



**KING COUNTY**

1200 King County Courthouse  
516 Third Avenue  
Seattle, WA 98104

**Signature Report**

**October 27, 2003**

**Motion 11825**

**Proposed No.** 2003-0455.2

**Sponsors** Sullivan

1                   A MOTION adopting the minutes of the 2003 Labor  
2                   Summit between local labor leadership and King County  
3                   elected officials.

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6                   WHEREAS, the 2003 Labor Summit between local labor leadership and King  
7                   County elected officials was held on June 2, 2003, and

8                   WHEREAS, Ordinance 13000, adopted by the King County council on February  
9                   9, 1998, directs that the minutes of the annual labor summit be adopted by the council;

10 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT MOVED by the Council of King County:


11 The minutes of the 2003 Labor Summit are hereby adopted.

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Motion 11825 was introduced on 10/13/2003 and passed by the Metropolitan King County Council on 10/27/2003, by the following vote:

Yes: 13 - Ms. Sullivan, Ms. Edmonds, Mr. von Reichbauer, Ms. Lambert, Mr. Phillips, Mr. Pelz, Mr. McKenna, Mr. Constantine, Mr. Hammond, Mr. Gossett, Ms. Hague, Mr. Irons and Ms. Patterson  
No: 0  
Excused: 0

KING COUNTY COUNCIL  
KING COUNTY, WASHINGTON

  
Cynthia Sullivan, Chair

ATTEST:

  
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Anne Noris, Clerk of the Council

**Attachments**      A. Minutes of the June 2, 2003 Labor Summit

## Minutes of June 2, 2003 Labor Summit

### Opening Remarks

The 2003 Labor Summit was chaired by Cynthia Sullivan, Chair, Metropolitan King County Council.

*Chair Sullivan* called the Committee-of-the-Whole meeting and the 2003 Labor Summit to order at 9:25 a.m. on June 2, 2003. The chair expressed the importance of the annual discussion between the executive branch, the legislative branch and labor on issues effecting the government. Chair Sullivan noted that King County's most valuable resource is its employees and the relationship with labor is a partnership in providing services. She further stated that anything less than a fair wage is not efficient and does not protect the public's interest. The chair expressed the need for labor and the council to work together to find solutions and maintain open communications in an effort to successfully manage the coming months. The chair called for more support from the State of Washington, either in the form of additional funding or the authority to utilize new revenue instruments. Chair Sullivan concluded her opening remarks by thanking everyone for attending the summit.

*Steve Williamson, Executive Secretary, King County Labor Council*, thanked the Council Chair Sullivan and the entire Council for holding the annual labor summit meeting and thanked everyone for attending the summit. Mr. Williamson noted that the structural budget issues require people to set aside their differences and work together to help make the county solvent. He noted that the county is overly dependent on property taxes for revenues and that the county needs to diversify its revenue sources. He cited the recent parks levy as a good example of explaining the cost of services to citizens and asking them to approve the levy for those services. Mr. Williamson also called for more support from the State.

*Mr. Williamson* recognized the good work of public employees during challenging times. He noted that public employees continue to do their jobs during tough financial times, frequently with fewer staff and resources.

*Mr. Williamson* concluded his remarks by discussing the current efforts in support of this year's Immigrant Workers Freedom Ride. The Freedom Ride is modeled after the freedom rides of the civil rights movement. Participants will travel by bus from points all across the country and convene in Washington D.C. and New York City for speeches and rallies.

*Mr. Rick Sawyer, President of the HRE Local 8*, spoke on the importance of the Freedom Ride to begin a dialogue on addressing the challenges of immigrant workers.

*Councilmember McKenna* asked if a legislative goal of the Freedom Ride was to gain amnesty for undocumented aliens.

*Mr. Williamson* responded that the Freedom Ride had more broad goals at this point, but that specific legislation may evolve in Washington D.C.

*Chair Sullivan* recognized County Executive Ron Sims and invited him to speak to the audience. She also recognized Deb Eddy of the Suburban Cities Association and thanked her for her work with human services.

*Executive Sims* spoke of the important role that immigrants play in our society and noted that many immigrants serve in the U.S. armed forces. He thanked the council for creating an environment that allows for a constructive dialogue with the labor community. He cited examples within King County government where efficiencies were attained as the direct result of cooperation between labor and management. He thanked the County's labor unions and the union leadership for their hard work, innovation and efforts to create a constructive environment.

*Mr. Williamson* thanked Executive Sims for his work on labor issues and support of the Freedom Ride.

*Chair Sullivan* invited other councilmembers to address the group.

*Councilmember Constantine* thanked the King County Labor Coalition for their work on labor issues in the Labor Operations and Technology Committee, especially during these difficult budget times. He discussed the progress of the labor movement to embrace the plight of immigrant workers.

*Councilmember Phillips* thanked Steve Williamson and the entire labor community for the opportunity to maintain a constructive dialogue during difficult budget times. He noted that after cutting many programs in county government, it is time to discuss new revenue options. He also spoke on the importance of providing opportunities for workers.

*Councilmember Gossett* thanked the King County Labor Council and all participants for their involvement in the Freedom Rides. He also thanked the Labor Council for their involvement in issues that are not strictly labor oriented. He cited the labor community's support and participation in the recent Martin Luther King celebration. Councilmember Gossett also thanked the labor community for their efforts to create employment opportunities for minority and poor populations.

*Councilmember McKenna* thanked Mr. Lance Norton and members of his bargaining unit for their work on the Regional Transit Committee.

*Councilmember Pelz* thanked Peter Coates, Lance Norton and Steve Williamson for their cooperation and hard work on many labor issues at King County and in Olympia.

*Councilmember Patterson* noted that she had traveled to El Salvador and Sweden in the past year. She observed terrible labor practices and extreme poverty of El Salvador. She observed strong labor practices and a high standard of living in Sweden. She also thanked Steve Williamson for his participation on the King County Commission on Governance.

*Mr. Williamson* thanked Scott White of Council staff for his work on labor issues and on the Governance Commission.

*Councilmember Edmonds* noted that King County provides important services to citizens and that the strength and effectiveness of county government is a reflection of the many successful partnerships the county had established, particularly with the labor community. She also expressed her support for the Freedom Ride.

*Mr. Williamson* thanked Dustin Fredrick, Whitney Hupf and the King County Labor Coalition for their work to build the partnership between the county and the labor community.

**Solid Waste: Intermodal Facility**

*Joe Tessier, Lead Negotiator, Teamsters Local Union No. 117*, opened his remarks by noting the many number of successes that have resulted from the good communication between parties.

*Mr. Tessier* discussed the benefits related to the Executive's forthcoming proposal to build and operate a solid waste intermodal facility. He explained that the Cedar Hills landfill will be closing in the next decade and that now is the time to plan for the future so that solid waste rates are stable and that citizens are not at the mercy of private waste companies. He noted that Solid Waste division employees were a tremendous asset to the citizens of King County and that the unions were working with the Executive to address this issue. There was further discussion regarding the need to stabilize rates for rate payers.

**Apprenticeship Utilization**

*Peter Coates, Executive Secretary, Seattle King County Building and Construction Trades Council, AFL-CIO*, briefed and answered questions from the Committee regarding Apprenticeship Utilization. He discussed the benefits of apprenticeships, both to individuals and to the labor community at large. Mr. Coates indicated that the labor community was meeting overall apprenticeship goals, but that they had not tracked performance by individual sub-contractors that performed work on projects. He asked the Council for their support in advancing apprenticeship opportunities in King County.

*Councilmember Irons* asked if Mr. Coates had been in contact with the King County School Directors Association. He noted that there were potential efficiencies and partnerships that could be attained if management in the educational sector was more aware of apprenticeship programs.

*Mr. Coates* indicated that he would be receptive to discussing the issue with them.

*Councilmember Edmonds* asked Mr. Coates if there was a similar relationship with public higher education in the state.

*Mr. Coates* indicated that the Governor had issued an Executive Order addressing the issue, but that there was still an opportunity to work directly with 4-year institutions and community colleges.

*Councilmember Gossett* asked *Mr. Coates* to examine the population of minority of African American workers in the apprenticeship programs and how that might be increased.

*Mr. Coates* responded that the labor community is examining how to increase apprenticeship opportunities for minorities. He noted that one issue is the retention of minority apprentices through the completion of their apprenticeship. He further indicated that they are working with leaders in the minority communities to examine the issues.

*Councilmember Phillips* noted that the region's economy is currently very poor and asked *Mr. Coates* to discuss how apprenticeship programs help with economic development and job growth.

*Mr. Coates* responded by noting that apprenticeship programs help improve worker productivity and that our region's workforce has among the best productivity in the world. He noted that this can be measured in terms of the cost per worker per hour. He cited several examples of successful projects, including construction of the recent football stadium.

*Councilmember Patterson* asked for an update on workers compensation issues in Olympia (legislature).

*Mr. Coates* acknowledged the challenge faced by management to consider other locations in the country or world that may have less strict workers compensation laws, but noted that these same laws help allow for a safe, productive and competitive workforce. He indicated that he did not have an update on specific issues.

*Mr. Williamson* noted the importance for ensuring that all business can be successful in the state. He indicated that Rick Bender of the State Labor Council is taking the lead on this issue in Olympia. He expressed the importance for establishing apprenticeship standards for individual trades to maximize opportunities for workers.

*Mr. Williamson* recognized staff members for their work on various issues, including: Berlene Wilder, Joan Wise and Rich Feldman. He introduced the first panel of speakers.

**Labor Management Relations**

*Whitney Hupf, Union Representative, International Federation of Professional and Technical Engineers, Local 17 and King County Coalition of Unions, Co-Chair*

*Tara Heinecke, Organizer/Representative Service Employees International Union, Local 925*

*Dustin Frederick, Business Manager, Service Employees International Union (SEIU), Public Safety Employees, Local 519 and King County Coalition of Unions, Co-Chair*

*Joe Tessier, Lead Negotiator, Teamsters Local 117*

*Ms. Heinecke* acknowledged the CTV workers who are members of the SEIU Local 519.

*Ms. Hupf* introduced the panel discussion on labor policies. She explained the benefits of the “interest based bargaining” policy and how it has been implemented in bargaining several contracts. She discussed the “labor management committee” policy that promotes setting up mechanisms to improve dialogue on issues that may be outside the parameters of a grievance issue. She also discussed the benefits of the King County Alternative Dispute Resolution Program as a mechanism for addressing a variety of issues. She cited the example of successfully addressing a reclassification issue via a mediation in the King County Alternative Dispute Resolution Program to avoid a costly arbitration process.

*Mr. Frederick* cited specific examples of how labor and management at the county have worked together to address issues. With respect to the executive branch, he noted two examples. First, he discussed how the Joint Labor Management Insurance Committee has worked to keep health care costs down while still providing critical benefits to employees. Second, he noted the Re-employment Program which works to preserve King County’s greatest asset—its employees. With respect to the legislative branch, he noted the annual Labor Policy Summit as a way to improve dialogue and the labor policy ordinance requiring that compensation be based on the market.

*Mr. Tessier* discussed the success of the Productivity Initiative at the Wastewater Treatment Utility. He explained how this success involved communication between labor and management to establish a framework for running the facility like a business. He noted that there were disagreements at times, but that the process established a mutual respect between labor and management that allowed for a win-win solution.

*Ms. Heinecke* provided an overview of the benefits and incentives associated with the Wastewater Productivity Initiative and related productivity pilot projects. She discussed the possibility of an initiative that would implement new cross-training opportunities that could create efficiencies. She noted that this possibility does come with some concerns that are being discussed by a committee to ascertain what can be implemented.

*Councilmember Hague* thanked *Ms. Heinecke* for her leadership on this issue and indicated that she is very optimistic about potential results.

*Councilmember Phillips* thanked presenters and thanked County Executive Sims for his leadership on the issue.

### **Health Department Update**

*Adrienne Thompson, Union Representative, International Federation of Professional and Technical Engineers, Local 17*

*Janet Parks, Nursing Representative, Washington State Nurses Association*

*Ms. Thompson* thanks the Council for passing the Small Pox vaccination ordinance in March 2003. She noted that the federal government mandated that public health departments be

prepared in the event of a Small Pox outbreak, including the vaccination of health department employees. She discussed the details and process of implementing these requirements and the positive communication between labor and the Council that resulted in the passage of the ordinance.

*Ms. Parks* discussed the details involved in the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) related to the Small Pox vaccination of employees. She also thanked the Council for their efforts to work with the labor community on this issue.

**SEIU 1199: Health Care Dollars for Health Care Only**

*Emily Van Bronkhorst, Executive Vice-President Service Employees International Union District 1199NW, AFL-CIO*

*Ms. Van Bronkhorst* explained that 1199NW has over 17,000 across the state, including about 12,000 who live and work in King County, who all work to ensure that quality health care is affordable and accessible to all citizens. She noted that the rising costs of health care is a crisis regionally and nationally, and that access to services is decreasing. She suggested that one efficiency would be to pass legislation that does not allow public health care dollars to be used to prevent health care works from having a unionized voice. She explained that this practice by management in the health care industry effectively directs funding away from critical health care services and provided examples. She called for public health care funds to be used for health care services—not union busting—and that health care providers should be held accountable for such practices.

*Councilmember Edmonds* asked for clarification about what jurisdiction—state or local—could pass legislation restricting the use of health care dollars.

*Ms. Van Bronkhorst* indicated that it could be passed at the local level.

*Mr. Williamson* noted that he is regularly asked by union members and leaders about ways to increase efficiencies in the health care arena.

*Chair Sullivan* thanked *Ms. Van Bronkhorst* for her informative presentation and asked for sample legislation relating to her subject.

**Closing**

*Mr. Williamson* acknowledged the attendance of Nancy Young, President of the King County Labor Council.

*Chair Sullivan* thanked everyone for attending and asked for any additional issues for the good of the order.

*Chair Sullivan* adjourned the meeting at 11:45 a.m.