

# SAMMAMISH

ISSUE 176

CITY NEWSLETTER

FEB. 2017

## Absent any hiccups, Central Washington will open its doors here in September

When the City Council voted unanimously in March of 2015 to purchase the old Mars Hill Church, the intent was to provide a generous space for an institution of higher education.

Last month, City Manager Lyman Howard presented the City Council with a memorandum of understanding (MOU) signed by James Gaudino, the president of Central Washington University (CWU).

Although the details of a long-term lease agreement are still being finalized, the MOU calls for the following:

- An initial lease of three years, with options for multiple 5-year extensions.
- CWU will begin teaching college courses in Sammamish no later than September of this year.
- CWU will pay for all tenant improvements and lease the building “as-is.”
- CWU will have a right to purchase the building at a price that would recover all city investments in the building.
- For the first three years of the lease, the annual base rent will be \$60,000.

*See CWU, pg. 3*



*A family walks through land purchased by the city in 2001. The 20-acre parcel has since become part of the Sammamish Commons.*

## Virtual Town Hall gathers public input for “Land Acquisition” plan

The city’s new online, public input tool – Virtual Town Hall – is already taking in comments, but there’s still plenty of time for you to offer your perspective on a proposed “Land Acquisition Strategy” for the city.

To take part, just go to the city website ([www.sammamish.us](http://www.sammamish.us)) and click on the Virtual Town Hall photo.

The new policy, scheduled for City Council adoption this summer, will look at preserving natural resources, wildlife corridors and trees, and developing new parks and trails.

In part, the initiative was prompted by growing concerns in the community about rapid residential growth.

*See LAND, pg. 4*

**MAYOR’S MESSAGE**  
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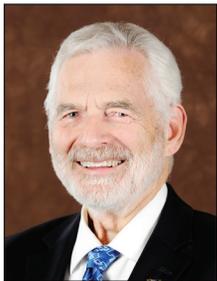
**TOWN CENTER**  
Story on page 4

**THE TRAIL**  
Story on page 5

## Turning City Council retreats into advances!

At our annual retreat last month, the City Council focused on better governance, or, to put it less formally: "How can we be more efficient and effective going forward?"

To explore that topic, Councilmembers and staff, with the help of a facilitator, drilled down into our procedures and outcomes in 2016, and came away with some plans for change in 2017.



*Don Gerend  
Mayor*

Last year we expanded our Council committee structure and reduced meetings of the entire Council to three per month.

The large number of committee meetings, however, required more staff support time and didn't significantly reduce the length of the full Council meetings.

Good work was done in these committee meetings, but it was felt that the benefits perhaps didn't justify the staff and Councilmember time expended.

In 2017 there will be fewer committees, and those that remain will meet less frequently, most quarterly. Committee reports will go to the full Council, accompanied by departmental reports on the relevant topics.

In another change, many topics will be reviewed at the Council level first, and only then be considered for committee and/or commission review.

We also addressed the problem of overly long Council meetings in 2016, many of which went past midnight, even with a 6:30 p.m. start. We all agreed these late meetings weren't conducive to good decision making.

To help shorten our sessions, we agreed that Councilmembers should do a better job of sticking to broad policy decisions and leaving the administrative details to the staff.

But this isn't always easy for Councilmembers, especially when a

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**Our conclusion:  
We need to provide more  
– and different –  
opportunities for our  
residents to  
speak their minds.**

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resident calls us and asks for help. Although we're not supposed to handle the details, it's tough not to get involved when residents point out that you're their elected representative.

One quick plug while I'm on the subject. The easiest way to get action if you see a fallen tree, a pothole, or something else that needs attention is to file a Citizen's Action Request (CAR) on the city website. Just go to [www.sammamish.us](http://www.sammamish.us), click on the "How Do I" tab, and select "Citizen Action Request."

Looking back on 2016, we also concluded that public comment was partially responsible for our long

meetings. Although we value and need public comment to make good decisions, there were times when the three-minute comments from the podium, in the aggregate, extended for more than two hours.

Our conclusion: We need to provide more – and different – opportunities for our residents to speak their minds.

So, in addition to public comment, Council office hours, personal meetings with city officials, Virtual Town Hall, and other well established forums for discussion, we decided at the retreat to expand our use of resident roundtable meetings, much like the one we successfully executed on the topic of growth last year.

Good governance, of course, always depends on good financial practices, so that too was an important part of our retreat conversation. With the infrastructure expenditures that lie ahead, how are we going to maintain the rock-solid financial foundation Sammamish is famous for?

The answer to that question, at least in part, will come from you, our residents. Before we settle the issue at a financial retreat in July, we plan to have a robust public outreach effort on this very topic.

I certainly hope you'll look at the options with us, give us your best thoughts, and help transform our retreats into advances!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Don Gerend".

## Deputy Mayor and Mayor won't seek reelection

As they do at their first meeting of every year, the members of the City Council selected one of their own to serve a one-year term as deputy mayor.

In 2017, the honor goes to Bob Keller, a member of the Council since 2014. He replaces Ramiro Valderrama, who remains on the Council after completing his one-year term.



*Deputy Mayor Bob Keller*

Shortly after his selection on Jan. 3, however, Keller announced that he would not run for reelection to the Council at the end of 2017.

"After many years of service to Sammamish, Bob will be going out on a high note as deputy mayor," City Manager Lyman Howard said. "We look forward to working with him over the next 11 months or so."

Keller was a member of the city's Planning Advisory Board shortly after incorporation, and later joined the city's first Planning Commission, serving as chair during the last year of his tenure.

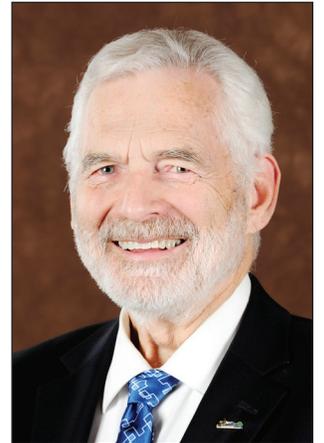
Coincidentally, Mayor Don Gerend also announced last month that he will not seek reelection at the end of this year. Gerend has been on the City Council continuously since incorporation in 1999. His fellow Councilmembers have selected him to serve as mayor on four separate occasions.

"Don Gerend is what every city needs," Howard said. "An energetic, creative, fair-minded leader who loves working with others."

"Cities don't really put up statues anymore, but if we did, a granite likeness of Don Gerend would be the first one to go up in our City Hall Plaza."

Under city rules, the mayor is selected for a two-year term and the deputy mayor for a one-year term.

Gerend said he announced his decision early so that it might encourage more people to step up and run for an open City Council position.



*Mayor Don Gerend*

### *CWU, cont. from pg. 1*

- After three years, the base rent will rise a minimum of \$60,000 annually.
- If, in the third year, however, CWU's yearly operating margin exceeds \$500,000, the base rent going forward will rise \$120,000 annually.

After being presented with the terms of the MOU on Jan. 10, the City Council, by a vote of 6-1, authorized the city manager to add his signature.

"We still have some work to do, but this is an important and very encouraging moment," Howard said. "Back in 2015, the Council took a bold step and embraced the opportunity to bring higher education to Sammamish. It's exciting to

see that vision come one step closer to reality."

The city bought the two-story, 30,807-square-foot building and 22-acre parcel for \$6.2 million. Since that purchase in 2015, the city has fielded a number of inquiries from interested buyers.

"Given the rise in property values of late, we were always pretty confident

we'd be able to sell the building for as much as we paid, even if the higher education option didn't work out," Howard said. "But right now, it looks like the original goal may be within reach."

With three high schools (Eastlake, Eastside Catholic and Skyline) within walking distance of the building (120 228th Ave. N.E.), CWU plans to emphasize "running start," a program of college courses for high school students. It will also provide continuing education for adults, professional certifications, and coursework that leads to baccalaureate or master's degrees.

The memorandum of understanding calls for a formal lease agreement to be executed no later than March 21, 2017.



*The old Mars Hill Church, 120 228th Ave. N.E.*

## Developers follow Town Center Plan on green design

One of many exciting features of Sammamish Town Center is the emphasis that will be placed on ensuring that new development both preserves and enhances the natural environment.

The Town Center plan states that development should “employ a variety of environmental enhancement and low-impact development techniques to improve ecological functions,” and developers like TRF, which is constructing the Metropolitan Market project, are taking the challenge to heart by featuring multiple pieces of green infrastructure on the site.

Following the city-adopted goal of including “exemplary environmental stewardship” into Town Center, TRF is incorporating a rainwater harvesting system for irrigation that uses a system

of vaults to treat and naturally filter rainwater before being used to sustain the site’s landscaping.

The site will also feature permeable paving surfaces, which reduce stormwater runoff and the associated pollution that enters the stormwater management system, and a green roof that will pre-filter rain before it enters into the below-grade storm water vault.

The roof system will hold what water the plantings and soils can support, and over time will gradually release captured water into the storm system. In addition to “greening” the roof area for views from above, the vegetation will help reduce Heat Island Effect and improve air quality.

The green features of the project extend to its use of LED lighting, which

will be featured on 100 percent of exterior and common area light fixtures, and an approximately 25-square-foot photovoltaic/solar array above the northeast stair and elevator tower that will meter the power generation of the array.

The power generated by the array will directly feed the building’s electrical system, serving the site’s lighting system and other operational systems.

These environmentally conscious features are a direct outcome of the desire on the part of citizens involved with the Town Center planning process to promote the protection and enhancement of the area’s ecological functions and values.

As more development gets underway, expect to see more “green” features like these!



*On the right side of this photo, the stormwater vault takes shape.*



*Today, the vault is hidden under the dark parking lot on the right.*

### *LAND, cont. from pg. 1*

The 2017-2022 Parks Capital Improvement Plan allocated \$13 million for land acquisition, with \$7 million of that available in 2017.

In addition to the input from Virtual Town Hall, the city will also conduct a statistically valid community survey on this topic, and hold its first public meeting on Wednesday, Feb. 15,

6:30 p.m., at City Hall, 801 228th Ave. S.E. A total of three public meetings are currently on the schedule.

“During a roundtable discussion with residents about growth, and a Virtual Town Hall on the same topic, we received suggestions that the city should purchase and protect land from development,” City Manager Lyman Howard said. “We took that feedback

very seriously and want to further explore community sentiment.”

Since incorporation, the park system alone has grown from 44 acres to over 500 acres, boosted by city purchases of land, transfers and generous private donations.

For more information, go to [www.sammamish.us](http://www.sammamish.us), hover over the Parks & Rec tab, and go to “Land Acquisition Strategy.”

## East Lake Sammamish Trail keeps lawyers busy

The city first approved a permit for King County's East Lake Sammamish Trail back in April of 2002. In the 15 years since, would it be fair to say that the checks made out to lawyers, if laid end to end, might well cover the full length of the 7-mile trail through Sammamish?

Probably not, but the thought does capture something important.

"This battle between the county and our trailside residents has certainly helped the legal industry," City Manager Lyman Howard said. "And, unfortunately, it's still going on."

The trail sits on an old Burlington Northern railbed, which the county purchased for \$2.9 million from a land conservancy group in 1998. As the county took up the rails and made plans to convert the lakeshore path into a recreational trail, many residents entered into legal battles with the county, both individually and in groups.

Among the many assertions made:

- The trail was too intrusive and unsafe
- An alternative path should have been considered
- The county was doing work on the trail without a permit
- The county didn't own the land under the railbed
- The county needed to compensate homeowners for use of the land

"Some residents wanted the city to block the trail on their behalf," Howard said, "but we were obligated to follow the law, so it put us in a tough spot, no doubt."

The county opened a gravel-surface version of the trail in March of 2006. Then, in April of 2014, they began widening and paving the "North Segment" of the trail, between 187th Ave. N.E. and Inglewood Hill Road. That section opened as a paved trail in June of 2015.

South Segment A, between S.E. 33rd Street and S.E. 43rd Street, is now closed and the county's paving work is proceeding.

South Segment B, the middle section between N.E. Inglewood Hill Road and S.E. 33rd Street, is still open while it goes through the permitting process with Sammamish.

Although most of the litigation over the years has not involved the city, the county recently took Sammamish to court over a permitting issue in South Segment B.

"I would hope that our issue will get resolved fairly quickly," Howard said, "but I'm not so sure about the other legal battles in South Segment B. That's where the trail passes very close to a lot of homes."

Facilitating a trail that most Sammamish residents like, while trying to protect the interests of homeowners who are directly affected, has been a tough balancing act for city officials over the years.

"We've done our best to mediate conflicts between residents and the county," Howard said, "but it hasn't been easy or satisfying."

"At the end of the day, it's King County's trail, they paid \$2.9 million for the railbed, and we have to follow our permitting rules and whatever legal direction we get from the court cases."



## Students complete environmental design internship with city

TESLA STEM HIGH SCHOOL SOPHOMORES AND JUNIORS DESIGN SIGNS FOR EVANS CREEK PRESERVE

After a six-week internship with the city, four students from Tesla STEM High School in Redmond presented the results of their environmental signage work to the Parks and Recreation Commission in January.

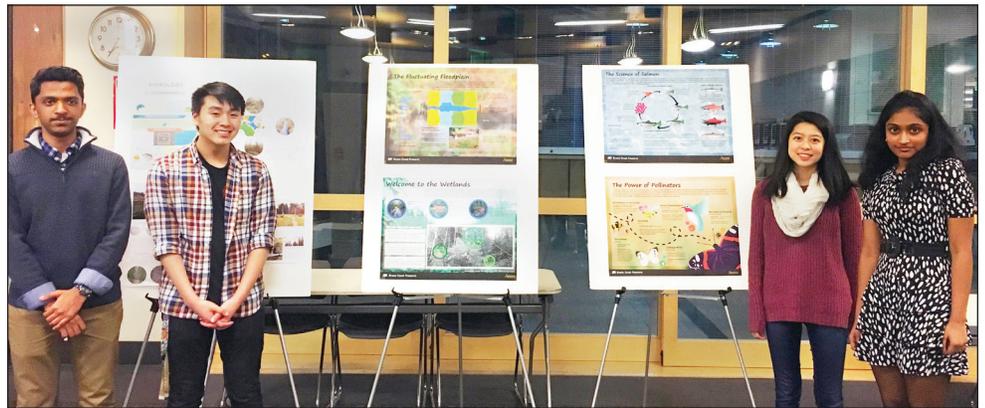
The students, sophomores Rishi Kavikondala and Ritika Iyer and juniors Jeffrey Cheng and Anne Lee, were asked to research and design interpretive signs for Evans Creek Preserve.

“They worked continuously with us from October to December,” Parks and Rec Director Angie Feser said. “It was great to see it all pay off with their presentation to

the Parks Commission.”

STEM stands for science, technology, engineering and math. Like other similar schools, Tesla STEM High

School emphasizes problem solving in its curriculum and asks students to learn their subject material by taking on real world challenges.



*Environmental design interns (from left) Rishi Kavikondala, Jeffrey Cheng, Anne Lee and Ritika Iyer present their signs to the Parks and Recreation Commission in January.*

## Consider this before you ditch the ditch!

Some of us are just luckier than others. Take those of us fortunate enough to have a city drainage ditch adjacent to our property. That's right: A ditch!

A well-maintained ditch plays a vital role in keeping pollutants, sediment, and debris out of our catch basins, streams, lakes, and storm water ponds. Ditches also provide more conveyance capacity than a pipe, and do a better job of infiltrating water into the soil.

Nevertheless, the Public Works Department receives several requests each year from property owners interested in substituting a pipe for their ditch.

The reasons for the requests vary widely: A need for extra parking, a new or expanded driveway, or a desire to improve the look of the place.

Some prefer to apply for a right-of-way permit and do the work themselves, while others ask the city staff to install the pipe.

City staffers review requests on a case-by case basis, applying criteria that include the following:

- Is the ditch a potential hazard to pedestrians or vehicle traffic?
- Are there significant soil erosion problems that require a ditch?
- Will the alteration of the existing condition of the ditch have a significant impact on the capacity or water quality of the surrounding storm water conveyance system, storm water pond facilities and nearby lakes and streams?

Word of warning: Most requests don't meet those criteria, so the ditch survives.

Should you have any questions or comments, please contact Lisa Werre at [lwerre@sammamish.us](mailto:lwerre@sammamish.us) or 425-295-0573.

## Farmers Market!

This coming season, stay up to date on what the Farmers Market is offering from week to week by signing up for the city's email alerts!

Go to

[www.sammamish.us](http://www.sammamish.us)

and click on the

“Join our mailing list” tab in the upper, right-hand corner of the home page.

Then, just follow the prompts and make sure you select Farmers Market on the menu of topics.

# CITY CALENDAR

## FEBRUARY

*Wednesday, Feb. 1*

Parks Commission Mtg, 6:30 p.m.

*Thursday, Feb. 2*

Planning Commission Mtg, 6:30 p.m.

*Saturday, Feb. 4*

Volunteer, Lower Commons,  
10 a.m. - 1 p.m.

*Tuesday, Feb. 7*

City Council Meeting, 6:30 p.m.

*Thursday, Feb. 9*

Artist's Opening Reception, 6-8 p.m.

*Monday, Feb. 13*

City Council Special Mtg, 6:30 p.m.

*Tuesday, Feb. 14*

City Council Study Session, 6:30 p.m.

*Wednesday, Feb. 15*

Land Acquisition Public Meeting #1  
6:30-8:30 p.m.

*Monday, Feb. 20*

Presidents Day (City offices closed)

*Tuesday, Feb. 21*

City Council Meeting, 6:30 p.m.

*Thursday, Feb. 23*

Planning Commission Mtg, 6:30 p.m.

*Saturday, Feb. 25*

Build-It Sammamish Lego Event  
11 a.m. - 3 p.m.

*Monday, Feb. 27*

Arts Commission Mtg, 6:30 p.m.

## MARCH

*Wednesday, March 1*

Parks Commission Meeting, 6:30 p.m.

*Thursday, March 2*

Planning Commission Mtg, 6:30 p.m.

*Monday, March 6*

City Council Study Session, 4:30 p.m.

*Tuesday, March 7*

City Council Meeting, 6:30 p.m.

*Tuesday, March 14*

City Council Study Session, 6:30 p.m.

*Wednesday, March 15*

Sammamish Youth Board, 6 p.m.

*Thursday, March 16,*

Planning Commission Mtg, 6:30 p.m.

*Saturday, March 18*

Make it a Glass Day, 1-3 p.m.

*Tuesday, March 21*

City Council Meeting, 6:30 p.m.

*Monday, March 27*

Arts Commission Meeting, 6:30 p.m.

### PLEASE NOTE:

All meetings and events at City Hall, unless otherwise noted. Times, dates and locations are subject to change. Please consult the city website for the most current information.

## Come to the "Build-It Sammamish" Lego Event

Sponsored by:  
The Sammamish Arts Commission

It's at City Hall  
801 228th Ave. S.E.  
Saturday, Feb. 25  
11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

No registration required

### Sammamish Citizen Corps General Meeting

Wednesday, March 1  
7-8 p.m.

Fire Station 82

Presentation: Map Your Neighborhood

### Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) Training

Learn about disaster preparedness,  
medical treatment, and light search and rescue.

For more information, go to:

<http://sammamishcitizencorps.com>

and click on CERT in the "contents" menu

ECRWSS  
POSTAL CUSTOMER

**SAMMAMISH CITY COUNCIL**



*Don Gerend  
Mayor*



*Bob Keller  
Deputy Mayor*



*Tom Hornish  
Councilmember*



*Kathy Huckabay  
Councilmember*



*Christie Malchow  
Councilmember*



*Tom Odell  
Councilmember*



*Ramiro Valderrama  
Councilmember*

**You can help Harvest Issaquah!**

Start a garden in your backyard  
and give a portion of your harvest  
to the Issaquah Food Bank.

For more information:  
Megan Edwin, [megan@issaquahfoodbank.org](mailto:megan@issaquahfoodbank.org)

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**Sammamish Human Services Needs Assessment**

The city is identifying the best way to provide human services for those in need. We are currently selecting a consultant to help us with public outreach and planning. Please do your part by participating in open houses, focus groups, social media and by stepping up to information booths at city-sponsored events. For more information on how to participate in this very important initiative, contact Allison Gubata, the city's community services coordinator, at [agubata@sammamish.us](mailto:agubata@sammamish.us).

**CITY OF SAMMAMISH OFFICES**

801 228th Ave. SE, Sammamish, WA 98075  
Phone: 425-295-0500 • Fax: 425-295-0600

[www.sammamish.us](http://www.sammamish.us)

**Don Gerend, Mayor**  
[dgerend@sammamish.us](mailto:dgerend@sammamish.us)  
**Bob Keller, Deputy Mayor**  
[bkeller@sammamish.us](mailto:bkeller@sammamish.us)  
**Tom Hornish, Councilmember**  
[thornish@sammamish.us](mailto:thornish@sammamish.us)  
**Kathy Huckabay, Councilmember**  
[khuckabay@sammamish.us](mailto:khuckabay@sammamish.us)  
**Christie Malchow, Councilmember**  
[cmalchow@sammamish.us](mailto:cmalchow@sammamish.us)  
**Tom Odell, Councilmember**  
[todell@sammamish.us](mailto:todell@sammamish.us)  
**Ramiro Valderrama, Councilmember**  
[rvalderrama@sammamish.us](mailto:rvalderrama@sammamish.us)

Lyman Howard	City Manager
Jessi Bon	Deputy City Manager
Aaron Antin	Finance Director
Angela Feser	Parks & Rec Director
Beth Goldberg	Admin Services Director
Steve Leniszewski	Public Works Director
Jeff Thomas	Community Dev Director
Melonie Anderson	City Clerk
Michelle Bennett	Police Chief
Jeff Clark	Fire Chief

**Newsletter suggestions or concerns?**  
Contact Communications Mgr **Tim Larson**  
425-295-0555, [tlarson@sammamish.us](mailto:tlarson@sammamish.us)