

APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP CONSIDERATION
CITY OF OLYMPIA VOLUNTEER ADVISORY COMMITTEES

2016 APPOINTMENT APPLICATION
Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Committee

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Why I wish to serve on the BPAC

Service and community have been important personal values for me since my teen years. Now that I am retired, I have more time and energy to devote to formal, ongoing community service activities, and the BPAC fits within my interests and ability to commit to the structure.

Before moving into Olympia in 1999, our family lived in rural Thurston County (on Johnson Point) and one reason we moved into town was to decrease our reliance on automotive transportation with its attendant adverse effects on the environment, public health, and community quality of life. I was able to switch at that time to commuting to my job primarily by foot or bicycle, and continued that pattern until I retired in late 2013. This of course made me very aware of the importance of safe, convenient infrastructure for cyclists and pedestrians, and gave me the opportunity to observe and consider the planning and maintenance of our streets, trails, and sidewalks from the micro level (reporting dangerous potholes, clearing leaves out of drains to mitigate flooded street crossings, etc.) to the macro level (neighborhood connections, arterial bottlenecks, etc.).

I am also an avid recreational distance runner averaging around 1500 miles/year primarily within 10 miles of downtown. Although this includes many trips along Capitol Blvd or the Olympia Woodland Trail, I also make an effort to explore the quiet neighborhoods, dead ends, and trail connections. I "run" many errands on foot or by bicycle. I'm plugged in to the local running community, and have some professional knowledge of issues like environmental health and safety, special needs related to physical and cognitive disabilities. I also see the BPAC as one small piece of the problems caused by population growth and over-reliance on the automobile.

In short, I am an informed user who is motivated to help make things better, and the BPAC seems like an effective way to make a difference.

Qualifications and skills which would benefit the BPAC

In addition to the avocational qualifications above, I have an extensive work background in analyzing and responding to complex information sets and working in committee settings. While I was with Western Institutional Review Board, I spent several years as a staff physician member of the human subject protection boards ("IRB"), working with community members who were typically lay (non-medical) volunteers, applying Federal regulations and international guidelines while evaluating regulatory and ethical aspects of medical research using humans subjects. I also spent about 8 years managing the unit overseeing biological safety of recombinant DNA research in humans. This of course is also subject to Federal regulation via the NIH, and involved chairing institutional biosafety committees (IBCs) in communities all over the US and in other countries (which often had their own regulations). To add to the challenge of the IBC meetings, they were conducted telephonically or by computer conferencing, often with members I hadn't personally met. We made it work well!

I'm an avid daily reader of both The Olympian and the New York Times, so I have a good familiarity with the last 35 years of local history, issues, politics and personalities. I have read the documents about Volunteer Advisory Committees on the City of Olympia website, and do not foresee having any difficulty complying with the letter and spirit of this type of work. I'm computer literate, love maps and geography, and enjoy finding creative solutions to problems--in my experience, good ideas very often arise from conversations among a diverse group of interested, caring people.

Involvement in the Olympia Community

I've run the Capital City Marathon most years since 2004, and had friendly connections with the current and previous Race Directors. Last year I worked with the Capitol City Marathon Association committee planning the new course, which of course drew on an intimate knowledge of the roads and traffic patterns. Last year I also dipped my toe into volunteering for the parks (ivy at Priest Point Park—need I say more?) and hope to continue this. I currently serve as volunteer treasurer for two local non-profits, and have held other non-profit Board-level positions. My wife and I direct some of our charitable giving to local social justice and environmental organizations. In the early 1980s I was active in the local Thurston County Nuclear Weapons Freeze Campaign, and once served as a precinct delegate to a Thurston County political party convention. In 2015 was on the local steering group for the I-732 signature gathering campaign. Not only did we do well with signature totals in Thurston County, but I got to spend plenty of time working the (pedestrian) crowds for signatures at the Farmers Market, Lakefair, the Pride Parade, Evergreen, etc. By the way, this provided great experience in engaging strangers in a civic topic, and hearing opinions and feedback of all sorts.

Current occupation

Retired!

Educational and Professional background

I spent my professional career as a family physician. I attended Deep Springs College and Cornell University, the UCLA School of Medicine, and did my residency at Northridge Hospital in the LA area. After training, I practiced at Group Health Cooperative in Olympia, practiced and taught at the Providence St. Peter Hospital Family Medicine Residency, and spent a dozen years at WIRB (described above). While at the PSPH Residency, I had the opportunity to work 2 half-days per month at the Nisqually Tribal Clinic.

Commitment as a volunteer

Being retired, I would not expect any difficulty in spending in the neighborhood of 3-4 hours per week, and would like to hear if the requirement routinely exceeds this. Also, the meeting schedule seems very workable to me. Although there could be occasional times when I may miss a meeting due to travel, I expect I would mostly be able to schedule around meetings.

If not appointed to the BPAC at this time

If I were not appointed to the BPAC at this time, I would consider a future appointment. The other group that appeals to me is the Heritage Commission. (You could ask Heather Lockman about me...)

Residency

I am a resident of the City of Olympia.

City email address

I am able to comply with the expectation about using city email for Advisory Committee

Business. In fact I am very curious to learn about open meetings rules because it seems to (regrettably) come up so often in the news, and would hope to be trained right away if I were appointed.

How did I learn about BPAC recruitment?

I have been aware of Advisory Committees for some years through friends who have served in this way (e.g., Heritage Commission, Utility Advisory Committee), but never had the time to take on such a commitment. Seeing a mention of the BPAC in a recent Olympian article prompted me to seek more information on the City website, and fortuitously the timing was right for the new year.