

**APPLICATION FOR APPOINTMENT TO MERCER ISLAND CITY COUNCIL POSITION #1**

**Applicant Information**

*(Please type or print)*

Applicant Name Tana Senn  
 Residence Address 8426 SE 47<sup>th</sup> Street, Mercer Island, WA 98040  
 Home Phone 206 297-2289 Work Phone 206 369-1253  
 E-Mail fanasenn@gmail.com

**Cover Letter & Resume**

Please attach a one page cover letter and a resume of no more than two pages to this application.

**Supplemental Questions**

Please respond to the following questions regarding your interest in the position of Councilmember for the City of Mercer Island on separate pages using no more than 3 pages total:

1. Why are you interested in serving as a Mercer Island City Councilmember?
2. What strength would you bring to the Council?
3. What are the three highest priorities and/or issues you believe the City needs to address? How would you propose to address these issues?
4. Explain your current and past community involvement and/or service on city, nonprofit, or public boards, committees, task forces, or commissions and how this has contributed to the Mercer Island community. Address its relevance to the position of Mercer Island City Councilmember.
5. What do you wish to accomplish during this appointed term as a Mercer Island City Councilmember?
6. What is your vision for our City and community?
7. Is there anything else that you may wish to add that would help us get to know you a little better?

Please return this form, your cover letter, resume and answers to the supplemental questions to the City Clerk at Mercer Island City Hall (9611 SE 36<sup>th</sup> Street) **no later than 5:00 pm on Thursday, December 30, 2010**. Applications received after 5:00 pm will not be accepted.

The application and any correspondence should be addressed to:

**Ali Spietz, City Clerk  
 Councilmember Recruitment  
 9611 SE 36<sup>th</sup> Street  
 Mercer Island, WA 98040**

December 30, 2010

Ali Spietz, City Clerk  
Councilmember Recruitment  
9611 SE 36<sup>th</sup> Street  
Mercer Island, WA 98040

Dear City Clerk Spietz, Mayor Pearman and distinguished Councilmembers,

It is with great enthusiasm that I submit my application to fill the vacancy on the Mercer Island City Council left by Steve Litzow.

I am an ideal candidate for this position. I have a Master in Public Policy and Administration and have dedicated my career to nonprofit and policy work. Volunteerism and public service are traditions that I have learned from my parents and work to pass on to my children.

With my experience and background, I believe I bring a valuable perspective to the City Council as it decides Mercer Island's path. My family and I love Mercer Island and it is our home. I would be honored to serve on the City Council and play a significant part in deciding our community's future.

I look forward to speaking with you more about my candidacy.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tana Senn". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

**Tana Senn**  
8426 SE 47<sup>th</sup> Street  
Mercer Island. WA 98040  
[tanasenn@gmail.com](mailto:tanasenn@gmail.com)  
(206) 369-1253

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EXPERIENCE

**Jewish Federation of Greater Seattle**

**Seattle, WA**

*Marketing and Communications Director*

*July 2008—August 2010*

Managed all marketing, external communications and fundraising events for this Seattle nonprofit that raises over \$6 million annually for distribution to local and international nonprofits. Served on the six-member management team. Supervised four staff members. Acted as an ex-officio board member to the *JTNews*, Washington State's Jewish newspaper.

Key accomplishments include:

- Overhauled the organization's communications, including implementing a new brand, streamlining external messaging, creating a marketing and editorial calendar, and initiating processes for all departmental activities.
- Created a new annual ad campaign to increase organizational awareness in an attempt to raise additional funds.
- Managed media relations for high-profile events including two murder trials and pro-Israel rallies.
- Spearheaded the development of the organization's website to foster a better understanding of the breadth of the organization's offerings, promote news and events, and inspire greater charitable giving.

**Pyramid Communications**

**Seattle, WA**

*Senior Project Manager*

*October 2000—June 2008*

Worked as a senior member of a 50-person public affairs and strategic communications firm specializing in nonprofit, foundation and government clients. Consulted with The Seattle Foundation, the Jewish Federation of Greater Seattle, Social Venture Partners, Sealaska Corporation, City of Redmond and Plymouth Healing Communities.

Key accomplishments include:

- Developed and implemented a multi-year strategic communications plan for The Seattle Foundation; developed numerous marketing materials and annual reports; served on six-member team planning, writing, designing and disseminating the Foundation's inaugural 96-page report, *A Healthy Community: What you need to know to give effectively*; wrote speeches for senior staff and board members; developed two new websites; managed the Foundation's advertising campaigns; and, monitored their brand across all messaging, materials and e-communications.
- Provided crisis communications and event and marketing assistance to the Jewish Federation of Greater Seattle; developed a message platform and brand identity; and, created a corporate sponsorship outreach strategy.
- Managed the rebranding of Social Venture Partners Seattle and development of a new logo, outreach brochure and website. Advised on orientation and communication with new donors.
- Developed a nationwide government relations plan for Sealaska.

**Hadassah**

**New York, NY**

*National Director—American Affairs/Domestic Policy*

*July 1996—August 2000*

Served as the chief government relations officer on domestic policy issues for 300,000-member, \$94 million national nonprofit organization. Responsibilities included: policy advising, legislative strategy development, federal government lobbying, grassroots organizing, coalition building and representation, member education and advocacy training, and event planning. Prepared strategic communications including formal policy addresses, Congressional testimony, advocacy advertisements and press releases.

Key accomplishments include:

- Managed Hadassah's legislative leadership role in Congress on prohibiting genetic discrimination in insurance and employment.
- Launched two national programming initiatives, one focusing on First Amendment religious rights and the second on genetic testing, discrimination and gene therapy.
- Lead and organized the government relations, public policy education and related press activities for two national conventions attended by over 4,000 members.
- Served as the editor of *The American Scene*, a member magazine focusing on domestic policy issues.

**U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development**

**Washington, DC**

*Policy Analyst Graduate Intern—Empowerment Zone Task Force*

*June—August 1995*

Developed benchmark protocols to evaluate Enterprise Zone initiatives. Helped organize President Bill Clinton's White House Conference on Empowerment Zones. Evaluated grant applications.

**Community Development Agency**

**St. Louis, MO**

*Consultant*

*June—August 1994*

Organized and facilitated citywide community meetings related to business, labor and community development to inform the Empowerment Zone grant application for St. Louis. Served as a contributing author of the application.

**Coro**

**St. Louis, MO**

*National Fellow*

*September 1993—June 1994*

One of 12 Fellows for this national public affairs leadership program. Gained experiential leadership training through field assignments, interviews, and individual and group projects at nonprofit organizations, government entities, unions, businesses and political campaigns.

EDUCATION

**Columbia University, School of International and Public Affairs**

**New York, NY**

*Master of Public Policy and Administration*

*September 1994—June 1996*

Graduate teaching fellowship—microeconomics

**Washington University**

**St. Louis, MO**

*Bachelor degree in Education. Minors in Political Science, Psychology*

*September 1989—May 1993*

CIVIC ACTIVITIES & AWARDS

**Island Park Elementary School, Art Docent, PTA Legislative Committee Member, 2010**

**Mercer Island Graduation Book Drive, Co-Founder, 2010**

**Various Political Campaigns, Volunteer, 1988-present**

**Jewish Federation of Greater Seattle, Member, Board of Directors, 2003-2008; Recipient, Spitzer Young Leader Award, 2006; Vice-chair and Chair, Government Affairs Committee, 2001-2003**

**National Breast Cancer Coalition, Member, Board of Directors, 1999-2000**

**New York Coro Alumni Association, President, 1998-2000**

## **Application for Appointment to Mercer Island City Council Position #1**

*From Tana Senn*

### **1. Why are you interested in serving as a Mercer Island City Councilmember?**

Public service and policy have always been a part of my life, as reflected in my education, career path and volunteerism. This City Council opportunity comes at a perfect time when I have chosen to focus on my family and my community. I strongly believe in showing my children the importance of getting involved and making a difference for the community in which we live. I believe my perspective, as a woman with young children, is an important one to have on our City Council.

### **2. What strength would you bring to the Council?**

My Master in Public Policy and Administration has been a strong foundation for my years of policy, communications, service and advocacy. I have worked in many team environments, which require a strong ability to listen and gather facts and then, in concert with my strong personal convictions, make decisions. The following are examples of where I have put these skills to action:

- As a facilitator, I lead broad-based community planning sessions for the city of St. Louis, MO during development of their application to be a federal Empowerment Zone. I worked with business leaders, unions and community organizers to generate public-private partnership projects and agree upon clear, tangible goals for the city.
- As a consultant for The Seattle Foundation, I worked closely with their leadership team to develop the concept and generate *A Healthy Community*, a 96-page report to help donors zero in on philanthropic opportunities that would leverage their dollars to the greatest extent.
- As a community leader and volunteer, I served for many years on the board of the largest, local Jewish organization, grappling with financial, political and other governance-related issues.

### **3. What are the three highest priorities and/or issues you believe the City needs to address? How would you propose to address these issues?**

- **Budget:** The City Council has made some difficult decisions with the 2011-2012 budget. We need to monitor the implications of the cuts, being mindful to maintain our community's core values. At the same time, we need to consider the slowly improving economic climate and voters' willingness to support bonds or levies for schools, a new pool and/or a new south end fire station that may be needed over the next few years. Additionally, as the population of the Island grows in north end apartments, we may need to explore ways to cover the associated costs of services since property-related taxes are not the main revenue generated from this population.
- **Education:** Our growing population of children and reduced public funding are challenges our schools are facing and will continue to face in the years to come. As class sizes increase and teacher pay decreases, we need to maintain our (rightly earned) reputation for stellar public schools, in part to ensure our property values and resulting tax base remain strong. Additionally, as our schools exceed capacity and age further, the City will serve as an important partner as the school district implements its 21<sup>st</sup> Century plans.

- **Transportation:** From commuting times and parking to road sharing and safe routes to school, transportation is a major issue for our Island. As we plan for light rail, we must anticipate the parking needs and implications for Mercer Island, looking for ways we can maximize resident access and minimize traffic. As we continue to maintain our streets, let's examine where we can, at the same time, make them safer so kids have the option to safely walk to school. Undoubtedly, there will be traffic and safety implications for the entire corridor around the North Mercer Campus as that property is developed over the coming years. Anticipating and addressing these concerns early on will be an important City role.

**4. Explain your current and past community involvement and/or service on city, nonprofit, or public boards, committees, task forces, or commissions and how this has contributed, and is relevant, to the Mercer Island community.**

- **Mercer Island Issues:** From grassroots advocacy to writing articles for the Mercer Island Reporter, I have consistently shared my voice to better our community. I have lobbied in Olympia on education issues important to our schools and am involved with the PTA legislative committee. When many of our schools were tagged with hate speech graffiti this past fall, I was outraged. Together with a friend, we gathered more than 40 Island residents at Island Crest and 40<sup>th</sup> during Yom Kippur to show our support of the diversity of our Island and of the Jewish community. And, as a mother and resident living in the middle of the Island, I felt it was important to actively support safety improvements along Island Crest Way.
- **Jewish Federation of Greater Seattle:** For 10 years, I have been deeply involved with the Jewish Federation of Greater Seattle, a nonprofit that raises \$6 million annually. I served with many other MI residents on their Board of Directors and Government Affairs Committee and then as the professional Marketing and Communications Director for two years. As the Government Affairs Chair, I helped lead the Jewish community's efforts to support state funding for human services for the needy, abused, and elderly.

Additionally, and unfortunately, I have crisis management experience. Immediately after a deranged gunman killed one and injured five others at the Jewish Federation in 2006, I served on the team that led the organization through its first weeks of recovery. I continued to serve as the media liaison all the way through the second trial of the gunman four years later. This crisis led to the strengthening of security for Jewish institutions including the Stroum JCC and the NW Yeshiva High School on Mercer Island.

- **Graduation Book Drive:** Earlier this year, together with two other Mercer Island moms, we started the "Mercer Island Graduation Book Drive," benefiting young children in need. During the weeklong drive, we collected more than 4,000 early reader books from families at the local elementary and nursery schools and at Island Books. Garnering numerous partners in the effort was a successful model and the impact of these books for families in need shows the power of Mercer Island volunteerism and what we can accomplish together.

**5. What do you wish to accomplish during this appointed term as a Mercer Island City Councilmember?**

As a new City Council member, I look forward to:

- Establishing close working relationships with my fellow Council members to best address issues that come before our body.
- Monitoring difficult budget decisions to make any mid-stream adjustments, if needed.
- Starting initial planning for major community discussions and City action around light rail parking, the potential redevelopment of the North Mercer Campus, the pool, and the south end fire station.

**6. What is your vision for our City and community?**

I would like to see Mercer Island manage its growth such that we maintain our small community feel, while benefiting from being a part of this diverse region. We must acknowledge, embrace and properly address issues arising from a growing population even as we ensure that treasured community traditions--such as American flags along Island Crest Way for the 4<sup>th</sup> of July, Mostly Music in the Park, Pioneer Park, high-quality schools--continue. I envision a City that makes decisions that support the very quality-of-life reasons many residents moved or returned to the Island: a safe, welcoming place for new and multi-generational families, parks and open spaces, quality education and accessibility to jobs.

**7. Is there anything else that you may wish to add that would help us get to know you a little better?**

My family and I have lived on Mercer Island for nearly six years. My husband Kevin and I have two children at Island Park, who both attended Country Village Day School. They have played sports and attended camps at the MIBGC, JCC and through Parks and Recreation. We belong to the Mercer Island Beach Club and are quite involved in the Jewish community. My husband Kevin is an executive at a wireless Internet company.