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FUNKHOUSER TO IMPLEMENT TOWN HALL MEETINGS

Mayoral Candidate Mark Funkhouser announced today that his administration would organize weekly “Town Hall” meetings and conduct live televised call-in programs in an effort to give citizens a voice at City Hall.

Funkhouser has long been amazed that an organization with a \$1 billion budget spends very little money and time actually listening to its customers. Much of what is spent was implemented by the city auditor’s office with its annual citizens’ satisfaction survey during Funkhouser’s 18-year tenure as city auditor.

The Auditor’s annual citizen satisfaction surveys have given city officials an important tool to measure how good a job the City is doing for its residents. Through the surveys, Funkhouser learned how important communication is in correcting problems and how often lack of communication makes things worse.

In fact, the current flavor at City Hall is to “ram” things through while limiting the voices of the citizens at City Hall. “This is just plain wrong,” states Funkhouser, “this city belongs to the people, and elected officials have the responsibility to keep citizens informed and to engage them in the decision-making process.”

Funkhouser’s plan for weekly town hall meetings will improve the city’s communication with its citizens and provide the transparency and openness that those citizens deserve from their government.

“The meetings will be held in different neighborhoods each week so that residents will have an opportunity to attend a meeting nearby,” he said. “Additionally, a live, call-in talk show will be broadcast each week from City Hall on Channel 2.”

These are some of the many ways that Funkhouser plans to bring citizen voices back to the ears of City Hall. “If a problem arises with one of our citizens, we will get the ball rolling to remedy the problem right then and there,” Funkhouser promises.

The idea comes from lessons he learned as auditor. “Some of our best Audits were inspired by people who came to me with their ideas, knowing that I would not only meet with them, but that I would listen to their views. These good people aren’t looking for political favors – they are looking for ways to help improve their government’s performance – and we need to work with them.” Funkhouser added: “One of the most-overlooked aspects of how I worked in the Auditor’s office was in the huge number of one-on-one conversations that I had every day with regular folks. It is those thousands

of individual conversations with regular folks, whose only interest was that they wanted a city that works, that fuels my passion to run for Mayor.”

END

Background: The most recent City Services Performance Report (a/k/a Citizen Satisfaction Survey) can be seen at <http://www.markfunkhouser.com/cityservices05.pdf> and is also available tabulated by geography and areas of the City at <http://www.markfunkhosuer.com/geosurveyresults05.pdf> .