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KING COUNTY  
2007-2008  
Charter Review Commission

PUBLIC HEARING



6:30 p.m.  
June 20, 2007  
The Hall at Fauntleroy  
West Seattle, Washington

REPORTED BY: Yvonne A. Gillette, CCR No. 2129.

1 COMMISSIONERS :

SHARON MAEDA

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GARY LONG

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DOW CONSTANTINE

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ALLA MUNRO

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2 MS. MAEDA: Good evening. So we realize that  
3 you understand the importance of civic engagement or  
4 you would not be here. And we're pleased to have  
5 you here today. My name is Sharon Maeda. I'm a  
6 member of the charter review commission. I'm going  
7 to be chairing the meeting today. I'm a resident of  
8 the Westwood White Center area. I live the closest,  
9 I guess, of anyone on the commission.

10 I would like to first introduce the other  
11 commissioners that are here. At the other end of  
12 the table the former Burien city manager, Gary Long.  
13 And we have Jim English and John Jensen. We may be  
14 joined by other commissioners as we go along. We  
15 have been having meetings in all nine of the council  
16 districts here comes Al right now.

17 And we would like to introduce the staff, Mark  
18 Yango and Corrie Watterson who you're going to be  
19 hearing from a little later on. Charlotte Ohashi in  
20 the back of the room who's been checking everyone  
21 in.

22 Our meeting tonight, as in the other  
23 districts, is focussed on hearing from you. We'll  
24 spend a few minutes talking about the commission.  
25 And then Corrie will briefly explain the charter

1 process. And we'll then go directly into public  
2 testimony after we have heard from our own eighth  
3 district representative, our council member Dow  
4 Constantine. We're going to ask you to limit your  
5 remarks to approximately five minutes. There's a  
6 couple of people I am going to recognize at the  
7 beginning because they have another very important  
8 meeting to attend to. But we'll certainly be here  
9 to listen from all of you. After everyone's had a  
10 chance to speak for approximately five minutes, we  
11 can have a full dialogue and discussion. But our  
12 role tonight as commissioners is really to listen to  
13 you.

14 So without further ado, let's go to  
15 councilmember Dow Constantine.

16 MR. CONSTANTINE: Thank you so much. I am Dow  
17 Constantine, the elected representative on the  
18 county council for the eighth council district. And  
19 I want to thank you for attending tonight's meeting  
20 of the King County Council Review Commission. I  
21 would particularly like to thank those who have  
22 helped to contact their fellow citizens and bring  
23 them here tonight. Believe it or not, this is one  
24 of the largest attendances we have had. This being  
25 the fifth of nine meetings taking place around the

1 county.

2 I would like to introduce Jim English for  
3 being particularly diligent about getting folks out,  
4 the League of Women's Voters, and the 35 Democratic  
5 Organization. I'm the, as I said, the  
6 representative for District 8. Although most of you  
7 live somewhere in West Seattle, White Center,  
8 Vashon, District Eight starts in downtown and  
9 extends all the way out to the end of Normandy Park  
10 and Beacon Hill all the way to Vashon Island. It's  
11 a very big area. About two hundred thousand people.

12 You know, the charter is essentially the  
13 constitution for the county. We're a home rule  
14 county. We have quite a bit of autonomy, unlike  
15 most counties, under the state constitution. And  
16 this is the way in which we govern ourselves.

17 King County conducts a formal review of the  
18 charter every ten years. And this is the fourth  
19 such review since the original charter was approved  
20 by voters in 1969. The Charter Review Commission  
21 has the authority to recommend amendments to the  
22 county council. It's the county council that  
23 chooses which amendments to refer to the voters for  
24 their approval or disapproval.

25 This regular review enables the charter to be

1 a living document and yet provides stability over  
2 time, because a person doesn't want to be amending  
3 the organic laws of the county every six months.  
4 And it has been a successful charter and a  
5 successful amendment process over the years.

6 There have been some significant amendments.  
7 In 1992, King County voters approved the merger of  
8 King County and the old Metro governments into a  
9 single government, because the Metro government was  
10 found to be unconstitutional. That's how King  
11 County came to operate the transit and sewer  
12 systems. In 1989 voters established charter  
13 provisions to limit campaign donations in county  
14 races.

15 The charter review commission, as I said, is  
16 holding nine of these hearings, one in each county  
17 council district in order to make sure we get all  
18 the way around the county. And I think that the  
19 county council members for those districts have in  
20 general been able to make it to those meetings to  
21 listen to citizens. There are a lot of issues that  
22 come up. And some will come up tonight. Often they  
23 have to do with whether positions should be  
24 appointed or elected. They have to do with which  
25 position should be partisan and which nonpartisan.

1 Other suggestions have come up around paid signature  
2 gatherers should be prohibited and whether there  
3 should be more changes to campaign finance laws  
4 governing the election of county officials.

5 From my perspective, I see some things that I  
6 think need to be changed. When the charter was  
7 amended to reduce the council to nine members, some  
8 of the committee structures did not change. And  
9 they don't fit so well anymore. So I think that  
10 some of the regional committees may need to be  
11 recalibrated to fit the new model of the nine member  
12 council.

13 There's a second possible charter change.  
14 When that initiative was brought forward to make a  
15 charter amendment on the ballot to amend the charter  
16 to reduce the council, the Supreme Court established  
17 because this right had not been previously  
18 recognized, they established a signature  
19 requirement, number of signatures you need to amend  
20 the charter. It's the same as the one you need to  
21 amend run of the mill county laws, ordinances.  
22 Generally, the signature requirements for amending  
23 an organic or underlying constitutional document  
24 should be higher than that for amending garden  
25 variety laws. One of the things we should look at,

1 do the voters want to approve a well thought out  
2 signature requirement for amendments to the charter?

3 Lots of questions. Very interested in hearing  
4 what folks have to say. I want to thank you so much  
5 for coming out on a beautiful spring evening to  
6 participate in this process.

7 MS. MAEDA: Thank you. Since you covered  
8 everything else I was supposed to say except to  
9 introduce the commissioners, if we could go to the  
10 next slide. I don't know if you can read it. But  
11 we are 21 volunteers appointed by the King County  
12 executive Ron Sims. We cover the gamut in terms of  
13 our geographic areas where we live, the kind of work  
14 we do, our ethnic and gender backgrounds. And it's  
15 a pretty wonderful group of people to be working  
16 together. We do not share the same opinions on many  
17 issues. And that will come up a lot until we start  
18 getting into the real deliberation. But it's going  
19 to be a lively bunch, I can assure you. We have an  
20 overabundance of attorneys on the commission. And  
21 so we will certainly have many arguments, I'm sure.

22 But, as Dow said, this is the fourth time that  
23 the charter is being reviewed. Every ten years.  
24 This is the fourth one. I think I'm the only member  
25 on the charter review commission that also served on

1 the King County Governance Commission several years  
2 ago. And we went over a lot of these same issues.  
3 So with that, those of you that are holding up  
4 another meeting can come forward first. If you  
5 would give your name and the neighborhood in which  
6 you live and make your comments.

7 MR. WEISS: My name's Evan Weiss, chairman of  
8 the 34th District Democrats. I live on Vashon  
9 Island. And the Hall here at Fauntleroy is where we  
10 meet every month. So kind of my second home. And  
11 can you hear me?

12 We looked over at some of the issues that are  
13 before the Charter Review Commission. And speaking  
14 for the Democratic Party, we had a few concerns  
15 about some of these and some positions that are  
16 still evolving. But pretty much nonpartisan King  
17 County council and executive. For us, that's going  
18 to be a complete nonstarter. This is just -- you  
19 know, this is just something to blur the party  
20 lines.

21 The party system has worked pretty well. By  
22 the time the candidates go through our process, we  
23 know who they are and what they have done and what  
24 they stand for. And we see no reason to allow a  
25 candidate to-- candidates to blur their stance so we

1 get some Jesse Ventura coming in here so we don't  
2 know who they are and what they stand for until they  
3 are in office, and there's nothing we can do about  
4 it. So we're going to be opposing any nonpartisan  
5 elections. There is the notion that partisanship is  
6 somehow dirty. It is not something we subscribe to.

7 Elected director of elections. For us that's  
8 a nonstarter. This is nothing more than a cloth to  
9 smear County Executive Sims and his county  
10 administration. And we're going to try to defeat  
11 this at the polls this fall and with hope everybody  
12 will see that. This is not old time Chicago. The  
13 county government here is very transparent, very  
14 open, and above board. I was born and raised in  
15 Philadelphia. And let me tell you, folks, this town  
16 is squeaky clean.

17 Elected auditor. The same thing. They think  
18 it would take politics out of the office. That's  
19 just wrong. When you have an election, you have  
20 politics. The county-- if they don't like it, they  
21 can throw out the county executive and the county  
22 council. They run for re-election.

23 Campaign finance reform. That's probably  
24 something we're going to favor. We want to get the  
25 big money out of it as much as possible. We want to

1 give people a chance to run for office without  
2 having to raise a lot of money. And this area is  
3 fond of process. And we think the process will get  
4 us some good candidates appointed.

5 And elected sheriff. Our position is still  
6 evolving on that. Paid signature gathering. I am  
7 not big fan of it. I think it should be a volunteer  
8 activity. Our position is still evolving.

9 I have run through these fast to save as much  
10 of my time is left for the single biggest threat for  
11 the way we do business in government here. And that  
12 is the instant run off voting. This must be  
13 defeated at all costs. We can't allow this in King  
14 County. I'm familiar with how it's coming done in  
15 Pierce County. And it's an administrative  
16 nightmare. In Pierce County, instant run off voting  
17 was pushed as a good government measure by a rich  
18 Libertarian who self-financed the campaign. And  
19 this is meant strictly to cut into the partisan  
20 primary, which we are required by law to have.

21 I have spoken at some length with the Pierce  
22 County auditor who was very scrupulous not to give  
23 her personal opinion about these. She just outlined  
24 to a group of us what they had done before, what  
25 they had to do now, what procedures they had to go

1 through, and how much they cost. And she left us to  
2 draw our own conclusions about how the voters were  
3 going to react to this.

4 I can speak for myself and I hope eventually  
5 for our district organization that we'll do  
6 everything possible to drive a stake through the  
7 heart of instant run off voting in King County.  
8 Thank you very much.

9 MS. MAEDA: Thank you very much. Who was the  
10 other person who's here from the 34th but needs to  
11 leave?

12 MR. WEISS: Well, several of us. One, two,  
13 three, four, five of us.

14 MR. MUNRO: On this issue of whether a sheriff  
15 ought to be elected and appointed, aren't you  
16 concerned that when you make the sheriff's position  
17 an elected position, that means that those  
18 candidates have to raise money and might become  
19 beholden to the people who helped finance their  
20 campaigns? What I have in mind is the history of  
21 the tolerance policy and the way in which the  
22 enforcement of certain kinds of laws, primarily  
23 gambling laws, was deliberately overlooked because  
24 of contributions of substantial nature that were  
25 funneled into the sheriff's office as well as the

1 Seattle Police Department.

2 MR. CONSTANTINE: I know about the problem  
3 and, you know, I could go either way with it. It  
4 wouldn't exactly break my heart to see an appointed  
5 sheriff. I'm fine with that. I'm not that  
6 passionate about that one way or the other.

7 MS. MAEDA: If there's no one else from the  
8 34th folks that have to leave, thank you very much  
9 for coming. And thank you to the rest of you for  
10 your indulgence as we let them go first. All right.  
11 The next person on the list is Heidi Johnson.

12 All right. Good Space Guy Nelson? Janet  
13 Anderson.

14 MS. ANDERSON: I represent the organization,  
15 Citizens for Proportionate Representation. We would  
16 like to see King County use a more fair election  
17 system.

18 As you know, we elect our council members in  
19 single member winner take all districts. When  
20 placed on a chart, this is what-- this is what our  
21 council looks like. And even from a distance, you  
22 can see that what happens is in each district, which  
23 is carefully drawn to become a single party  
24 district, we have one candidate that wins by a mile  
25 and little or no opposition.

1           This isn't the fault of the redistricting  
2           commission. It is the fault of the election system  
3           we use, which has a single member district. That  
4           system overrepresents the winner in the election and  
5           completely ignores the minority points of view in  
6           that district otherwise.

7           There are many other election systems which  
8           would more accurately represent the county  
9           electorate. Ten years ago, your commission  
10          counterparts recommended to the council that they  
11          appoint a committee to investigate alternative  
12          election methods. The council ignored the  
13          recommendation, as they frequently do many of the  
14          county's recommendations. For this reason, we  
15          support a charter change which would give more  
16          weight to your committee recommendations as the  
17          Pierce County charter does.

18          In the year 2004, the British Columbia  
19          legislature formed a citizens assembly to study  
20          improved election methods. The outcome of their  
21          work was a proposal to change to a proportional  
22          voting system. And last year, British Columbia  
23          voters voted for the change by 58 percent.

24          Unfortunately, a super majority of 60 percent  
25          was required to go into effect. So the change was

1 not adopted. However, the proposal will be  
2 resubmitted to the voters, I think, in the year  
3 2009. Just yesterday, a similar citizens assembly  
4 in Ottawa make a similar recommendation. And the  
5 public will vote on that recommendation next fall.  
6 In 1990, New Zealand followed the same process, and  
7 the result was a modern more representative election  
8 system. Every time a citizen party has been given  
9 the opportunity to study alternative election  
10 methods over an extended period of time, they have  
11 selected a system which is superior to the old  
12 fashioned winner take all system that we currently  
13 use.

14 We would love to be given the opportunity to  
15 further elaborate on these exciting options, and  
16 hope you will lend your support to improving our  
17 method of representing all voters better. Thank  
18 you.

19 MS. MAEDA: Thank you very much, Ms. Anderson.  
20 Our next person that signed in was Ron Johnson. I  
21 am not sure if you wanted to speak or not.

22 MR. JOHNSON: No.

23 MS. MAEDA: Next is Mark Ufkes. Will you  
24 please come to the microphone.

25 MR. UFKES: By name is Mark Ufkes. I'm a

1 resident of White Center. I'm a recovering  
2 Republican. Thank you for this opportunity to speak  
3 to all of you. There are two issues that I would  
4 like to bring up now that I would like you to  
5 consider. And I don't know -- one issue I'm not  
6 sure how it fits into the charter, but I was elected  
7 to the North Highline Unincorporated Area Council.  
8 One time I got seven votes. And one time I got nine  
9 votes.

10 And I was on the council. And in that  
11 election, I think we had about 150 people  
12 participate. What's important is that the people  
13 that serve, they are trying to do good things for  
14 the community. But what people tend to do in that  
15 position, is tend to suggest in public gatherings  
16 that they represent the community. I think if one  
17 percent of the voters in Seattle or Burien or any  
18 other municipality participated in the election,  
19 they don't represent the community at all.

20 I think what's important in this charter, we  
21 represent the role of what these unincorporated area  
22 councils are supposed to do. They can go their good  
23 work, but when they come-- they try to make policy  
24 declarations, I think it's inappropriate and an  
25 inappropriate use of the position, the entity, and

1 the resources that this county provides.

2 The second component of that is that we--  
3 that's okay. The other issue I guess I will offer  
4 is that in terms of the elected sheriff's position,  
5 I think inherently, we are on-- I was involved in  
6 the Republican party back ten years ago, and that  
7 was a Republican originated idea. I think it was a  
8 bad idea. And I think that elected law enforcement  
9 officers is not what-- not in the best interest. It  
10 puts money ahead of the position and the integrity  
11 of the position. And I think we need to consider  
12 that. I think we should go back to the appointed  
13 position.

14 And I guess that's about it. Thank you for  
15 the opportunity to speak.

16 MS. MAEDA: Thank you, Mark. Jean Durbin. Do  
17 you wish to speak?

18 MS. DURBIN: Not at this time.

19 MS. MAEDA: All right. Jackie Dupree. She  
20 left. Okay. G. Hodgson? Okay. Bruce Scotler?  
21 Okay. Tanya Aguilla. You say no? She left also.  
22 Claire Hanson?

23 MS. HANSON: My name is Claire Hanson. I live  
24 at 12414 Military Road South. I'd like to echo a  
25 little bit about what Mark said. If this is the

1 most attendant meeting, I find it questionable that  
2 with this low of a turn out that these few people  
3 that are here, no matter how wonderful and dedicated  
4 that we are, that we could claim to represent  
5 thousands and thousands of people.

6 I would also like to vote that the citizen  
7 participation initiative does not give them any role  
8 in government. On the King County web sites, they  
9 are listed as government for the unincorporated  
10 area. I find it ludicrous if they only had like  
11 around 40 votes this past year, and since thirteen  
12 of them are on the council, that puts the people  
13 that had a voice outside of people on the council  
14 was about 20 to 30 people to represent the 35,000  
15 people. I really want King County to remove all  
16 suggestions that the unincorporated council is a  
17 government body. They are a voice for the people.  
18 And I have no problem with that. But to claim a  
19 government body is against the initiative. And it's  
20 an insult to the larger number of people who did not  
21 share their feelings on the annexation issue.

22 I would also like to voice an opinion on the  
23 notification for this meeting. I have been an  
24 active participant since 1997. I have been in  
25 parades for five years. I have a web site. People

1 in King County know who I am. There is no reason I  
2 should not have been notified of this meeting  
3 outside of one e-mail that I just happened to get.  
4 So I would suggest that King County could improve  
5 their methods of contacting active people so that  
6 the active people are fairly represented instead of  
7 selectively represented.

8 As far as the paid signature gatherers, I am  
9 one hundred percent against that. I was approached  
10 by ACORN about three to four years ago. A lady  
11 walked into my driveway, talked me into going out  
12 with her. Wonderful lady from Hawaii. She's just  
13 absolutely fantastic person. But I went out and  
14 cried all my tears about all the negative stuff, all  
15 the stuff that volunteers run into. And over the  
16 next several month period, I was highly pressured to  
17 join ACORN so that they could get their money. I  
18 finally conceded based on the fact that they were  
19 going to represent Boulevard Park regarding the  
20 annexation issue.

21 Over the next several months, I saw several  
22 people get involved with ACORN. And every single  
23 one of them outside of one person, they were used  
24 and abused. They had to walk the streets in the  
25 rain. I picked them up off the street. I took them

1 to restaurants. I dried them off. I listened to  
2 them complain about the forced work, hours that they  
3 were not paid overtime for, that they had to get  
4 quota signatures not for anything related to  
5 Boulevard Park. It was being used to benefit  
6 national issues for ACORN.

7 So I am highly against getting paid for  
8 signatures when volunteers like myself spend  
9 thousands and thousands of dollars of our own money  
10 to benefit our community, our time away from our  
11 family, our health. I have lost three friends to  
12 death because of the stress of volunteering.

13 So I really am avidly against paid signatures.  
14 It is not fair to the people who volunteer free and  
15 give up their lives for their community to have  
16 somebody get paid under wage to collect signatures.  
17 It's just not right.

18 I think the basic thing that I most concerned  
19 about -- excuse me. I have been up since three this  
20 morning. I'm exhausted. My mother's dying. That's  
21 the tears. But I beg King County to please start  
22 listening to the people of Boulevard Park. This is  
23 ludicrous that there's not a meeting being held in  
24 Boulevard Park. I am asked all the time when I am  
25 in the grocery store, when are you going to hold

1 another meeting? And I have to decide between my  
2 family and my community.

3 And I don't know why King County is not coming  
4 into Boulevard Park. It's a beautiful place. And I  
5 would just ask that we get some more representation.  
6 Sorry for the tears. Thank you for your time.

7 MS. MAEDA: Thank you. According to this sign  
8 in sheet, there is no one else that signed up to  
9 speak.

10 MR. NELSON: All right. I signed up.

11 MS. MAEDA: Okay. You were Good Space Guy  
12 Nelson.

13 If you would please go to the microphone.

14 MR. NELSON: Good Space Guy Nelson. My name  
15 is Good Space Guy Nelson. I'm one of the candidates  
16 for county council. I live at 10219 Ninth Avenue  
17 South. And I'm unhappy with the arrangement of the  
18 elections. We have districts. And so I'm forced to  
19 run against a person I don't want to run against.

20 So I'm forced to run against Dow Constantine.  
21 This will be the third time I have run against him.  
22 I don't want to run against him. But the system  
23 forces me to run or not be a candidate. Now, there  
24 are several districts where there is no opposition.  
25 So I'm thinking I can guess who's going to be the

1       elected victor in district two and district four.  
2       Before the election occurs, I already know who the  
3       victor is most likely to be. So I really think this  
4       district system of electing people to the county  
5       council does not work well for me.

6               I like the idea of running at large, where the  
7       candidates don't have to run against a person. They  
8       can follow more positive campaign of saying this is  
9       what I'm running for. And whoever gets the most  
10      votes wins the available offices. So that's the  
11      issue number one.

12             Issue number two, I see a lot of unemployed  
13      people around King County. And it's unlikely that  
14      these unemployed people are going to get jobs. We  
15      have the highest state minimum wage in the nation.  
16      And these people have problems. People who have  
17      problems, it's difficult for them to get jobs at  
18      this minimum wage. And so I want to have the county  
19      and other governments establish a new work  
20      classification called helpers. And under this  
21      helper program, anyone who wants to work, who wants  
22      to apply to work at the minimum wage can go to King  
23      County and to the other governments and say, here I  
24      am. I want to work. And I want to get a minimum  
25      wage. And if we establish this position, then

1 suddenly everybody who can't get work currently  
2 suddenly can get work, because the government will  
3 be the back up employer. And this will reduce a lot  
4 of misery in King County.

5 Now, people who don't have problems, they  
6 usually can get work at the minimum wage or even  
7 better. But people who have problems -- and for  
8 that individual who has problems, unemployment is a  
9 terrible thing. One of the cures for homelessness  
10 is employment. But there's a lot of homeless people  
11 who employers will not rush out to hire at our  
12 minimum wage. So a cure for homelessness is to  
13 establish a work category in King County and other  
14 governments called helpers.

15 And these helpers-- I was in the military.  
16 And it seemed to me that much of the work in the  
17 military is done by privates under the supervision  
18 of sergeants and officers. So it seemed to me that  
19 the regular employers could be officers and  
20 sergeants supervising the available helpers. To  
21 think of the helpers as the privates and a beginning  
22 position, a work position through which they can get  
23 experience.

24 My third issue-- oh, the second issue of  
25 helpers. Helpers can help open the libraries more

1 to advance our leadership in the nation, King  
2 County's leadership in the nation. It's good that  
3 the people can get education. And so the helpers  
4 can help in the libraries, to open libraries more.  
5 And the helpers can help the police, sort of like  
6 security guards, private, not private security  
7 guards, but military privates, working under the  
8 supervision of a police officer. They can magnify  
9 the skills of this high paid police officer.  
10 Currently we can't have a lot of police officers,  
11 because they are so highly paid. We can't afford  
12 them. If we give them helpers, suddenly we magnify  
13 the abilities of the police officers. In all the  
14 functions that the government does, we can use the  
15 available helpers that we get. And we can erase  
16 unemployment for those who want to work in King  
17 County.

18 And now my third issue is preference voting or  
19 choice voting or instant run off voting. In my  
20 mind, those are sort of all the same. Different  
21 titles for the same thing. Mrs. Anderson, is that  
22 correct, these three titles, do they signify the  
23 same thing?

24 MS. ANDERSON: Instant run off voting applies  
25 when there's one winner. The other two systems can

1 apply when there's one winner or when there are  
2 multiple winners.

3 MR. NELSON: So there's a slight difference.  
4 But I don't like the idea of having the voters go  
5 into the polls and not voting for their first  
6 choice. I want the power to be with the voters.  
7 And the voters should be able to vote for whoever  
8 they want, even if they know that person is probably  
9 going to lose. If they vote for their first choice,  
10 who is likely to lose, then we go to their second  
11 choice and do away with the wasting vote syndrome.  
12 And the voters are allowed to express what they  
13 want.

14 I do like instant voting. Preference voting,  
15 choice voting. And I'll let the experts define the  
16 difference. Thank you.

17 MS. MAEDA: Thank you very much. There is no  
18 one else listed on here. But, Liz, you wanted to  
19 speak.

20 MS. GIBA: I'm Liz Giba. And I'm vice  
21 president of the North Highline Unincorporated Area  
22 Council. And there have been a number of comments  
23 made about the council this evening that I would  
24 like to address. First of all, there are many  
25 people who have been on the council who subsequently

1 talked about the fact they were on the council and  
2 go on to their give their views on annexation. All  
3 of these discussions were about annexation. Whether  
4 the North Highline Unincorporated Area Council did  
5 have a low turn out last election, there were no  
6 protested seats.

7 We do our best to outreach the community. We  
8 are probably the only organization in the area that  
9 is totally volunteer. So we are thirteen people who  
10 are working diligently to do the best to outreach.  
11 We're there every other Thursday for the community  
12 to come to talk to us, for Mr. Constantine to come  
13 talk to us. Mr. Constantine has done some good  
14 things in terms of working with us, in terms of the  
15 study that was done. It was -- well, I think  
16 well-orchestrated. There were hundreds of people  
17 that showed up for those meetings. And the council  
18 had followed through and is continuing to follow  
19 through on the recommendation that was made as a  
20 result of that.

21 So in terms of annexation, I think the council  
22 has a right to talk about what it learned via that  
23 study. I would ask that rather than trying to shut  
24 us up, that King County help us do more outreach  
25 into our communities, particularly in communities

1           such as North Highline where we have a tremendous  
2           issue in terms of language issues. We have people  
3           who are economically deprived, people who are  
4           working two and three jobs to try to support their  
5           families. It takes a lot of money to do that  
6           outreach, and we could really use your help.

7                     In regard to one thing that I agree with  
8           Claire on, and I'm not in support of paid signature  
9           gatherers. I have been to too many stores and  
10          talked to too many people who have no idea what they  
11          are gathering signatures for. It is cutting funding  
12          for our government. It is cutting funding from our  
13          neighbors. So I would I certainly hope that you do  
14          everything you can to make that go away.

15                    And in regards to the sheriff, I like the  
16          ability to vote for our sheriff. If there is a  
17          public safety problem, I want to be able to vote  
18          whoever is in charge and not dealing with it out. I  
19          don't think that appointing the sheriff has any sort  
20          of relationship to having problems with that office  
21          necessarily. I think if you read the Times  
22          yesterday, you know that might be true.

23                    Thank you very much.

24                    MS. MAEDA: The young man there, would you  
25          state your name and your neighborhood?

1           MR. NUSBAUM: My name is Lindsay Nusbaum. I'm  
2           in the Delridge neighborhood. And there's three  
3           things I would like to address briefly. And I think  
4           they pertain to the charter in terms of what you  
5           guys are considering that has long term impact that  
6           can only be done by the charter. And it deals with  
7           processes not so much with people.

8           The first, again, is I'm in support of the  
9           instant run off voting. I just heard the gentleman  
10          before, that it would be difficult to implement.  
11          Obviously they have done it in San Francisco. They  
12          have done it in Australia for decades. Ireland,  
13          Cambridge, Massachusetts for decades. So if they  
14          can do it, I don't know why we can't effectively.

15          There's many things about that I would support  
16          that I won't go into detail. Because I know you  
17          guys-- I could provide information if you want to  
18          look into it more.

19          Second, I think publicly financing campaigns  
20          would be-- it kind of goes back to what you were  
21          saying with the sheriff on, you know, who do we want  
22          to hold responsible? And who do we hold them to?  
23          And I think you could make the argument to the whole  
24          council in terms of elections.

25          The third thing would be sustainability. I

1 think there's a growing movement, not just here, but  
2 nationwide, worldwide of trying to make, I guess,  
3 all things sustainable in terms of economic,  
4 ecological, and social programs and businesses. And  
5 I think government could be a leader in that. And  
6 we have a statement in our charter that specifically  
7 says how we should manage and how we should run our  
8 government in that way. There's a professor in  
9 British Columbia. I don't know the name off the top  
10 of my head. But he could give you an idea of how to  
11 put that into the charter.

12 So that our government, you know, in terms of  
13 buildings that we construct, in terms of waste and  
14 water treatment, in terms of parks -- for example,  
15 they have the goats now that go on the side of the  
16 road. That's sustainable. And there's many, many  
17 different things that can be done in a sustainable  
18 way. I think if we had that in the charter, it  
19 would be a good foundation for how we run the  
20 government.

21 Those are my three main points. And, like I  
22 said, I could provide more information. Thank you.

23 MS. MAEDA: Thank you very much. And before  
24 you leave, would you make sure that you sign on this  
25 form?

1 MR. NUSBAUM: Sure.

2 MS. MAEDA: Okay. Is there anyone else who  
3 wishes to speak?

4 MS. DURBIN: I would like to speak.

5 MS. MAEDA: And your name?

6 MS. DURBIN: My name is Jean Durbin. I live  
7 up by South Seattle Community College. And I'm not  
8 sure if this is the right forum. But you guys can  
9 direct me. Just a little feedback on the elected  
10 position for the sheriff's department. I don't have  
11 any problem with the election. But I would like to  
12 see a citizen's committee formed to oversee the  
13 wrongdoings in the sheriff's department. I think we  
14 shouldn't leave it up to the internal department to  
15 do the investigations. I think that the citizens  
16 have a right to investigate, whether there is  
17 campaign donations for dancing or whatever, we may  
18 be able to avoid these problems, and people will be  
19 a little more above board.

20 I also had a question for the council. And  
21 that is, I know we currently have a nine member  
22 council. And I want to know how you see that  
23 working. And do you see any need to go back to a  
24 thirteen member? I know the citizens wanted to go  
25 to nine because of costs. And I was just wondering

1 if-- if it's working for you guys.

2 MR. CONSTANTINE: Thanks for being here. I  
3 opposed the reduction of the council from thirteen  
4 to nine members for the reason it would simply be --  
5 we're a big county. We're 1.8 million people. It  
6 would simply be a lot more difficult to get out to  
7 each of the distinct neighborhoods we represent and  
8 do a good job of providing that local connection.

9 It is much harder. I have had all sorts of  
10 neighborhoods with all sorts of needs to my  
11 district. And I just don't get to go to White  
12 Center as often as I used to, or Vashon. Now I'm  
13 all over the place. You know, that's-- it provides  
14 the citizens with less direct contact with their  
15 elected representatives. Obviously you have to have  
16 a balance between cost and other factors and that  
17 need for direct representation or direct contact.

18 With regards to the internal workings of the  
19 council, I would say it's working quite well. With  
20 nine of us, it's easier to make sure we're all  
21 communicating. And this goes to the partisanship  
22 issue. There are five Democrats and four  
23 Republicans on the council. And everybody who voted  
24 for us knows that they voted for a Democrat or  
25 Republican. But that being said, we're able to work

1 on our differences and try to find common ground,  
2 which is why almost all of the legislation we pass  
3 is ultimately passed unanimously. And of that tiny  
4 percentage that's not, only a small part of that is  
5 actually voted on partisan lines as opposed to  
6 geographic. It's a very interesting dynamic. It  
7 doesn't mean we all believe in the same things. It  
8 means we're doing a lot of work internally in order  
9 to get to a compromise.

10 So reducing the council has been good and bad.  
11 The difference in cost is fairly inconsequential  
12 relative to the \$4.2 billion last year that's the  
13 county budget. Although given as the reason for the  
14 reduction, it was not of particular benefit.

15 MS. DURBIN: And I think what's brought me  
16 here tonight is waste water and the merger of Metro  
17 with King County.

18 Former metro employee, waste water division.  
19 It was supposed to be a merger. It's felt like a  
20 hostile take over. And we were-- had at one time  
21 designed a logo that represented the county and  
22 Metro to be one. Later on we said, well, because of  
23 the letterhead and everything, it was too costly for  
24 the taxpayers to change the letterhead. But we have  
25 done it for Martin Luther.

1           The second part is on Tuesday, when I opened  
2           my email, I found out we're no longer going to be  
3           metrokc.gov. We're going to be King County. Metro  
4           doesn't exist anymore. And the waste water division  
5           in my opinion and solid waste have become the cash  
6           cow for the Tim Eyeman initiatives and taxes that  
7           the county hasn't been able to collect.

8           And right off the top of our budget, we get  
9           about 80 million-dollars for operating and  
10          maintenance. 28 percent the council skims off the  
11          top and puts in their general fund. I don't think  
12          it's right.

13          The employees -- the staffing has been cut  
14          back at the plants. Safety is an issue. And I  
15          would like to see in this charter where utilities  
16          such as waste water and solid waste are protected  
17          from politics. And politics, one being Bright  
18          Water. We were all given an extra five dollars and  
19          something charge on our waste water sewer bills, not  
20          because of the employees not doing their job or  
21          because we're wasting money. It's because the  
22          revenue that we're generating is going toward Bright  
23          Water.

24          This Bright Water plant will do-- they said we  
25          needed another regional waste water plant. Not

1 true. That plant will do 40 MGD. One pump at West  
2 Point does 110. When we're in storm conditions,  
3 we're putting out 440 MGD. We have the Renton  
4 treatment plant that has the capability of doing a  
5 couple hundred million of sewage. The problem is we  
6 can treat the sewage. We can't treat the storm  
7 water.

8 And so by putting our dollars into waste water  
9 plants, it's not the right way to go for the rate  
10 payers. The way to go is separation of sewers and  
11 storm water. And this one billion dollar project  
12 for a 40 MGD plant will probably by the time they  
13 get done probably be two billion. And for  
14 250 million dollars, there is an alternative of  
15 treating this 40 MGD. And for the two billion, we  
16 could probably separate our sewer systems and be a  
17 little more cost conscious of the rate payer. But  
18 they are not. And it's politics that's driving it.

19 And just like Seattle City Light, you know, we  
20 write our bills to Seattle City Light. We write it  
21 to the department of finance. And the last time I  
22 talked to an electrician a couple of years ago, they  
23 were like a half a billion dollars in the red. Why?  
24 Because the council, the city council has taken over  
25 that budget. And I don't mind being under the

1 umbrella of the county. But if we're going to be  
2 responsible to the rate payers, then we need to have  
3 a plan to be responsible to the rate payers, and  
4 keep politics out of it.

5 MS. MAEDA: Thank you very much.

6 Is there anybody else that would like to  
7 speak?

8 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Just a real quick question.  
9 Is there any way to get one of these meetings in  
10 Boulevard Park? Or are you guys scheduled for the  
11 meetings that you have?

12 MS. MAEDA: We are scheduled for one meeting  
13 in each of the council districts. I'm not real sure  
14 whether we're going to go out back to the public  
15 once we get further deliberation or not. But this  
16 is a perfect segue to go to Corrie Watterson on the  
17 staff to go through the whole process that we'll be  
18 undergoing over the next year or so for the  
19 commission.

20 (Powerpoint presentation by Ms. Watterson.)

21 MS. MAEDA: All right. Now we're going to ask  
22 if any of the commissioners have questions of any of  
23 the citizens who made their comments.

24 MR. MUNRO: I have one. Claire, is that  
25 right? Claire Anderson? Okay. I'm sorry. I

1 apologize. You criticized the single member  
2 district system and the winner take all. Are you  
3 suggesting that all council members run at large  
4 like the city council candidates do?

5 MS. ANDERSON: That's a common misconception  
6 that Seattle's election method is not a winner take  
7 all system, which of course it is. And the city is  
8 a single member district. But then the candidates  
9 run by position which separates them. So it's  
10 exactly the same. They don't run at large against  
11 all the other candidates. There are many different  
12 election methods that can accomplish a proportional  
13 result.

14 The one that our organization prefers for King  
15 County would be running King County at large where  
16 all the voters would have-- would be voting for--  
17 would have one vote that counts, but they can list  
18 several choices. And their votes would transfer if  
19 their first vote doesn't make it. So that any  
20 minority group that can gather together one ninth of  
21 the vote countywide can elect someone to the  
22 council.

23 It's much easier to demonstrate how these  
24 systems work with sample ballots and charts and  
25 everything. I'd be more than happy to meet with you

1 and explain further.

2 MR. CONSTANTINE: So then under that system,  
3 and that's pretty pure proportional system, you're  
4 essentially voting for a party who's the individual  
5 that the aggregated minority group would end up  
6 electing into office.

7 MS. ANDERSON: You can't predict who that will  
8 be. People define themselves personally and vote  
9 accordingly. So when I speak of minority  
10 representation, I'm not necessarily speaking of  
11 racial minority or political minority.

12 MR. CONSTANTINE: It could be personality as  
13 well.

14 MS. ANDERSON: Sure, but -- yeah, but  
15 proportional elections can take place in a party  
16 system or a nonpartisan system. If you're doing  
17 choice voting, that doesn't make any difference.

18 MS. MAEDA: Other questions from commission  
19 members?

20 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Just a real quick  
21 clarification on what representative Constantine  
22 said. Is there currently a motion to go back to the  
23 thirteen members or --

24 MR. CONSTANTINE: No. But, you know, that's a  
25 theoretical outcome of the charter review process,

1 not one that I think people are actively  
2 considering. This commission, these folks and all  
3 the other people who are listed there, will  
4 formulate recommendations and deliver those to the  
5 county council. And then we'll decide whether or  
6 not to put them on the ballot in 2008.

7 MS. ANDERSON: I would like to put in my two  
8 cents right now to hopefully bring back a larger  
9 number. The tears I was in earlier was just from  
10 direct overload in my own life. And I'm not  
11 handling two hundred thousand people. And I have  
12 noticed the difference between when it was thirteen  
13 and now nine, the ability to get hold of the  
14 representatives, the magnitude of what one person  
15 can deal with all the people in need. So I would  
16 highly recommend going back to the thirteen.

17 MR. MUNRO: You're Claire.

18 MS. ANDERSON: I'm Claire.

19 MR. MUNRO: It's been rather forcefully  
20 presented to us for the incorporated areas of King  
21 County, King County provides limited services, the  
22 Courts, the prosecutor, public defender, and at  
23 least in some cases, police.

24 But then in the unincorporated areas, the  
25 county is providing the same kinds of service to

1           those people that the cities are in the incorporated  
2           areas. And you have kind of attacked the idea at  
3           least with the North Highline Area Council. Do you  
4           have a proposal for improving the way that those  
5           unincorporated areas can organize themselves and  
6           express their needs to the council and the  
7           executive?

8                     MS. ANDERSON: I happen to be the last  
9           secretary of the Boulevard Park Community Council.  
10          And the Boulevard Park Community Council was  
11          instrumental with other councils in establishing the  
12          UAC. And the thing that offended me was how a  
13          handful of people could-- and I asked a lot of them.  
14          And their answer was, I don't have to go out and  
15          talk with the people. I was elected for my point of  
16          view. So all I have to do is follow my point of  
17          view, and I don't have to be responsive to the  
18          community. If they want to talk to me, they need to  
19          come to me. However, nobody knew who they were. So  
20          this was both on the Boulevard Park Community  
21          Council and on the UAC, the Unincorporated Area  
22          Council.

23                     In my time with both councils -- because I'm a  
24          graphic artist, I know how to promote and do PR  
25          work. My whole goal since 1997 was to bring these

1 two organizations into public scrutiny and  
2 participation. And I spent ten years and nearly  
3 killed myself and totally disrupted my family life  
4 trying to reach out to the people, the community,  
5 much like you guys do, to solicit response, to teach  
6 people how to become involved in the community.

7 In that process, there was a behind the scenes  
8 war between these two councils which ended in the  
9 cessation of the Boulevard Park Community Council.  
10 We were driven out of dealing with our community  
11 because of the dominant issue with the UAC saying  
12 that they were chartered by King County to be our  
13 government.

14 Now, King County when we talked with them, we  
15 were told that we were basically on equal footing.  
16 They listened to all of us, which was cool. But in  
17 reality, our council for our little Boulevard Park,  
18 which still is, was basically ignored. There's all  
19 sorts of stuff going on in White Center, but hardly  
20 anything in Boulevard Park. We were undercut to the  
21 point that we fell apart.

22 I still have all the records, all the  
23 documentation to prove out anything that needs to be  
24 proved out. What I'm saying is, there are a lot of  
25 people in Boulevard Park that were very active. We

1           were like going forward. Actually we voted in 2002  
2           to annex to Seattle, but the bridge was an issue.  
3           In 2003, we voted to incorporate Boulevard Park. I  
4           filed for incorporation last year, but I screwed up  
5           in the way I did it, so I had to withdraw it.

6                     The issue is Boulevard Park itself is not  
7           being listened to. The dominant attention in this  
8           particular unincorporated area is going to White  
9           Center. So the volunteers in our area who are not  
10          paid -- and we have had theft. We have had damaged  
11          property. We are being systematically eliminated  
12          from speaking up for the Boulevard Park area.

13                    So as to an-- I'm sorry I have rambled. I  
14          have forgotten your initial question. But the thing  
15          is there are people out there that would get  
16          involved, that are involved. We're just involved  
17          behind the scenes, but we need to believe we're  
18          being listened to.

19                    Years ago, representative Constantine came to  
20          our meetings. We did the drive through Boulevard  
21          Park. You know, we will be holding more. And the  
22          whole thing is, I walked into the grocery store, and  
23          they are asking me when we're going to have another  
24          community meeting. I'm not paid. I'm worn out.  
25          I'm getting old. The thing is, we have people that

1 want to be listened to.

2 But how do we tie in and really feel that  
3 we're listened to? Because I could right now go  
4 start a Boulevard Park Community Council again, and  
5 I could do it. I am the president of the Boulevard  
6 Park community study group. I do have a web site.  
7 I have got all the history of Boulevard Park in the  
8 past two years regarding their government. But I am  
9 worn out.

10 MS. MAEDA: Thank you, Claire.

11 MS. GIBA: I have an idea. We could use more  
12 money to do more outreach to Boulevard Park.

13 MS. MAEDA: John.

14 AUDIENCE MEMBER: I had a question. Three  
15 people spoke about the sheriff's position. And that  
16 leads to an issue. Out of those three people, one  
17 was for it and one was against it and one didn't  
18 really care. And so that was done by initiative, if  
19 I'm correct, in '96. It's kind of a question in  
20 general to the audience, and I think-- it was done  
21 by initiative by the people. Is that something that  
22 as citizens you would think that the appointed  
23 commission should put forward in front of the voters  
24 again? Just an interesting concept.

25 MS. MAEDA: Comments on that particular

1 question or issue?

2 MS. GIBA: We agree.

3 AUDIENCE MEMBER: It could be that they have  
4 experienced it now and maybe think, you know, they  
5 can choose again. I don't know. I don't know much  
6 about it.

7 MS. MAEDA: Any other comments on the elected  
8 or appointed sheriff?

9 MS. GIBA: I'm wondering how it came about in  
10 the first place, the issue, why we're discussing it  
11 again. How did that happen? Is it possible you  
12 might make that recommendation?

13 MS. MAEDA: It's not that we're going to be  
14 making the recommendation. It has been brought up  
15 at some of the other public hearings in the other  
16 districts.

17 MS. GIBA: Citizens have come to these  
18 meetings and--

19 MS. MAEDA: We have not put any issues on  
20 agenda.

21 MS. GIBA: The reason I'm bringing up it up,  
22 it's, to me, different from other issues, different  
23 than the original charters or different from issues  
24 that have been amended by charter. This is one in  
25 particular that was done by initiative and the

1 citizens voted on and wanted. To me, it's a  
2 different type of issue. And it also -- we have got  
3 an initiative 25. So that's coming up. And it  
4 sounds like that's going to go on the ballot. Is  
5 that something that ten years from now that the  
6 charter review would then look at again and have a  
7 different opinion than what the voters have? And  
8 I'm just questioning would it not be more  
9 appropriate if elected officials brought those  
10 issues forward, and they have the power to do that  
11 rather than the commission?

12 MR. CONSTANTINE: The difference between our  
13 charter commission and some others, is we are not  
14 elected. So our conclusions are not put to the  
15 voters because of that. Other counties have elected  
16 charter commission, charter review commissioners.  
17 And I believe-- so there is a difference.

18 MS. MAEDA: Claire, I see your hand, but I am  
19 going to ask if there's anyone else who has not  
20 spoken who wants to say something? Any  
21 commissioners who have questions of any of the  
22 citizens who made comments? And of course,  
23 Mr. Councilmember, you can ask questions too.

24 MR. CONSTANTINE: I just want to say I'm  
25 particularly fascinated by the civics part of this.

1           Especially discussions about elections systems.  
2           When this-- I mean our national constitution was  
3           established. We established this winner take all  
4           system, which is something of an outlier globally.  
5           Most systems are not like this. And it has some  
6           benefits but it also has some ill effects that you  
7           described. It tends to exaggerate the victory, but  
8           it also frustrates people in the minority in a  
9           particular geographic area.

10                   And there are all these iterations, whether  
11           it's parliamentary type system, whether you have a  
12           winner take all system, whether the executive is  
13           directly elected or is selected by the prevailing  
14           party or viewpoint.

15                   You know, I imagine that a more radical  
16           departure is less likely to happen during the  
17           charter review process, but I think it's important  
18           that was sort of educated participants in the system  
19           have a conversation that goes beyond simply our  
20           immediate circumstances and talk about what systems  
21           would work best for our government. It's very  
22           interesting.

23                   MS. ANDERSON: The unincorporated area has  
24           been brought up and the government for that. And I  
25           think the unincorporated area is 25 percent of the

1 county. But that's another minority in the county  
2 that could organize behind specific candidates  
3 representing them rather than have districts that  
4 are a combination of unincorporated, but the voter  
5 themselves makes the decision of what's most  
6 important to them. That is a way of dealing with a  
7 sizeable population in the county that is poorly  
8 represented now.

9 MR. CONSTANTINE: And yet the unincorporated  
10 area itself is wildly diverse from urban to rural.  
11 So it's hard to lump everybody who's unincorporated  
12 into one bucket.

13 MS. MAEDA: And I think you would find that  
14 the unincorporated area councils are very, very  
15 different from one area to another.

16 AUDIENCE MEMBER: I was wondering, is the  
17 charter available for a possible audit of the  
18 different departments within the council? If you  
19 drive down the road, and you call in a sink hole and  
20 you go, but my road taxes just went up, we can look  
21 at and see, is our money being spend on roads? Is  
22 the money being at the-- have we created a  
23 government that looks like a mushroom instead of a  
24 pyramid where all the money is being spent downtown  
25 and not for the general services that people think

1           they are paying for? I mean, can the charter do  
2           that?

3           MR. CONSTANTINE: I don't know what's in the  
4           charter right now about audits. The audit function  
5           of the county is primarily the legislative branch.  
6           And we do a work plan every year place based on  
7           issues that might come up, like there's a sink hole.  
8           We'll assign the auditors to look at that. The  
9           state auditor can also come in and do local audits  
10          now. But I don't know what the charter implications  
11          are.

12          MS. ANDERSON: The point was, the computer  
13          system, they were going to go to Peoplesoft. And  
14          waste water was the guinea pig for that project.  
15          And we all said this sucks. It's not working. And  
16          they already put in four million. And now they're  
17          going to go back to the taxpayers, whoops, it was  
18          four million dollars, but we're going to have to  
19          make it work, so we end up throwing more money at a  
20          white elephant than saying, we made a mistake, let's  
21          do it over. And I think the county government needs  
22          to be accountable to the people. And auditing and  
23          looking at our current practices would be one way to  
24          the charter could address that issue.

25          MR. CONSTANTINE: If I could, I think that's a

1 really good suggestion, a good suggestion for this  
2 charter commission to look at that may not be  
3 addressed currently in the charter and may need to  
4 be. But the whole area of performance based  
5 governance, of identifying the mission, setting  
6 goals, objectives, measurable outcomes, and doing  
7 the measurement and having those measurements  
8 actually inform the decisions that are made,  
9 subsequently is, you know, an emerging area, one  
10 we're working on, and that's good. But it requires  
11 a lot more encouragement.

12 AUDIENCE MEMBER: I have a comment here.  
13 County auditor, section 250 of the charter, is  
14 appointed by the majority of the county council and  
15 is given specific direction. You may want to flesh  
16 that out a little bit more and give them a little  
17 more incentive to go out and actually independently  
18 look at various agencies.

19 And regarding the elected sheriff, I'm in  
20 favor of the election. Citizens voted on that  
21 recently. And I don't see any reason that we should  
22 go back.

23 MS. MAEDA: Okay. Yes.

24 MS. HEINECKE: My name's Tara Heinecke. I'm  
25 from District Five. And actually I'm at a number of

1           these other public forums. And some of the groups  
2           that have addressed the commission have also talked  
3           about wanting the auditor position to be an elected  
4           position, not appointed as it currently is. I  
5           haven't heard anybody talk about that here tonight.  
6           Since you were just mentioning that, it would be  
7           interesting to know what this room feels about that  
8           idea, since we have heard a lot from other groups.

9           AUDIENCE MEMBER: It's a good idea. I haven't  
10          had a chance to read this thing. So this is all  
11          good information for me.

12          I will have a lot to say in an e-mail.

13          MS. MAEDA: All right.

14          MR. NELSON: I have a question for Dow  
15          Constantine. What is the number of members on the  
16          council that would be best for improving government?  
17          What do you think is the best number?

18          MR. CONSTANTINE: Well, it's a hard question  
19          to answer, because as I said before, the number we  
20          have now has advantages and disadvantages. A larger  
21          number has advantages and disadvantages. Thirteen  
22          was better in terms of providing local attention to  
23          constituents, but it was worse in terms of reaching  
24          consensus and good communication inside the  
25          courthouse in our day-to-day business. I do think

1 in a county of approaching two million, the model  
2 that we're working from is still based on a County  
3 of half that size. And we need to find a way to get  
4 representative government out more into the  
5 communities, even if it's not me personally being  
6 there talking to you. It needs to be somebody  
7 representing the legislative branch and not simply  
8 bureaucrats representing government agencies.

9 It needs to be the elected officials or the  
10 representatives hearing directly from the people.  
11 And that's the hard part about having votes. I like  
12 thirteen. I thought it worked okay. I think that  
13 we will make nine work, but it's -- there are things  
14 about it that don't work well.

15 MR. NELSON: My question is, for better  
16 government, which is the best? That's what I have  
17 been thinking about.

18 MR. CONSTANTINE: Probably thirteen. But when  
19 you say better government, you know, from the  
20 perspective that the people are in this room, most  
21 of you I know, what we're saying is more responsive  
22 government. A government that hears the problems in  
23 the community and is able to address them.

24 MR. NELSON: I was not thinking of responsive  
25 government. I was thinking of government that would

1 raise the quality of life and raising the living  
2 standards.

3 MR. CONSTANTINE: That does not necessarily  
4 tie to the number of representatives you have. That  
5 is a different issue. That could be accomplished  
6 with nine members, could be accomplished with fewer.  
7 It depends on the quality of the members who are  
8 elected.

9 MR. NELSON: If one of the members is a  
10 failure, can the other eight cover for him?

11 MR. CONSTANTINE: Yes.

12 MR. NELSON: So eight could cover or twelve  
13 could cover?

14 MR. CONSTANTINE: You could carry a little bit  
15 of dead weight.

16 MS. MAEDA: Can we quote you on that?

17 MR. CONSTANTINE: No.

18 MS. MAEDA: All right. Claire.

19 MS. HANSON: I meant to put this question out  
20 to the entire commission. Believe me, I spent my  
21 entire life believing in the right of the people to  
22 vote and elect their choice. But I have heard in  
23 the comments that have been made tonight, it's like  
24 doing it by vote you have got the people that have  
25 the money to do the advertising, which could totally

1 preclude a person of quality, higher quality being  
2 acknowledged by the voter populace, because in  
3 effect, that vote is bought. I don't see that  
4 different between having it appointed by people who  
5 were elected that they could also be bought. Or  
6 they might know better. So I would like to hear  
7 from people on the commission as to-- I don't find  
8 this a very defining reason, the arguments I have  
9 heard tonight. Not arguments. But the wording that  
10 I have heard tonight.

11 I have been very disillusioned in the past two  
12 years with the way our government is run, so I have  
13 lost a lot of confidence in our voting system,  
14 because that is bought and purchased in a lot of  
15 ways. And so on the one hand, that's an outright up  
16 front kind of thing for the people to make their own  
17 mistake. The other way, they have got elected  
18 officials that could have gotten in there the same  
19 way.

20 Is there any defining thing to be said here as  
21 to the validity of either argument?

22 MR. LONG: I will say my observation of not  
23 just this county, but other counties, the more  
24 elected officials you have, the less internal  
25 accountability. The more elected officials, like

1 the sheriff or the judges or the executive agencies,  
2 the less likely they are to work together very  
3 effectively.

4 One of the constant frustrations for cities  
5 that work with the county is trying to deal with  
6 issues that cross the departmental lines and trying  
7 to get any kind of a, what I call, timely decision.  
8 Very difficult. And the city is often the one that  
9 has to build the bridge, because the departments  
10 don't necessarily work together.

11 That's an observation or experience that I  
12 have had trying to work from the municipal side.  
13 And I've worked inside the county. And the county's  
14 culture is very departmentally focussed. And you  
15 don't step outside that box without permission from  
16 the top official. So it's not a very flexible kind  
17 of institution.

18 MS. MAEDA: Well, I think there's one thing  
19 that all of us agree upon on the commission, and  
20 that is citizen participation is essential. Whether  
21 it's at the ballot, when you vote, or whether it's  
22 participating in a session like this. And we really  
23 appreciate the fact that you have given us number  
24 one status. We have got the most people that have  
25 showed up in this district. And it shows that you

1 care and you're engaged in the community. And with  
2 that, I'm going to end the formal portion of this.

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