

137

TESTIMONY PORTLAND CITY COUNCIL

2/15/12

Good Morning Mayor and Commissioners. My name is Steve Ferree; I am the owner of Mr. Rooter Plumbing of Portland. In addition, I am also the Vice-Chair for the Small Business Advisory Council for the city.

As a plumbing company in 5 counties doing plumbing and drain cleaning, I would like to first compliment you on the efficiency of the permitting system in the city. The online process is easy and efficient. It has made getting permits for most of our small jobs much easier.

I also want to encourage you to continue the storefront improvement program and micro lending programs for small businesses. This helps our small business community to grow.

In order to grow our local economy, we need a favorable business environment by reducing taxes and fees that can be burdensome to small business. I would also urge you to raise the owner's compensation deduction for the business license fee. This will help small business put money back into their business.

The main reason I am here is to talk about educating today's youth. You hear both nationally and locally about the "Global Economy" or "Traded Sector". In order to compete in both of these arenas, there is a strong push, and rightfully so, to make sure we raise the number of students attending higher education. While I agree with this emphasis, we cannot lose sight of those students that are not college bound, but can be very successful in the trades. We have a number of youth that will need training in careers such as Electricians, Plumbers, and Auto Mechanics, etc.

You also hear a lot of news at both the National and Local levels about improving the number of students graduating from higher education. The common statement is "To be successful in the Global Economy you need a college education". The concern I have with this statement is "What are we saying to those youths that are not college bound?" There ARE those students that know they are not college bound or choose not to attend. We still need people to build, repair and, maintain, infrastructures and citizens homes. Which are all accomplished by trade's people.

I advocate for metal, woodworking, and auto mechanics shops in our high schools. In addition we need to continue pre-apprenticeship programs in our public school system. With the high technology society we live in these days, we need to support young people that want to work with their hands. As a board member of "Area 1" (which is the Portland Greater Area) Plumbers Apprenticeship Board, I can tell you that it is getting harder to get good quality applicants to the program because most young people have not learned to work with their hands. This is why it is imperative to teach them how they can have a successful career in the trades. My journeyman plumber's average \$61,000 a year in wages with great medical, dental and 401K benefits. I can assure you other trades have strong wages and benefits.

Those students that are not “college bound” already know it. If we focus on people getting college degrees, in order to be successful, what message are we sending to those youths that know they are not going to college? We need to support their career goals just as we prepare those that are off to college.

Thank you for your time, today!

Parsons, Susan

Subject: FW: Speaking to Council

From: Frazier, Andrew (SII)

Sent: Tue 1/17/2012 11:02 AM

To: kmoore-love@ci.portland.or.us

Cc: Mark@staroilco.net; alando@cityofrosesdisposal.com; Steve Ferree; markhwrw@aol.com; Frazier, Andrew (SII)

Subject: Speaking to Council

Several business organizations are coordinating to speak to council through their business owner members. In February, the city's Small Business Advisory Council has 5 business owners who would like to share their business stories, successes and short falls and comment on the effort council has made in funding strategic programs.

Mark Fitz, StarOil would like to speak February 1st.

Alando Simpson, City of Roses Disposal & Recycling would like to speak February 8th.

✓ Steve Ferree, Mr. Rooter Plumbing would like to speak February 15th. — confirmation received sp

Mark Hope, Tire Disposal & Recycling would like to speak February 22nd.

Andrew Frazier, Frazier Hunnicutt Financial would like to speak February 29th.

Can you confirm that we are all on signed up and what time each should be there to speak. If there is a better way for us to sign up let me know. Several other organizations plan to speak through out the year and I can pass along the proper way of scheduling.

Portland Investor Conference (February 23rd, 2012)
www.PDXIC.com

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1/17/2012

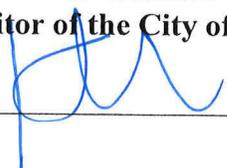
Request of Steve Ferree to address Council regarding small business in Portland
(Communication)

FEB 15 2012

PLACED ON FILE

Filed FEB 10 2012

LaVonne Griffin-Valade
Auditor of the City of Portland

By 

COMMISSIONERS VOTED AS FOLLOWS:		
	YEAS	NAYS
1. Fritz		
2. Fish		
3. Saltzman		
4. Leonard		
Adams		