

Special Election - Referendum No. 1

Submitted by the City of Edgewood



Official Ballot Title:

The Edgewood City Council passed Ordinance No. 04-0227 concerning imposition of a gross receipts utility tax and the qualified electors of the City have filed a sufficient referendum petition on this ordinance. If approved, the Ordinance would establish a 5% utility tax on the gross receipts of telephone businesses, cable television businesses, distributors of natural gas, electricity and water, and on storm water and solid waste collection. The Ordinance would also establish standards and procedures for collection of the tax and imposition of penalties for failure to register or pay the tax and would provide for utility tax credits for eligible low income households. Should the Ordinance be approved or rejected?

Explanatory Statement:

If approved, this measure would establish a 5% tax on the gross revenues of utility companies such as telephone, cable, gas, electricity, water and solid waste collectors. State law authorizes the City to impose a utility tax of up to 6% of the gross revenues of those engaged in such businesses. The City of Edgewood is one of the few cities in Pierce County that does not currently impose a utility tax. The tax will be used to offset the loss of approximately 35% of the City's general fund and the loss of approximately 25% of the City's street fund due to cuts in state shared revenues. It is anticipated that proceeds from the tax will be used toward the addition of a deputy police officer, for street maintenance, and as matching funds for street grant projects. The anticipated cost to an average household with monthly utility expenses of \$315 would be an additional \$15.75 per month.

Statement For:

Edgewood is a wonderful community that takes pride in its rural character, great neighborhoods, and high quality of life. Our residents are well educated and have an average income level substantially above most of Pierce County. The city has worked for years to contain costs.

However, even after the city has trimmed expenses to the bone and cut services, we are spending our reserves at a rate that cannot be sustained. This model does not work for a business, a family, or our city.

All neighboring communities rely on property, sales and utility taxes. To avoid becoming overly dependent on property and sales taxes alone, the time has come for Edgewood to balance its tax structure and adopt a utility tax. The money generated by the utility tax will be used for police protection, maintaining roads, and developing our parks. Please vote yes.

Rebuttal of Statement Against:

Voting Yes for the utility tax maintains Edgewood's neighborhoods. State funding has dried up. A stable source of revenue is needed.

Please carefully read the statement against, it says: fire city staff, cut the wages of the remaining few, quit planning, build no playfields or trails, and use tax dollars to rapidly develop Meridian. That is a vision of "South Hill", and is not what you want. Protect Edgewood, vote to approve.

Committee Members Include: Michael Deckert, Bill Evans, Lois Mohler

Statement Against:

Vote no new taxes and return our City to the vision of its founders – a small city government staffed by a few employees with reasonable salaries to provide basic services. The passage of a utility tax will only continue the policies which have brought about this financial crisis.

Instead of asking citizens to pay more taxes, the City must set priorities (i.e., police support), reallocate funds, cut staff and expenses where necessary and fast track economic development along the Meridian corridor. Currently assessed at over \$80MIL (MetroScan 3-31-05), most Meridian properties are undeveloped or underdeveloped. Reasonable corridor development will greatly enhance city coffers minimizing the tax burden on homeowners.

By voting no, you will tell our City Council to return to the original goals of incorporation, revenue and expenses can be brought back in line, the broken bonds in the community can be repaired, and citizen involvement restored.

Rebuttal of Statement For:

Even while spending our reserves, the City added staff, borrowed \$740,000 to purchase park land, and alienated our business community causing some successful businesses to flee to other cities. This behavior demonstrates that we need to totally rethink our City's financial model and make major adjustments. This utility tax does not solve our fundamental problems; it only serves to delay making tough decisions making future tax increases inevitable. Please vote no.

Committee Members Include: Eric Docken, Bill O'Ravez

Special Election - Proposition No. 1

Submitted by Steilacoom Historical School District No. 1

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS

GENERAL OBLIGATION BONDS - \$55,900,000



Official Ballot Title:

The Board of Directors of Steilacoom Historical School District No. 1 passed Resolution No. 523-03-23-05 concerning general obligation bonds for capital improvements. If passed, Proposition No. 1 authorizes the District to construct and equip a new middle school, complete Chloe Clark Elementary School, upgrade and modernize the High School and make other capital improvements, to issue \$55,900,000 of general obligation bonds maturing within a maximum term of 21 years to finance such capital improvements and to levy excess property taxes annually on taxable property within the District to repay such bonds, all as provided in Resolution No. 523-03-23-05. Should Proposition No. 1 be approved or rejected?

Explanatory Statement:

Passage of Proposition No. 1 will authorize Steilacoom Historical School District No. 1 to borrow \$55,900,000 by issuing general obligation bonds. In accordance with Resolution No. 523-03-23-05 approving this proposition, the bonds will pay for constructing and equipping a new Middle School, completing additions to Chloe Clark Elementary School, upgrading and modernizing the High School and making capital improvements and additions to District facilities and properties. The bonds would be repaid out of annual property tax levies over a period of not to exceed 21 years. The exact amount of such annual levies for these bonds would depend on the amount of principal paid each year and on the interest rates available at the time the bonds are sold, but the District anticipates a bond tax rate increase (over the 2005 bond tax rate) of approximately \$1.72 per \$1,000 of assessed value for a total bond tax rate for all outstanding bonds of approximately \$3.20 per \$1,000 of assessed value over the term of the bonds. Taxes to repay the proposed bonds will be collected beginning in 2006.

Statement For:

Steilacoom Historical School District proposes a \$55,900,000 facilities improvement bond to meet both its near, and long-term, student growth needs. By 2015, the District projects its enrollment to reach approximately 3,000+ students. Current enrollment is 2150. All schools are at or over-capacity now. Passage of this Bond will permit the District to replace our aged middle school, expand/modernize our 25 year-old high school, triple the capacity of over-crowded Chloe Clark Elementary School, and replace the multi-purpose room at Anderson Island Elementary School. This Bond finances a six-year construction/improvement plan that will allow us to take advantage of the current low interest bond rate, along with eligibility for state matching funds. We anticipate a fixed/stable tax rate of not more than \$1.72 per \$1000 assessed valuation. This facility plan meets the District's short and long-term student housing needs in the shortest time period, and for the least amount of money.

Rebuttal of Statement Against:

The vision of the 2002 Facilities Committee was for the District to have one high school, one middle school, and neighborhood elementary schools. The vision has not changed!

The current plan is fiscally responsible and is timely in addressing the District's K-12 near and long-term classroom space needs. The improvement and expansion of the high school will accommodate future projected student enrollment.

For accurate and current information, please see www.supportSHSDstudents.com

Committee Members Include: Lenore Rogers, Al Lawrence, and Mike Winkler

Statement Against:

Implement the Facilities Committee recommendations! Expanding SHS and building a new middle school is the wrong approach to addressing our long-term facility needs. Pioneer enrolls 550 and projects 800+ by 2012. SHS enrolls 662 and projects 1,000+ by 2012. SHS will outgrow its capacity even with the proposed expansion, but meets middle school facility needs.

The proposed middle school site, 20-acres with 5+ additional acres available for sports fields, is larger than SHS (17 acres total). Strategic Planning and Facility Committees have met for years and always recommended building a new high school and using SHS as a middle school.

The District should build our most expensive facility, a new HS, at today's bond rates (lowest in 42 years). Chloe needs completing. Anderson Island needs improvements. Restructure this bond to make the necessary repairs to SHS to meet middle school facility requirements; save taxpayers from another bond in the future!

Rebuttal of Statement For:

"The shortest time period for the least amount of money" is crisis management and band-aids!

This bond proposal meets only short-term, not long-term needs. By restructuring to build a High School, complete Chloe and improve Anderson Island, it may cost a few million more now, but will save taxpayers from a second bond of \$50+ million in 10-12 years. Restructuring would meet all short and long-term student-housing needs over the next 25+ years and save millions.

Committee Members Include: Jaimie L. Garrett, Chris Carrs, John Anderson



Special Election - Proposition No. 1

Submitted by Pierce County Fire Protection District No. 22

East Pierce Fire & Rescue



Official Ballot Title:

Shall the Board of Commissioners of Pierce County Fire Protection District No. 22 be increased from three members to five members?

Explanatory Statement:

The Board of Fire Commissioners for East Pierce Fire & Rescue (District No. 22) has passed a resolution to change the number of fire commissioners from three to five. Authorizing a five-member Board would increase representation from the community and enhance commissioners' ability to address increasingly complex fire and safety issues at no additional cost to taxpayers. Prior to merger with District No. 24 in 1999 and annexation of the City of Bonney Lake, the three-member board of the district represented a population of approximately 12,000. After the merger, by operation of the laws, the board was reduced gradually from six to three commissioners, resulting in a lower ratio of representatives to citizens. This measure would restore an appropriate level of representation.

Population growth and the increasing number of 911 responses continue to make the management of fire and emergency services more complex. A larger Board of elected citizen volunteer fire commissioners will help fire and emergency services meet the increasingly complex public safety needs of our growing community. This change would also allow the Commissioners to appoint committees of the Board to study newly emerging fire safety issues for presentation to the full Board.

Statement For:

Your Fire District, which serves the Lake Tapps, Bonney Lake and Prairie Ridge communities, has placed a proposition on the May 17th ballot that will restore the number of elected Fire Commissioners from 3 to 5. Restoring the number of Fire Commissioners from 3 to 5 will improve representation of the community at no additional cost to taxpayers because Fire Commissioners are unpaid volunteers.

As our district continues to grow, and public safety needs become more complex, the role of elected fire commissioners becomes more difficult and increasingly more important. Fire Commissioners are a critical arm of fire and rescue services, helping to provide public citizen input and set policy for department operations and development.

This measure will ensure that fire and rescue services continue to provide high quality service and wise use of taxpayer dollars. Vote "Yes" to support your Community and your Fire District.

Statement Against:

No statement was submitted against this issue.

This space is available each election for citizens and/or committees opposing measures to publish a "Statement Against." For information, contact the Pierce County Auditor's Office at (253) 798-7430.

Committee Members Include: Zane Gibson, Rick Kuss, and Neil Johnson