

## Gresham Butte Neighborhood Association

October 12, 2016  
Springwater Trail Room

Officers present: Jim Buck, president; Sandy Davidson, vice-president; Theresa Tschirky, treasurer; Tracy Slack, land use chair; Lynn Saint, secretary.

### 6:58 p.m. Opening

President Jim Buck called the meeting to order and asked the 13 attendees to introduce themselves. Meeting focus: learn about Measure 97, corporate tax increase.

### 7:03 p.m. Measure 97 Debate: Pro – Brian Seltzer, Con – Lynn Snodgrass

#### **Brian Seltzer, CPA, graduate school instructor, tax and small business expert – his view**

As a point of introduction, Brian explained he moved to Oregon in 1986 and started a family. He watched education fees continue to increase as his daughter went through the school system.

Big companies, 82 percent not from Oregon, fight tax increases. We are making up the rest of the pie. Middle class families and small businesses shoulder the burden of the inequitable tax system. Corporations have lobbyists. Oregon has unlimited campaign contributions...one of six states. Oregon has not raised corporate taxes in 79 years.

Oregon is 47<sup>th</sup> out of 50 states, third from the bottom, regarding business taxation. Oregon's educational system needs more funding. High school graduates earn 51 percent more than those who don't graduate from high school. Those against this measure are corporations such as Comcast, Chevron and Wells Fargo; those in support are teachers, nurses and economists.

The wording of Measure 97 changes only three lines in the tax code. This would affect companies earning more than 25 million dollars – only one in 400 businesses. Large companies should pay their fair share to help with education, health care and senior services.

#### **Lynn Snodgrass, former Oregon House speaker and legislator, small business owner – her view**

Public employee unions originally presented the need for this type of tax. Portland State hired someone to look into the possibility of increasing revenue. A legislative review had been conducted. The Oregon Consumer League also evaluated the possible impacts. This is a hidden sales tax. Although Oregon is third from the bottom regarding corporate taxes, it rests at number 26 out of 50 states by removing sales tax from the equation.

Because this is a statutory, not a constitutional, measure, no one can stipulate how the monies must be spent. Therefore, no one can guarantee funds will benefit education. For example, the lottery money proceeds did not end up paying for education, as originally promised. Interest groups have their ways of coercing legislators into offering them part of the proceeds. Allocations for pet projects are determined by the loudest participants, the best lobby group and the strongest union voices. This tax is a 30% increase in the budget. The government will grow. Should this measure take place, fewer businesses will be competitive; people will lose their jobs.

Along with a letter from the Legislative Counsel Committee, she presented a page with tables, showing possible monetary outlays should this become a law. The tax on gross receipts will affect all of us because drastic increases will take profits from distributors, manufacturers and retailers.

#### **Questions from the floor – some responses**

**Sandy:** Are the other states benefitting or suffering from this tax? How do they compare?

**Jim:** Why C corporation taxes?

**Answer from Brian:** The tax is designed to make out of state companies accountable.

**From the audience:** Why do the labor unions want the tax?

**Answer from Lynn Snodgrass:** Public and private labor unions worked with Kitzhaber in his first term to come against Measure 97 and to provide better funding. Regaining momentum takes time. How does Measure 97 affect a nonprofit organization?

**Answer from Brian:** This would not impact nonprofits.

**Answer from Lynn Snodgrass:** Cutting the margin of profit for corporations will drastically reduce donations, thus harming nonprofits, such as the Salvation Army

**Response from Theresa:** A nonprofit organization with ancillary services, along with a low-profit margin, could easily experience a \$300,000 deficit.

**Tracy summarizes:** There is nothing specific in Measure 97 about Oregon corporations. With extra taxation, corporations, in and out of state, will put pressure on pricing. This produces a compounding effect on pricing pressure with the implementation of a tax on gross sales.

#### **Concluding comments**

**Lynn Snodgrass:** I am passionate because I have been in business and understand how limited the margins are. This will stop competition with big companies and with small companies. Once the money is in the pot, what will happen? We need to take a different look at the problem.

**Brian Seltzer:** This is a good measure for Oregon: good for education, good for seniors and good for health care. Companies come to Oregon because they want to do business here. Cost does not determine pricing. The market does.

## **7:48 p.m. Minutes and Reports**

**Minutes** will undergo a review, pending amendments to the form.

**Land Use** Chairman, Tracy Slack, did not report any significant changes since last month.

**Treasurer** Theresa Tschirky reported no change in the treasury. The total remains at \$1081.91 as of September 15.

## **7:52 p.m. Old Business**

### **Tree cutting**

Jim Buck reported that 300 regulated trees had been harvested from the Lovhar area last year. Further action, on the part of the city and Metro, is still under consideration. The Hogan cedar that had been topped in the Dawncrest Neighborhood is sprouting new limbs.

## **8:00 p.m. New Business**

At the beginning of the year, Tracy had suggested looking at the acronym SMART (specific, measurable, attainable, result-oriented, time-bound) for assessing GBNA goals. The Neighborhood Coalition is encouraging the neighborhood associations to look over their bylaws to consider if they are staying consistent with the newly updated administrative procedures. Jim, Theresa and Tracy will review GBNA bylaws.

Attendees discussed both goals of the GBNA and ways to attract members to the GBNA meetings. Much chatter takes place on Next Door, a social media outlet for neighborhoods. As a general rule, there is not as much participation by Gresham Butte residents, in part, because this particular area has one of the lowest crime rates in Oregon. Again, people often attend meetings when they perceive a need. When their need is met, they do not have an interest in continuing participation through attendance.

| Goals                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | Attract participants/Possible topics                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stimulate greater community interest</li> <li>• Beautify areas within the community through volunteerism</li> <li>• Encourage participation with unrepresented neighborhoods</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review of past themes and speakers</li> <li>• Neighborhood survey through Next Door (600 Gresham Butte residents have joined)</li> <li>• Plant trees on unimproved land plots</li> <li>• Inform about city website and posted minutes</li> <li>• Inspire neighborly interactions</li> <li>• City Council member update on Gresham happenings</li> <li>• Northwest Mediation issues</li> </ul> |

The coalition meeting next month will identify items for adding to the Gresham City Council’s 2017 work plan. Possible topics include:

- Review of heavy industrial zoning
- Review encroachment of private individuals on public property.
- Request of council to regularly engage with the coalition of neighborhood associations
- Review of Early Neighborhood Notification Process
- Asking the Council to do a master plan for undeveloped parks
- Review current platted streets – some are not actually ever going to be developed.
- Street improvement plan...many streets have been heavily damaged and are in gross disrepair

### 8:28 p.m. Announcement

Theresa informed attendees that the Homelessness Task Force results are posted on the city website and will be presented to City Council. The findings are public record for those who wish to learn about the task force research from this past year.

Next month, on November 9, Chris Strong addresses the GBNA about a street improvement plan for the city.

### 8:32 p.m. Meeting Adjourned