

League of Women Voters of Tacoma-Pierce Co.

## Observer Report Form

**Name of Agency:** Puyallup City Council

**Date:** 2/12/2019

**Observer Reporting:** Nancy Dahl

**Length of Meeting:** 3 hrs. 52 min

**Members Present/Absent:** All Councilmembers present except Councilmember Farris, who had an accident before the meeting. She came briefly to speak to the strong mayor issue and then left again to return to the emergency room.

**Others Present (i.e., media, public):** Many members of the community came to comment on the proposed special election ballot proposal and on a previous council decision to require an RFP for the management of the Puyallup Farmer's Market and the Meeker Days festival currently managed by Puyallup Mainstreet Assoc. About 30 people spoke.

**Content (What is being discussed):** i.e., *Did they approve some action? Does anything relate to League priorities or positions? If so, do you recommend local league action? Was access to materials for certain agenda items limited or excluded from you? Was background material available to the public?*

**Major discussions were as follows:**

1. A council initiative to approve an election resolution place a proposal on the April special election ballot to abandon Puyallup's Council-City Manager form of government and adopt a Council-Elected Mayor/City Executive form—All council members expressed their position for or against (for: Jacobsen, Kastama, Swanson; against: Palmer, Door, Farris). Councilmember Johnson, the one undecided member, was the last to speak. He expressed concern about the divisions created in the community over this issue and expressed discomfort over that impact. He then made a motion suggesting, in the interest of community harmony, that the council suspend the idea of the initiative and allow the citizen's group circulating a petition to continue to collect signatures. Then if they can collect enough signatures to qualify for the ballot, consider the petition during a regular election later in the year. That way, it could be voted on by the community at that time without the cost of a special election and without the perceived ethics issues inherent in the council putting the idea forward. The motion to suspend was seconded and passed 7-0.
2. Puyallup to Tacoma Trail planning—This is an extension of the Riverwalk Trail to Tacoma. Three route proposals are being evaluated via Environmental Impact Statement in preparation for going to the legislature for funding.
3. An ordinance to restrict riding of bicycles on sidewalks in the downtown core area of Puyallup was discussed again. The discussion was influenced by a citizen comment by the Puyallup HS Cross Country coach about her need to be able to ride a bike on the sidewalks with the team during their practice. Again, the council decided they needed more information about why the current "riding negligently" ordinance is not working. The city attorney suggested perhaps some additional language could be added to the existing ordinance to make it easier to enforce. No vote was taken.

**\*Public Meetings of interest to League** – i.e., *Were there any public meetings announced that you think League members may be interested in attending and/or becoming involved with the issue?*

- Watch for a public workshop on the Riverwalk to Tacoma trail planning during the summer.
- There will be a Council Study Session on 2/26 (in lieu of the regular meeting) to do a deep dive into the design/funding of the new Public Safety Building to be built on So. Hill near Lowes (Old Lumberman's site).
- There was a study session on 2/5/19 on Affordable Housing in Puyallup that is available to watch online at <http://www.cityofpuyallup.org/827/Agendas-Minutes-and-Videos>

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**Process & Protocol (Observations about participants, conduct, and procedures of the meeting):**

i.e., Did the members appear to have done their “homework”? Were members courteous to each other and the public? How does the group respond to your presence?

There were no major deficiencies in the process and protocol at this meeting.

**Reminders** 😊

**The purpose of the LWV Observer Corp is:**

1. To promote public interest in local government and to be a “presence” to elected officials.
2. To alert the League Board to upcoming agenda items on which we have program positions on which we can speak.
3. To identify areas for future LWV study and action.

Observers play an important role as they learn about issues and processes and are in touch with what is happening in our community. A LWV Observer is impartial, silent, and respectful. It is, however, appropriate to ask questions for clarification.