

**SPECIAL CITY COUNCIL MEETING  
TUESDAY, APRIL 26, 2011  
CITY HALL  
22710 E. COUNTRY VISTA DRIVE**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Mayor Van Orman called the meeting to order at 6:09 p.m.

**ROLL CALL**

City Council Members:

Mayor Pro Tem Crump  
Council Member Kaminskas  
Council Member Langford  
Council Member Romney  
Council Member Schuler  
Council Member Beckett  
Council Member Owens

City Staff:

Ann Swenson, City Clerk  
Doug Smith, Community Development Director  
Sean Boutz, City Attorney  
Officer Taj Wilkerson

At 6:08 p.m. Mayor Van Orman called the meeting to order. After council members, city staff, and audience members introduced themselves, Mayor Van Orman turned the floor over to Mr. Stan E. McNutt.

Mr. McNutt gave a brief overview of his resume and background. He has 37 years' experience in active local government, having held several interim positions as city manager, county administrator, and as a city council member. He then reviewed the handouts that were provided in council packets and to the audience members. He talked about three forms of government Mayor/Council, Mayor/Council/Administrator and Council/Manager type of governance. He discussed comparisons between each type of form, what works, and what does not.

At 6:40 p.m., Councilman Romney arrived to the meeting.

Mr. McNutt addressed whether to change or not to change the current governance structure. He suggested no government can function better than its elected leadership creates or allows, and indicated change is often forced by a real or perceived crisis or when internal corporate evaluation has been deferred too long. Another desire for change, which can be the most common cause, is citizen dissatisfaction, but he commented that seldom has to do with the "form" of government. Mr. McNutt recommended every city should periodically conduct an internal assessment by taking a "pulse" of the community. He explained each form of local government already has the

discretionary power to fix most of its problems. He talked about root causes of dysfunction such as failure to establish and follow rules for and by all and failure to provide a comprehensive basic training period for newly elected officials. He outlined formulas for success, including making, learning, and following good rules, having a traceable policy path to the rules, a clear, concise direction that is harmonious with “core beliefs”, and clear lines of authority.

Mr. McNutt then reviewed the process for changing the form of government. He explained a resolution would need to be adopted by the legislative body, and a special election would be required – unless timing allowed for a ballot measure to be placed during a general election. Citizens could also create a petition for change, however, Mr. McNutt said this is a long process and also requires 10% of verified voters from the last general election in order for the petition to even be valid.

At the conclusion of Mr. McNutt’s presentation, council members discussed the need to conduct an internal assessment of the current administration, as well as the possibility of hiring a city administrator to help assist the executive branch. Mr. McNutt provided a handout to the council members entitled, “The Governance Coordination Review and Manual Process in a Nutshell” that outlines 17 detailed activities for the review process. Clerk Swenson will distribute copies of the above-referenced handout and the Council Rules of Procedures to all council members for their review, and an item regarding this will added as a workshop discussion to the May 3, 2011 City Council agenda.

Mayor Van Orman then opened the floor to receive citizen comments.

## **CITIZEN COMMENTS**

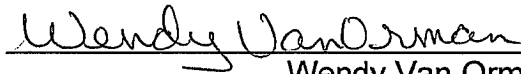
Ron Ragge 116 N. Lindeblad Lane, Liberty Lake, WA: said overall he thinks the current council is very good, with very involved people. He talked about the salaries of the elected officials, stating “it is a joke” because of the amount of work that is required. He also said he has witnessed the awkward position the Community Development Director has been placed in, having to act as a city manager yet not have the authority of that role. Mr. Ragge advocated for a public meeting to be set up in a forum where citizens would be able to voice his/her positions about the governance structure.


Pat Dockery, 22213 E. Henry Road, Liberty Lake, WA: expanded on the point of hidden agendas causing chaos, which was mentioned earlier in the meeting. He said, during the budget process, decisions were made by the council or city staff that did not appear logical. He spoke about the lack of transparency to the citizens, stating “when you come to a city council meeting, during a budget meeting, and ask 45 questions and get three answers, there’s a problem there – and nobody responded to that.” Mr. Dockery acknowledged his opposition to changing to a different form of government. He proposed that if the administration does conduct an internal evaluation, that an outside consultant is recommended.

Shanna Hale, 121 N. Lindeblad Lane, Liberty Lake, WA: a life-long resident, stated issues have arisen way before the budget and financial issues surfaced. She said she has enjoyed working with the mayor and council during the last couple of years and has learned a lot. She expressed her frustration about the council's continual postponement of addressing topics that come up during meetings. She would like to see more specific and defined actions from the governing body, rather than just postponing discussions to future meetings.

At 8:50 p.m. Mayor adjourned the meeting.

These minutes are approved on May 17, 2011.

  
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Wendy Van Orman, Mayor  
City of Liberty Lake

  
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*Notes and Transcription by Ann Swenson, City Clerk. This Council meeting was also audio taped. Anyone desiring to listen to the recording may contact the City Clerk.*