Introduction
-Tim Matthes, Mayor

We had another great turn out for this second meeting, and I saw many new faces in the crowd. The topics for discussion were ferries, downtown Port Orchard, public safety, and the 2013 budget. And of course we had plenty of time to talk about new topics as well. My favorite comment came at the very end of the meeting when a lady shared that she is happy to live in the City of Port Orchard. She feels she can get most of what she wants from downtown, and she praised the services that she received from the Police Department on the few occasions she needed them. This report summarizes the meeting, and answers questions I was unable to answer during the meeting. The next Town Hall meeting will be November 15, 2012, at 6:00 p.m. If you want to talk to me, please call or email me: 360-440-6483 or tmatthes@cityofportorchard.us

2013 Budget
I gave a general overview of the 2013 budget highlights, and shared a graph that showed the 2012 budget and what percentages are allocated to each service. Both of these handouts are available on the City’s website under Mayor’s Report.

Ferries
Ferries are necessary for our community, and there was much discussion regarding the proposed cuts in service to the Bremerton-Seattle Washington State Ferry route and the need to reinstate Kitsap Transit Foot Ferry service. I encouraged everyone to contact our legislators to voice their concerns regarding the proposed cuts. It was proposed that the City Council should draft two resolutions: one to Washington State Legislators stating that we do not want our service cut, and another to Kitsap Transit explaining how longer hours in service would encourage downtown businesses to stay open longer. Another person suggested creating a taxing district for the foot ferry if the community really wanted increased service.

Public Communication
A lot more feedback was given about improving public communication. Council committee meetings were discussed again by many. There is a feeling that the public is not welcome when the meetings are set during the day when people are at work. Others do not feel comfortable attending a public meeting in a private establishment, because the business owner ultimately gets to decide who is allowed in their place of business. A comment was made that the public doesn’t feel their
opinions matter, because it seems like the Councilmembers already have a decision in mind before the meeting starts.

The City has to do a better job getting the word out about public meetings. Most people do not go looking for this kind of information, but if it is put in front of them, they will respond to it.

Bremerton Kitsap Access Television (BKAT) was brought up by one citizen who thought a portion of the cable utility tax was dedicated to fund broadcasting Council Meetings on BKAT. I have researched the contract, and there was no provision in the contract that stated any amount of the revenues be set aside for that purpose. Councilmember Chang asked Municipal Research and Services Center to research if there were any restrictions on revenue from cable television. He learned under the Cable Act, 47 U.S.C. § 542(h)(2)(i), it stated no federal agency may regulate the amount of the franchise fee paid by the operator, or regulate the use of funds derived from such fees.

**Public Safety**

Roads were discussed again, this time focusing on the intersection of Rockwell & Bay Street. Due to the limited sight distance and oncoming speeding traffic, it was suggested to put some bumps (little silver caps) on the road to slow down the speeding cars on Bay Street.

Concern was expressed over the design of the future Tremont roundabout. It was felt that a better crosswalk design was needed for the students and seniors who need to cross that road. There is a fear that someone will end up getting hurt.

A new development near McCormick Woods located in the City of Bremerton was discussed and how the City of Bremerton would not be able to respond to emergency calls in a timely manner. Port Orchard would probably be the one responding, thus costing the City more money.

The City of Port Orchard Police activity report and response time reports were also reviewed, and can be seen on the City’s website under Mayor’s Report.

**Repossessed Properties & Absentee Landlords**

A concern was raised about the current situation neighborhoods find themselves in with foreclosed properties being auctioned. Speculators are taking advantage of the process and setting up rentals as slumlords. They are coming in from out of state to purchase the foreclosed homes, rent them, and not maintain them.

The City of Bremerton requires that property owners who rent their homes apply for a business license. This could help identify who the owner is when issues and concerns about the property are raised.

The City of Seattle just passed an ordinance requiring landlords to register with the city and pass home inspections to ensure safety and health.

The City of Bellevue, Nebraska, gives infractions to the property owner when the police department is called out to a property for more than three calls. If infractions are not paid, a lien is put on the property. This helps motivate the landlords to make changes.

I am researching all of these different solutions used by the above jurisdictions to see if there is something that would help solve this problem for Port Orchard.