



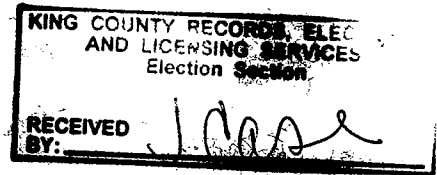
KING COUNTY

1200 King County Courthouse
516 Third Avenue
Seattle, WA 98104

Signature Report

September 7, 2007 07 SEP -7 PM 3:55

Ordinance 15896



Proposed No. 2007-0437.1

Sponsors Initiative, Ferguson, Hague,
Phillips and Patterson

1 AN ORDINANCE relating to enhancing citizen
2 participation, civic engagement and citizenship education
3 in county government, creating a volunteer citizen
4 councilor network within the legislative branch; and adding
5 a new chapter to K.C.C. Title 1.

6
7 **PREAMBLE:**

8 Freedom of speech, freedom of petition and freedom of assembly are
9 hollow rights if people feel unable to be heard.

10 Freedom to be heard is not mentioned in the United States Constitution
11 and thus is a right reserved to the people under the ninth amendment.

12 The purpose of this initiative is to enhance citizen participation, civic
13 engagement and citizenship education in government. There is a need to
14 create a citizen councilor network of small discussion groups, open to all
15 citizens, self-funded and using symbolic and sustainable dialogue to
16 communicate among political and other community leaders and the people
17 at large.

18 One key to a sustainable community is an informed and sustainable
19 dialogue among leaders and people. Citizens need new, more convenient
20 and effective ways to share their opinions with other citizens and the
21 leaders of their organizations, institutions and governments. This is a
22 process of building social capital through both bonding and bridging
23 dialogue and improving community mental health and happiness—one of
24 the goals of all governments, which seek, as they should, to protect and
25 enhance the basic human rights of "life, liberty and the pursuit of
26 happiness."

27 The intent is to improve the people's freedom to be heard by providing,
28 without cost to those participating, an enhanced public arena for effective
29 civic engagement. Similar to advisory voting, but less expensive and
30 more collaborative, this process enables all interested citizens to contribute
31 their opinions in a convenient and efficient manner.

32 This initiative will establish a feedback communication system by
33 establishing a network of volunteer citizen councilors, coordinated by the
34 King County auditor's office, where all interested citizens can meet in
35 small groups and share their opinions on topics of public interest for
36 discussion and tabulation. Topics will be selected periodically by the
37 auditor based on suggestions made by participants and public officials.

38 The program encourages citizen volunteers to meet in small groups at
39 convenient times and places such as neighborhood homes or workplaces,
40 and provides valuable feedback on important public issues. Participant

41 opinions will be tabulated and shared with participants, interested public
42 officials, news media and the general public. The program will be self-
43 funded without taxpayer dollars through voluntary contributions from
44 participants, civic-minded citizens, businesses, organizations and
45 foundations.

46 The accounting profession has fully developed financial audits of tangible
47 accounting for fraud but has not yet developed ways to measure intangible
48 accounting of human assets, such as the esprit de corps and stakeholder
49 interests and concerns of citizens in their various roles as taxpayers,
50 clients, patients, consumers, workers and members of organizations.

51 The auditor has a charter responsibility and serves the citizens of King
52 County by promoting accountability, fiscal integrity and openness in local
53 governments.

54 State Initiative 955 was filed January 8, 2007, and is the model legislation
55 for this similar initiative to the King County council. Initiative 955 can be
56 viewed in its entirety at:

57 <http://secstate.wa.gov/elections/initiatives/people.aspx#955>. For more
58 information, see also <http://EasyCitizenInvolvement.com> and
59 <http://ForumFoundation.org>.

60 BE IT ORDAINED BY THE COUNCIL OF KING COUNTY:

61 SECTION 1. Sections 2 through 12 of this ordinance should constitute a new
62 chapter in K.C.C. Title 1.

63 NEW SECTION. SECTION 2. The people of King County recognize that many
64 citizens have difficulty participating meaningfully in government processes that rely
65 primarily on public hearings held at locations that are often distant from their residences
66 or workplaces or held at inconvenient times. To increase and enhance citizen
67 participation in county and local government, this ordinance establishes and supports a
68 self-funded program in cooperation with the auditor and the clerk of the council of King
69 County by which every interested citizen could receive information about public issues,
70 discuss these issues with other citizens at convenient times and places and record their
71 opinions in an efficient, objective and anonymous way, so as to provide valuable
72 feedback to elected officials, community leaders and the public.

73 NEW SECTION. SECTION 3.

74 A. The office of citizen councilor is established in the auditor's office of the
75 legislative branch. Any person who lives or works in King County and volunteers to act
76 as an official government advisor may become a citizen councilor by sending a letter to
77 the clerk of the council, calling a local or toll-free telephone number or signing up on a
78 website. Citizen councilors shall act collectively as a sounding board for the county on
79 important public issues selected by the auditor. Conveners of citizen councilor groups
80 shall be those designated by the citizen councilor coordinator from those citizen
81 councilors who volunteer to host a group. Every effort shall be made to assign citizen
82 councilors to a group that meets at a convenient time and place for those participating.
83 Meetings will usually be in small groups.

84 B. Citizen councilors may participate:

85 1. In a citizen councilor group of approximately four to twelve persons, ideally
86 eight to twelve persons, usually organized by residence or work area zip code with the
87 assistance of the citizen councilor coordinator;

88 2. In a citizen councilor organizational group under section 9 of this ordinance;
89 or

90 3. As an individual if the person is unable to attend meetings in groups due to
91 age, disability, remote location or otherwise.

92 C. A citizen councilor may be reassigned to a different group on request to assure
93 that the group meeting place, time and makeup is convenient and compatible.

94 D. For the purposes of this section and sections 4 through 12 of this ordinance:

95 1. "Councilor" means an official advisor to a sovereign or chief magistrate;

96 2. "Citizen councilor" means a person who lives or works in King County and
97 volunteers to act as an official government advisor pursuant to this ordinance;

98 3. "Citizen councilor convener" or "convener" means a citizen councilor who
99 agrees, at the request of the citizen councilor coordinator, to host a meeting of citizen
100 councilors at a home, workplace, or elsewhere;

101 4. "Citizen councilor communicator" or "communicator" means a citizen
102 councilor who assists a convener by obtaining and distributing the approved background
103 materials used at each meeting and then facilitates the transmission of participant
104 opinions back to the citizen councilor coordinator;

105 5. "Citizen councilor coordinator" or "coordinator" is the volunteer
106 administrator of the citizen councilor network, as appointed by the auditor;

107 6. "Value reporter" means any person assigned by the coordinator to gather
108 information on the issue or issues selected by the auditor;

109 7. "Participation window" is the designated time period, usually consisting of
110 thirty consecutive days, in which citizen councilors have to meet, discuss a topic, and
111 share their opinions by completing an opinionnaire; and

112 8. "Opinionnaire" means an objective survey instrument based on participation
113 and administrative theory using social resonance technology developed by the Forum
114 Foundation. An opinionnaire is different from a "questionnaire" which is an objective,
115 random-sample survey instrument based on statistical and mathematical theory. An
116 opinionnaire uses yes/no, multiple choice, Likert scale, end anchor and value questions or
117 statements, to which participants respond objectively in a manner that allows for easy
118 tabulation of participant opinions. In addition, an opinionnaire always allows participants
119 to respond anonymously and allows participants to respond with an "object" or "abstain"
120 and these responses are recorded and reported along with all other responses so that
121 participants never feel pushed to answer a question that they believe is misleading or
122 when they simply aren't prepared to make a decision based on the information they
123 currently have.

124 NEW SECTION. SECTION 4.

125 A. The King County executive is hereby encouraged, but not required, to prepare
126 by March 1 of each year a citizen councilor network opinionnaire. The opinionnaire shall
127 be based on the concerns of the executive and consist of no more than thirty questions on
128 no more than four pages.

129 B. Each councilmember may submit to the auditor by March 15 of each year a
130 list of no more than twenty questions on no more than four pages to be added to the
131 opinionnaire issued by the executive for response by citizen councilors in each
132 councilmember's district. The citizen councilor coordinator may add questions in a
133 district if a councilmember does not do so. The citizen councilor coordinator may edit all
134 questions submitted but only for grammar, style and consistency with the overall
135 opinionnaire and the space available.

136 C. If the executive does not prepare a citizen councilor network opinionnaire by
137 March 1, the auditor shall do so with the assistance of the citizen councilor coordinator.

138 NEW SECTION. SECTION 5.

139 A. After consulting with interested citizens and community leaders in the manner
140 described below, the auditor shall select the issue or issues that will be discussed during
141 each meeting or participation window of the citizen councilor network. These meetings
142 will usually be held approximately quarterly but not more than monthly. The auditor's
143 selection shall be made from suggestions received from the executive, councilmembers,
144 other state and local public officials, community and business leaders, clubs, unions and
145 associations, agencies, municipalities and individual citizen councilors.

146 Recommendations received for consideration by the citizen councilor network shall be
147 forwarded and reviewed by an advisory citizen councilor steering committee composed
148 of representatives of the following:

- 149 1. The county executive or the executive's representative;
- 150 2. King County councilmembers or the councilmembers' representatives;

151 3. The executive director of the Puget Sound Regional Council or the executive
152 director's representative;

153 4. The superintendent of each school district in King County or the
154 superintendent's representative;

155 5. The mayor of each city in the county or the mayor's representative;

156 6. The county executive from adjacent counties or the executive's
157 representative;

158 7. The president of a community college, college or university located in King
159 County or the president's representative;

160 8. A representative from any organization participating in the citizen councilor
161 network that has twenty-five or more groups of four to twelve persons each under section
162 9 of this ordinance;

163 9. The citizen councilor coordinator and the coordinator's two deputies selected
164 as provided in section 6 of this ordinance; and

165 10. Others invited by the auditor.

166 B. All members of the advisory citizen councilor steering committee shall serve
167 without remuneration. Travel expenses for steering committee members may be
168 provided on request if funds are available.

169 C. After considering the advice of the steering committee, the auditor shall
170 determine and assign the issue or issues approved for discussion to the volunteer citizen
171 councilor coordinator for preparation and implementation by volunteer staff. The first
172 meeting of a group will usually be an orientation meeting using a standardized agenda
173 prepared by the coordinator and approved by the auditor. All persons assigned by the

174 coordinator to gather information on the issue or issues selected by the auditor shall be
175 called "value reporters." Value reporters shall always be careful to present each issue and
176 all related materials as evenhandedly as possible, taking care to present the generally
177 prevailing viewpoints from experts, officials, scholars and others in an effort to provide
178 participants with useful information for their discussion. Whenever practical, all
179 interviews with experts, officials, scholars, leaders and others shall be electronically
180 recorded. Before any materials are published, however, persons interviewed or quoted
181 shall approve their interview or quote for release, or complete another interview to their
182 satisfaction; otherwise their statement shall not be included in the materials distributed.

183 D. The auditor shall refer the public information material obtained by the value
184 reporters and edited by the citizen councilor coordinator to the steering committee
185 members for their review and advisory recommendations. The auditor shall make the
186 final determination concerning the suitability of all materials, including background
187 information on the issues presented and the opinionnaire, before these are distributed.

188 NEW SECTION. SECTION 6. The office of citizen councilor coordinator is
189 created within the office of the auditor. The auditor shall appoint the citizen councilor
190 coordinator and two deputy citizen councilor coordinators with the advice of the steering
191 committee, if available. The citizen councilor coordinator and deputy citizen councilor
192 coordinators shall serve at the pleasure of the auditor, until terminated with the approval
193 of the steering committee, and shall be citizen volunteers and serve without
194 compensation, but shall be reimbursed for actual expenses incurred in carrying out their
195 duties under sections 2 through 12 of this ordinance as funds are available.

196 NEW SECTION. SECTION 7.

- 197 A. The citizen councilor coordinator shall:
- 198 1. Promote the citizen councilor program;
- 199 2. Oversee preparation, tabulation, summarization and dissemination of citizen
200 councilor materials and data;
- 201 3. Receive, on behalf of the citizen councilor revolving fund, gifts and donations
202 of real or personal property, including cash, in-kind services and licenses;
- 203 4. Hire paid staff to assist the volunteer staff if the auditor agrees that doing so
204 would be worthwhile and that sufficient funds are available;
- 205 5. Contract for any necessary or appropriate services including without
206 limitation a local or toll-free telephone number and answering service, keying, optical
207 scanning, computer tabulation, recording, reporting, research, consulting, printing and
208 mailing to carry out sections 2 through 12 of this ordinance;
- 209 6. Recruit volunteers to assist in administering the program, including
210 conveners, communicators and value reporters;
- 211 7. Recruit individual citizen councilors to participate in local groups organized
212 by mutual convenience usually within the same residence or work zip code areas of King
213 County;
- 214 8. Assign value reporters to record electronically interviews with scholars,
215 experts, public officials, planners, leaders and others concerning topics of discussion
216 assigned by the auditor;
- 217 9. Produce electronic audio-visual and printed materials, including
218 opinionnaires, as evenhandedly as possible;

219 10. Mail or distribute electronically public information materials to citizen
220 councilor communicators for group conveners or individual citizen councilors, or both,
221 after final approval by the auditor;

222 11. Provide, at cost, the contact information for a participating organization's
223 own conveners, communicators and councilors on request if a separate iteration of the
224 organization's own constituents is desired at its own time and expense;

225 12. Use machine-scan, interactive telephone, or computer technology to record
226 citizen councilor responses and tabulate data using the symbolic dialogue and social
227 technology developed by the Forum Foundation;

228 13. Prepare summary reports including percentage responses and "polarization-
229 consensus" and "modified polarization-consensus" ratings of participant opinions, issue
230 press releases and post data for public analysis on a website.

231 14. Mail, email, post to the Internet or otherwise provide for transmission of
232 summary reports to participants, participating organizations, interested public officials
233 and news media; and

234 15. Maintain all data generated for public and media reference in the auditor's
235 office and post information to the Internet to ensure easy public access.

236 B. The clerk of the council shall facilitate the process created by this ordinance
237 by providing upon request information on the charter, initiatives, referendums,
238 ordinances and voters' materials for consideration by the citizen councilor network
239 participants in their dialogues and deliberations.

240 NEW SECTION. SECTION 8. The citizen councilor coordinator shall actively
241 encourage citizen councilor groups to form throughout the county. Citizen councilor

242 groups will meet at mutually convenient times and places as determined by each
243 convener, during a designated time period or participation window that will usually
244 consist of thirty consecutive days. Citizen councilor groups will usually meet quarterly
245 but never more than monthly. They shall have the opportunity to review materials,
246 consider electronic audiovisual presentations, or both, articulating an issue of public
247 interest or concern prepared as described in section 4 of this ordinance. Citizen
248 councilors shall then have the opportunity to discuss the issue and information with each
249 other and anonymously record their opinions using an approved interactive response
250 technology such as individual mark-sense response sheets, interactive telephone or an
251 interactive website for return to the citizen councilor coordinator for tabulation and
252 reporting.

253 NEW SECTION. SECTION 9. Four through twelve citizens from organizations
254 including, but not limited to, community service, civic association, cooperative, club,
255 union, association, religious, business or school district groups may enroll as an
256 organizational group with its own conveners and communicators. An organizational
257 profile report or login to a website shall be provided without cost to the leaders of
258 organizations with twenty-five or more groups to inform them of how their members
259 responded. All such information shall be posted on a website for easy public review.

260 NEW SECTION. SECTION 10.

261 A. Each citizen councilor may periodically be asked to make voluntary donations
262 to help cover the costs of the citizen councilor program. The voluntary donation is
263 estimated to be ten dollars per person per year at present costs.

264 B. It is the intention of this ordinance that donations and gifts should be solicited
265 from individuals, businesses and foundations to assist in the funding of the program.
266 However, because all direct costs of this program are provided by voluntary donations
267 with no funds from public sources, the auditor, with the advice of the citizen councilor
268 coordinator, shall use the auditor's discretion in determining the scale and the scope of the
269 program so that expenses do not exceed available funds.

270 C. Libraries are hereby encouraged, but not required, to participate and allow
271 citizens who are not members of a citizen councilor group to respond to any opinionnaire
272 during any participation window. A nominal fee of fifty cents to one dollar may be
273 charged to cover the direct costs to participating libraries and the citizen councilor
274 network.

275 NEW SECTION. SECTION. 11. A citizen councilor revolving fund is created
276 and shall consist of voluntary donations collected under sections 2 through 12 of this
277 ordinance. The treasurer shall be custodian of the revolving fund. Disbursements from
278 the revolving fund shall be authorized by the citizen councilor coordinator or the
279 coordinator's deputy and according to any oversight and procedure deemed appropriate
280 by the auditor in order to maintain an effective expenditure and revenue control.

281 NEW SECTION. SECTION 12.

282 A. The auditor may provide the citizen councilor coordinator and the
283 coordinator's deputies and volunteer staff with unused space in existing county offices if
284 such space is available and appropriate for this use.

285 B. The citizen councilor coordinator shall seek donations from citizen councilor
286 organizational groups, citizen councilors, individuals, community service organizations,

287 businesses and foundations to help cover the costs of the program. When ten thousand
288 dollars in cash donations have been received, the auditor shall authorize the citizen
289 councilor coordinator to establish a telephone number, answering service and website to
290 develop a list of the names, addresses, telephone numbers and email addresses of:

- 291 1. Persons interested in serving as citizen councilors, citizen councilor
292 communicators or conveners;
- 293 2. Communicators, conveners and councilors in citizen councilor organizational
294 groups; and
- 295 3. Persons interested in making donations.

296 C. When at least one thousand people have signed up to participate as citizen
297 councilors and a total of at least twenty thousand dollars in cash donations has been
298 received, the auditor shall initiate the new communication process contemplated in
299 sections 2 through 12 of this ordinance and continue it at a scope and scale that is
300 supportable by the resources available.

301 D. In the event the program under sections 2 through 12 of this act fails to receive
302 donations sufficient to support the direct costs of a minimal program, and thus needs to
303 be terminated, funds remaining after payment of all outstanding expenses and disposal of
304 equipment and supplies owned shall be deposited in the county's general fund.

305 SECTION 13. The citizen councilor network created by this ordinance is based
306 on ideas developed by the nonprofit Forum Foundation, an educational research
307 organization based in King County. In recognition of the Forum Foundation's pioneering
308 work in this field, all participant opinions shall be tabulated using the fast forum
309 computer program and related technology developed by the Forum Foundation since

310 1970. This requirement shall be met only if a license to use the program and related
311 technology without charge is donated to the county by the Forum Foundation in
312 accordance with section 7 of this ordinance.

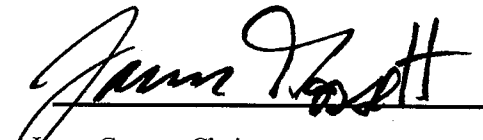
313 SECTION 14. If any provision of this ordinance or its application to any person
314 or circumstance is held invalid, the remainder of the ordinance or the application of the
315 provision to other persons or circumstances is not affected.

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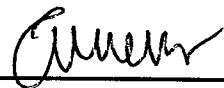
Ordinance 15896 was introduced on 8/20/2007 and passed by the Metropolitan King
County Council on 9/7/2007, by the following vote:

Yes: 9 - Mr. Gossett, Ms. Patterson, Ms. Lambert, Mr. von Reichbauer, Mr.
Dunn, Mr. Ferguson, Mr. Phillips, Ms. Hague and Mr. Constantine
No: 0
Excused: 0

KING COUNTY COUNCIL
KING COUNTY, WASHINGTON


Larry Gossett, Chair

ATTEST:



Anne Noris, Clerk of the Council

Attachments None