

Mukilteo Beacon

YOUR HOMETOWN NEWSPAPER

728 3rd St., Ste. D Mukilteo, WA 98275

Volume XXX

Number 30

February 16, 2022

Both school district levies are passing

Mukilteo District voters have lowest turnout in Snohomish County

BY DAVID PAN

REPORTER@YOURBEACON.NET

Voters in the Mukilteo School District showed strong support for the two replacement levies on the Feb. 8 special election ballot.



Alison Brynelson

As of Monday, Feb. 14, Proposition 1, the replacement of educational programs levy, was being approved by 57% (8,334) of the vote with 43% (6,326) opposed. Proposition 2, the replacement capital projects levy, garnered 56% (8,171) approval with 44% (6,495) voting no.



Michael Simmons

"We are very thankful for our community supporting important programs and services for students," said Mukilteo School District Superintendent Alison Brynelson. "The passing of these levies will ensure continuing existing programs outside of the basic school offerings, such as band and orchestra, choir, performing arts, and athletics. They also enable us to maintain current technology and facility care and replacement needs so students and staff have safe places to learn and work. This investment in schools has a direct benefit to students, families and our community."

see **SCHOOL LEVIES** page 15 ▶

Over the Moon: Councilmember humbled by appointment

BY DAVID PAN

REPORTER@YOURBEACON.NET



Beacon photo by David Pan

Jason Moon is Mukilteo's newest City Councilmember after being appointed to fill Mayor Joe Marine's seat.

Jason Moon felt like he was the underdog heading into the second and final round of interviews for the open seat on the Mukilteo City Council that became available when Joe Marine took office as mayor.

Of the four candidates the City Council was considering for Position No. 7, two – Alex Crocco and Carolyn "Doty" Carlson – had run to fill a different seat on the council in the most recent election. The third candidate – Jericho Bridge Church founder and senior pastor Don Saul – was one of two finalists for the last open seat in 2020.

All three are longtime residents of the city (one more than two decades), while Moon moved to Mukilteo about five years ago, though he has lived in south Snohomish County since 1985.

After the candidates answered the seven questions posed by councilmembers and Marine and a round of follow-up questions, each councilmember was asked for the name of the candidate he or she wished to appoint to the council.

One by one, all six councilmembers said the same name – Jason Moon.

"As the votes rolled in, I was in shock," Moon said. "I didn't realize what was happening until the fourth or fifth vote.

"I'm honored that they saw the potential perspective I can bring to the council."

The significance of his appointment was not lost on Moon, a 40-year-old Korean American.

"This is a great opportunity for myself to represent the Asian American community," Moon said. "It's a big weight on myself. All eyes are going to be on me. How I perform will reflect on the community."

see **JASON MOON** page 16 ▶

Expanded Mukilteo Finance Committee to include all councilmembers

BY DAVID PAN

REPORTER@YOURBEACON.NET

Residents who want to dig deeper into Mukilteo's finances should start to block out the fourth Monday of every month.

During its Monday, Feb. 14, work session, the City Council decided that all seven councilmembers, not a selected few, will now be on the Finance & IT Committee.

Previous committees included three councilmembers, an alternate, and City

staff. Meetings were held on the fourth Monday of the month but were not open to the public. Future Finance & IT committee meetings will be part of a work session with more than three councilmembers, which means the meeting has to be open to the public.

In an earlier meeting, the council considered whether to ditch separate committees and commissions and have what is called committee of the whole, in which the entire council sits in on each of the committee and commission meetings. Councilmembers were against the idea except for Finance & IT.

Mayor Joe Marine said he will meet with council leadership, but moving forward the plan is for the entire council to meet on the fourth Monday of the month for Finance & IT.

"I think it's important that the whole council sits in on the Finance Committee," Council President Steve Schmalz said. "It just seems that the budget amendments, new budget items that come up, I think it would be important to have everybody

participate in that. ... I've always felt that it's probably of the most important of the four large committees that we have."

Councilmembers Louis Harris and Riaz Khan agreed. "It's just one of more important things in the city," Harris said. "... How we spend money and how we look at our finances is extremely important, and I do see the value of all councilmembers being involved in this conversation."

Councilmember Tom Jordal didn't have a strong opinion either way, but tended to fa-

see **FINANCE COMMITTEE** page 2 ▶

TIME TO RENEW

Don't Let Your

BEACON SUBSCRIPTION EXPIRE

mukilteobeacon.com **425-347-5634**

► from **JASON MOON** page 1

"Everything I'm going to do is going to be magnified 10 times. I want to be the best role model and be the best example for all people to see. Ultimately, what they see goes into their world view."

Moon joins what is one of the most diverse city councils in Snohomish County with Council Vice President Elisabeth Crawford (first-generation Mexican-American), Councilmember Riaz Khan (born in India, president of the Islamic Center of Mukilteo), and Councilmember Louis Harris (African-American, member of NAACP).

According to the U.S. Census, Asians make up about 20% of the population in Mukilteo, the largest minority in the city. Moon is hoping his presence will encourage others to become involved in government and politics.

"There hasn't been anyone on the council who looks like me," he said. "I think that alone will inspire people in the community, children in the schools, to be really motivated."

The seeds of Moon's political career were planted during his time with the City's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Commission. Moon was one of the seven original members appointed and served as the chairperson in 2021. "That when the conversation started," Moon said.

People started asking him what his goals were and if he planned to enter politics.

The impact of the DEI Commission extends beyond Moon's budding political career. Last November, members met in person for the first time. Moon enjoyed getting to know the others on a more personal basis.

"Everyone is so passionate about the DEI Commission," he said. "Everyone is so knowledgeable. All these people have very interesting stories."

Two of the members returned to school to obtain their master's degrees after raising their children. "That was so inspiring," said Moon, who has decided to go back to school to earn his MBA at the University of Washington.

Moon was surprised by the interest his candidacy garnered. Within minutes of the vote, he started receiving congratulatory emails. A



Photo courtesy of Jason Moon

Councilmember Jason Moon (left) met with Police Chief Cheol Kang.

Korean newspaper also reached out to him.

"I felt a lot of support that I really wasn't expecting," Moon said. In voicing his support for Moon, Councilmember Tom Jordal said he was looking for someone who could represent a part of the community that currently is not being represented on the council.

Moon understands Jordal's point.

"There's a big community in Mukilteo that

just hasn't had the chance to be as vocal," Moon said. "We need more representation from communities that don't have a voice – BIPOC, Indigenous, all peoples.

"We're so diverse. I want to make sure all voices are heard, not just Asian American."

The diverse backgrounds of each of the councilmembers should lead to better government, Moon said.

"Having different perspectives will help with innovation," he added. "We will be able to think outside of the box. ... Councilmembers Harris, Khan, and Crawford all have experience with project management. We have a lot of different flavors. I'm hoping it will come out as a delicious dish."

During the last election cycle, Moon had considered running for one of the three positions on the ballot. But with COVID-19 running rampant, he and his wife felt they didn't have the time and resources to mount a campaign. Moon decided to focus on the DEI Commission and wait for the next opportunity.

The opportunity presented itself after Marine defeated incumbent Mayor Jennifer Gregerson in the November general election. The council had a vacant seat that needed to be filled. "This is going to be a lot more simple when it comes to a campaign," Moon said.

Position No. 7's term runs through 2023, giving Moon a year and a half to gauge how his service to the City will impact his family life. Moon and his wife have two sons, 3 and 5. "It's a great opportunity that presented itself," Moon said. "I'm humbled and honored. ... I want to my kids to go to school and say my dad did great things for the community. My biggest motivation is my family."

Moon already has started making the round with City officials, meeting with Police Chief Cheol Kang. He plans to reach out to business leaders, residents, and others in an effort to gain as much knowledge about what Mukilteans are thinking. Moon said his approach to government revolves around building relationships and collaboration.

"The road ahead is going to involve lots of learning," he said. "I'm going in with open ears. ... I'm going to be relying on the community, my family and friends, and the other councilmembers."

Moon expects to hear a wide range of opinions and views from Mukilteo residents.

"Mukilteo is a very diverse community with different perspectives and different views. But we all live in Mukilteo. We chose Mukilteo. The foundation for our love of Mukilteo is where we have to start."

SPONSORED **FEATURE**

New Construction Projects Require Vision and Trusted Partnerships

Climbing rent prices, declining inventories, and low rates are creating an opportunity for business owners to consider the advantages



Peoples Bank

DREW SMITH
Commercial
Banking Officer
at Peoples Bank

of new construction. If your business has expansion plans and you're outgrowing your current space, you have significant tenant improvements to make on your existing building, or you want a better location for your business, a lender can explain the ins and outs of new construction lending and help you achieve the long-term security associated with owning your own building.

When it comes to underwriting commercial loans, banks look at a multitude of factors, and construction financing is no different. Could new construction be the right move for your business? Here are some factors to keep in mind.

A trusted contractor mitigates lending risk. Borrowers often underestimate the importance lenders put on the reputation of the project team assembled. Due to the inherent risk associated with all construction projects, the more experienced the

contractor is, the more comfortable the bank will be to take on the risk. Be prepared to explain how experienced the contractor is with the type of construction project you're proposing, how speculative the project is, if signed leases are in place, and if the project principals have excess liquidity and outside income to support the project in the event of cost overruns or project delays.

Cash on hand can offset risk. If there are perceived weaknesses in a project, a lender will lean more heavily on other aspects of your loan application. This could include requiring more cash on hand to cover possible contingencies. In general, a lender will want to know how much cash the borrower has in the project, as well as the proposed loan amount compared to the value of the project (loan to value). The lender will also be interested in the loan repayment source. For example, is it an owner-occupied building for a successful business? Does the repayment come from the

property itself (via lease income)? Who are the tenants, and how are the leases structured? A loan secured by a building with an investment grade tenant is viewed differently than a tenant who doesn't provide the same financial strength and stability.

Fixed bids can help you stay on budget. A fixed bid contract is one where the contractor gives a contractual bid to complete the project for a pre-determined price. Assuming there are no change orders or allowance overages, the contractor is required to complete the job for the pre-determined dollar amount. If the project costs more money than expected (even if it costs more than the original bid), that burden is borne by the contractor. Banks tend to have a strong preference for fixed bid or 'guaranteed maximum price' contracts as they limit the risk associated with overall project costs.

Be aware of the costs involved. In addition to the price of the land and the construction costs themselves, business owners should have a firm understanding of other expenses related to construction financing. For example, interest reserves are the cost of loan interest while the building is under construction. Say, for example, you're building an apartment building. During construction, the building is vacant and not generating

income, but there is still a loan to service. It's a carrying cost that is often overlooked when budgeting for a new project. Other costs include loan fees, third-party financing costs (title, escrow, construction draws), contingency reserves, permitting, and additional soft costs. It's a good idea to discuss these costs with your lender and make sure you are budgeting for the project accordingly.

Whether your business needs new industrial warehouse space or you're seeking a high-traffic downtown storefront, it's an exciting time to take advantage of current market conditions while contributing to the economic vitality of the community. If new construction sounds intimidating or more than you're ready for, remember that it's never too early to start the conversation with a lender about your long-term plans to see if new construction makes sense for you.

Please contact a lender at the Peoples Bank Evergreen Way Office, 6920 Evergreen Way, 425-257-4495, to learn about financial solutions that are right for your business.

