



Wasatch Hollow Community Council

Interview Summary and Index

Interviewee: John Bennion

Interviewer: Melvin P. Thatcher

Date: August 5, 2016

Location: Salt Lake City

Summary	
<p>John Bennion served as Community Council Chair in 2011. In this interview he recalls how he became involved in the council and its leadership. He recalls challenge that he faced as chair with poor meeting attendance and community concerns with the city’s slow pace on developing Wasatch Hollow Open Space and public safety. He shares his thoughts on the value of the community council and participating and serving in it. He talks about gathering information from the community through meetings and concludes that the council is a good outlet for expressing community concerns and connecting with city policymakers.</p>	

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Time	Brief description
00:00	Introduction.
00:53	Getting involved. Learned about the community council from neighbors, attended meetings, stood for election as chair.
02:48	Challenges. Sparse meeting attendance. Impact of special events, issues, and meeting agendas.
03:49	Challenges/community issues. Acceleration of development of Wasatch Hollow [Open Space].
06:17	Challenges/community issues (cont.). Mayor’s Office and city departments [open space] design reports. Council recommendations.
07:27	Community issues. Safety. Police and fire department reports.
09:28	Thoughts on community council concept. City reports and exposure to candidates for school board and city offices were valuable. Laments poor attendance.
11:33	Thoughts on serving. Conscientious officers. Organized periodic socials that promoted sense of community despite low participation.
14:00	Thoughts on serving (cont.). Grass roots democratic decision-making and community involvement in neighborhood. Opportunity to become informed.



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15:40	Thoughts on serving (cont.). Personal benefit: mayor's meetings for council chairs provided an opportunity to broaden exposure to city government and citywide issues.
17:40	City's response. Good two-way conversation. Gave council chairs large picture perspective.
19:38	Gathering community input. Paucity of regular attenders complicated gathering input. No big issues other than slow progress on Wasatch Hollow.
21:00	Gathering community input (cont.). Issues drive attendance. Irritation brings people out. Gives example of Foothill Boulevard traffic.
23:17	Conclusion. Community council is a good outlet for community frustrations. Compares participation to Salt Lake City School board meetings. Mechanism for bringing concerns to policy makers,
25:00	End time