidence vote — a rally which the District alleges costed businesses

Janet Pope <jpope@lynnwoodpfd.com>  
To: Vivian Dong <[REDACTED]>  
Cc: "Mike Miller" <[REDACTED]>  
Tue, Jun 13, 2023 at 10:30 AM

Hi Vivian,

Matt and I have discussed the legal language in our bylaws and I'll let him use his authority to confirm that with you. There is a section on public statements in the bylaws that were in your packet. In general, as Mike noted, you are certainly allowed to attend and have your own free speech, just not representing the PFD, unless the board is doing advocacy on an issue with one voice. You can't ever endorse a candidate as a PFD representative but the organization can certainly advocate on issues.

I will also say I have now spoken to the owner of the spa, Sun Lee, and he is very distressed about this protest. He doesn't want it to disrupt his business and is angry that no one contacted him to ask if he wanted it.

I am still working with the City on how to plan for this. We are private property and organized protests typically need to get a permit to do them on public property. However, that doesn't mean we don't plan for whatever could happen.

**Email reply to Vivian Dong from Executive Director Janet Pope giving Vivian Dong the approval to attend the Olympus Spa rally. Emails show that Vivian Dong was in constant communication from June 12 to June 15 leading up the rally on June 17.**

approximately \$35,000 in lost revenue and the District approximately \$10,000 to \$12,500 in protest management. The District never reached out to Dong requesting she remove her social media post.

Dong signed a code of conduct when appointed agreeing to act in the financial best interest of the District, which the District says she violated. However, the decision to close businesses fell on Pope despite her claiming the decision was per the recommendation of the Lynnwood Police Department.

In an email, sent on June 15, Pope wrote: "Based on current information the LPD recommended that all our tenants close for business that day. Several are very upset by this loss in business and concerned for their property."

Pope also claimed the decision to close businesses was the Lynnwood PD's recommendation during a sit-down interview with Journalist Jonathan Choe, Senior Fellow at Discovery Institute, in a collaboration with the Lynnwood Times. However, the Lynnwood PD confirmed this was not the case.

"Lynnwood Police was not involved in any recommendation to close those businesses in the area. Janet Pope is the one who managed that, not LPD," Maren McKay, Lynnwood Police Department's Public Affairs and Communications Manager, told the Lynnwood Times.

Leading up into the rally Dong sent an email to Matt Hendricks, PFD's attorney, on June 13, asking if she could attend to show her support "both as an Asian woman as well as the PFD board member to support our key tenant."

She received a response from Janet Pope that same day stating "you are certainly allowed to attend and have your own free speech, just not representing the PFD."

Two days later, on June 15, Pope then wrote in an email: "Based on the recommendations from the Lynnwood Police and the JLL Risk Management team who has international experience with this, they are asking that no staff or board members other than our emergency operations team be on site, so that limited resources can be spent on preventing incidents."

The Lynnwood Police Department confirmed with the Lynnwood Times they never made recommendations for staff or board members to not be on-site.

According to Lynnwood Public Facilities District By-laws, Article 10, Section 1, which deal with Board Di-

rector Conduct: "any director has the right to express personal views and opinions pursuant to Constitutional guarantees of freedom of speech, statements purporting to represent the view or pronouncements of the Board or the Public Facilities District or committees thereof shall not be made in advance of the Board's final determination of the matter, except as directed or authorized by a majority of the entire Board at any special or regular meeting or public hearing."

Never in Dong's social media posts did she claim to be speaking on behalf of the Board, nor as a Board representative. Pope herself was also in attendance at the June 17 rally.

Dong was appointed to the District board by the Lynnwood City Council in April. Leading up to that decision Pope and The District Board Chair, Mike Miller, made it clear they did not think she would be a good fit.

In a letter sent to the Lynnwood City Council, signed by both Pope and Miller, they wrote: "Our interview team did not believe [Dong] would be able to fill some of the urgent gaps we are currently experiencing," citing Dong's busy work schedule, and that she appeared "unfocused" and "unclear" on what the Board does. Their top pick, the letter indicates, was Lynnwood City Council Candidate Nick Coelho. To view the letter in its entirety, click here.

According to Lynnwood City Council video recording during her 13-minute interview with the City Council on April 17, six days after Miller and Pope's letter to the council, Dong who is a Senior Software Engineer, shared she will capitalize on her engineering and leadership experience in IT, financial management, and community outreach to bring valuable insights and perspectives to the PFD board, helping to create a vibrant, and thriving "live, work, play" space for all residents.

In the last three months since Dong was appointed, the District's website has not been updated to include Dong in its list of board members.

Prior to joining the Board, Dong has established herself as a well-known community member in Lynnwood for her work with Safe Lynnwood — an organization created to protest against the opening of a methadone clinic just 433 feet away from the Alderwood Boys and Girls Club.

She has since used the Safe Lynnwood social media page to vocalize her political stance, some regarding LGBTQ+ issues — something Board members said conflicted with the District's "community-focused apolitical" ap-

proach.

In a letter sent by the District Board, and publicly read during Tuesday's PFD Board Meeting, "there is considerable evidence that board member Ms. Dong and her organization Safe Lynnwood were very involved in the promotion and organization of the event," referring to the June 17 rally. "Safe Lynnwood promoted the protest on social media and interacted frequently with several individuals involved in the event, including groups on national watch lists as extremist organizations," the letter accuses.

While Dong did, in fact, post about the rally on her Safe Lynnwood social media page on June 12, primary organizer of the event, Sovereign Women Speak — who considers themselves a "grass-roots, non-partisan, and woman-centered" group yet considered a trans-exclusionary radical feminists (TERF) group by others — confirmed with the Lynnwood Times that Dong was not involved in organizing the rally and April Morrow, the Founder and Executive Director of the group, shared that "they aren't even aware who she [Dong] is."

The Lynnwood Times has confirmed with Dong, that she never organized nor was involved in the planning of the rally.

The District's letter to the Council further stated "we are removing [Dong] from our board and request that you assign another community member to our board," citing the following accusations, not allegations, against Dong:

- "Organizing" the rally.
- Statements made on social media.
- Financial harm caused to the District, yet, according to the Lynnwood Police Department, it was Pope's decision to recommend closing businesses upon advice of a security firm.
- Attending the rally, despite emails by Pope and the PFD Attorney approving Dong to attend. Pope along with other staff members also attended the rally as its emergency management team which Pope did not want Dong to be involved in.
- Failure to ask if there was an event impacted by the rally or what the financial repercussions of the rally would be. However, there was no mention that any other Board member voiced this concern.

It is unclear if the Board has the authority to remove Dong without approval from the Lynnwood City Council who appointed her. After multiple requests, the PFD Board has yet to provide a copy of its Bylaws to the Lynnwood Times for review, nor responded to our request. The District has yet to provide a copy of its Public Records Request policy, nor a copy of the statement read by Chair Miller. The City of Lynnwood provided a copy of Miller's statement after it was shared with the council earlier in the day.

Dong has confirmed with the Lynnwood Times that she has yet to receive a copy of the accusations made against her by the PFD Board.

The District oversees the operation of the Lynnwood Event Center and the surrounding 13 acres. It's current goal

from page 1 **BURTON**

moment talent shows where students would perform a talent or skill over circus music during select Fridays.

Last month's event was organized by Robert's children: Barbara, Richard, and Carol. Barbara Burton began to digitize her father's old choirs' recordings over the years – some dating back as early as 1964 and 1965. She created a Facebook page, tracking down a hand full of Meadowdale High School Choir alumni to share files with, and the idea to get together for a reunion blossomed from there. Barbara suggested her father's upcoming 90th birthday as a good excuse for the reunion.

Barbara, and around 250 to 270 former Meadowdale Choir students, from 26 graduating classes, rented out the Edmonds Waterfront Center for the occasion. Some traveled as far as Japan, North Carolina, and Texas to be there.

Leading up to the event, Barbara sent out sheet music of four different songs her father used to teach, which the alumnae performed from risers under

Mr. Burton's conducting. Two of the songs performed were the MHS alma mater Burton adapted and his signature "goodbye song" which his choirs would perform to conclude their concerts.

"These were students I hadn't seen in 30 years," Robert Burton told the Lynnwood Times. "I saw some familiar faces and also some unfamiliar faces. With some, even if I looked at their old high school yearbook picture, I still didn't recognize them."

Burton's love for music took off while serving in the U.S. Army in 1956. While stationed in a war-torn Korea, three years after the Korean War ended, Burton played the trumpet in the seventh division band, which was used to play music for various military ceremonies. He also worked as a music librarian in the army to avoid being deployed in the infantry.

"I got to play music and didn't have to play guns," said Burton.

When Burton exited the military, he decided to become a school band direc-

tor, beginning his career at Cleveland High School in Seattle before transferring to the Edmonds School District.

Burton has lived in Edmonds most of his life. Born in California, he followed his family up to Snohomish County during World War II in the 1940's. He attended Edmonds High School while working at the boat launch at the Edmonds Waterfront. At Edmonds High School, Burton took music classes under Bob Anderson, who became superintendent of the Edmonds School District Music Department and eventually hired Burton as Meadowdale High School's first music instructor.

"My favorite part [of teaching] is hearing a finished production that came out well and teaching the kids how to sing," said Burton.

Like many school districts throughout the area and the country, the Edmonds School District is currently considering making significant cuts to the very arts programs that made such an impact on the hundreds that attended Burton's birthday celebration reunion.

One of Burton's former students wrote: "I'm excited to celebrate a reunion of the best years of high school. Bob Burton made them great." This was the most memorable time of my life. Enjoyed the songs, the leadership, camaraderie, and everyone who sang one note or thousands" says another.

For Barbara Burton, this event was about more than just celebrating her father's landmark 90th birthday. She, and her siblings, believe that their father created a program that built community, creativity, confidence, and joy.

"Music is a really important part of education and Edmonds School District is doing a lot of cuts right now of these programs, some of the very programs that were so strong during Bob's time," Barbara Burton told the Lynnwood Times. "People wouldn't respond this way to an old math class, or an old STEM class. It's not because they all became musicians, it's not about a job, it's about creating a certain kind of people who have had this experience in their life that isn't exactly tangible in terms of a job."

from page 5 **ARLINGTON PRIDE**

"I am not aware of any group who are planning to bring rifles to protest this pride event," Howie said during public comments. "I have not seen any evidence of it, I have only heard hearsay. The only people who are talking about it are the Arlington pride people."

Flyers warning parents to keep their children away from the pride event began circulating around Arlington prompting Mayor Barbara Tolbert to call on individuals, on both sides of the issue, to demonstrate tolerance, proclaiming her dedication to maintaining Arlington as an inclusive city where residents can acknowledge each other's differences and allow everyone to feel safe and respected.

"I am disheartened to learn that members of our LGBTQ+ communities feel they have been the victims of hateful speech, harassment and intimidation. These types of disgraceful actions do not belong in Arlington," Arlington Mayor Barbara Tolbert took to Facebook to say on July 14. "I like to think that Arlington's residents are accepting, open-minded and respectful. As a community, we have a challenge to come together with kindness and compassion for each other."

Last Mother's Day, the ReMyx'd Restaurant and Bar in Arlington hosted a drag show titled "Celebrating Mothers" which was advertised as a "family-friendly" event. Some residents were appalled that performers were allegedly scantily clad, and dancing in a way they believed to be sexually provocative in front of children – some routines involving a stripper pole and what they referred to as "sexually gyrating" movements.

Drag Queen Kris Rose defended her sister and fellow drag performer, Columbia Blue's, "gyrating" dance moves stating "I assure you queer happiness and art is not the problem. By all means continues taking your kids to Hooters."

ReMyx'd received backlash from Arlington residents for allowing children to attend the event and, coincidentally, sustained extensive fire damage back in May that left

it temporarily shut down. At that time Arlington Police said there was no indication the fire had been intentionally set, however.

The same drag troupe that performed at this controversial event, named the La Tres Touche, have signed on to have prominent roles at Arlington, WA Pride's Camp Pride event leaving some worried their children might be subjected to a similar display.

The circulating flyers, and vocal opposition of the city's pride festivities by some residents – with at least one even authoring a blog post on the matter – is now leaving elected officials in surrounding jurisdictions concerned for event goers' safety especially considering the city of Arlington has stated it would not be enforcing open carry armed intimidation restrictions.

"I am here supporting the pride community," Everett Councilwoman Vogeli told the Lynnwood Times who read the resolution during public comment at the Arlington City Council meeting she and her fellow councilmembers passed unanimously early Monday morning. "I am here because I really want to support

[Arlington] councilmembers that are having a hard time speaking up."

When asked to share her thoughts about the city of Everett passing the "Free and safe expression of First Amendment rights for the Arlington LGBTQIA+ community and pride events in Snohomish County" resolution, one Arlington resident replied, "We don't live in Everett for a reason; we do not subscribe to big city thinking."

from page 7 **PUBLIC FACILITIES DISTRICT**

aims to redevelop Lynnwood's downtown core as a live, work, play, and entertainment destination for the region with a \$200 million Master Plan. The Board of Directors is a volunteer position with a term limit of four years, which can be renewed at end of the term.

**PFD STATEMENT REGARDING VIVIAN DONG**

The following statement was read in the public meeting on July 11, 2023, by PFD Board Chair Mike Miller as the

from page 4 **BINDA**

Black voices.

"I am very pleased that the district passed this motion to oppose the recall efforts of Josh Binda," Roberts said. "To me this is just another attack on many of our democratic elected officials including, especially those of democratic elected officials, who happen to be of color."

Earlier in the meeting, Hurst, who is running unopposed for Lynnwood Council seat was endorsed without objection by the 32nd LD Democrats.

"I need your help in changing the direction of this city council," Hurst told his fellow Democrats. "Lynnwood would soon become the major city in south Snohomish County. I need fellow councilmembers who will join me so we can make real progress on affordable housing and will seriously address homelessness and the crisis of substance abuse and mental health and who will make sure to create policies to protect our environment."

"Your endorsement for my reelection to the Lynnwood City Council and your support for progressive candidates to the other Lynnwood City Council positions up for election will make a difference. It is time to make good trouble."

justification for removing fellow Board member Vivian Dong. It was signed by Wally Webster II, Rosario Reyes, Taylor Nordby, and Mike Miller. No supporting evidence nor documentation was shared in the meeting to substantiate the claims against Board member Dong. To view the 3-page document, click here.

During a phone interview with the Lynnwood Times on July 11, Chair Miller, did not share, when asked, if an investigation was conducted nor who conducted the investigation against Dong. He did state that Executive Director Janet Pope authored a vast majority of the statement he read on Tuesday and that the other Board members reviewed the document for their input prior to the meeting.