**To whom it may concern:**

I am excited to put my name forward for an open board position at the Thurston County Dispute Resolution Center. Attending the 40-hour Professional Mediation Training in 2020 was a transformative experience; the golden questions have found their way into my life as a father, husband, friend, and leader. Volunteering as a tech/observer, I’ve seen the effect that DRC’s process and people have on individuals. After working to become an apprentice mediator, I’ve appreciate comments from colleagues who noticed a change in how I show up and I am excited about the possibilities for our community if more folks have those skills and can apply them in everyday situations.

I’m a recent transplant, moving to Olympia from Albuquerque in 2014. As a Navy brat with a sense of humor, I’ve demonstrated the ability to quickly learn about new environments, build coalitions, determine effective strategies, and lead change in order to enable others to excel at their work. Each of these opportunities required adaptation and calibration of my leadership and management approach in order to work with stakeholders and succeed.

In Albuquerque, I first served on and then chaired the board of the US Green Building Council-NM Chapter. This working board successfully navigated legislative issues around tax incentives and fundraising challenges during an economic downturn. My current board experience is connected to my role at the Washington State Department of Commerce, where I lead our State Energy Office. I represent the Western States on the National Association of State Energy Officials and Co-Founded and Co-Chair the NASEO Equity Committee. I’m also a youth soccer coach for my son’s SuperMod team.

This year, I’m part of the Leadership Tomorrow Seattle LT’22 cohort, focusing on anti-racist community leadership and hope to bring that learning and perspective to my work. My equity learning grew out of experiences playing soccer in Brazil and volunteering in post-Katrina Mississippi. Working at the University of New Mexico’s Resource Center for Raza Planning brought me to historically marginalized communities and shifted my focus beyond class to racial equity. There, I applied advocacy & community-based planning skills, working with different sectors to bring residents normally excluded into community development processes. While I continue to learn, I know that centering racial equity and dismantling anti-blackness makes for better outcomes for us all.

While I continue to learn and grow, please consider the governance, leadership skills and management experience I offer to the DRC. My experience includes both mistakes and successes in multiple efforts to align the culture and achieve results of teams in wildly different contexts.

I look forward to speaking with you about this opportunity.

Sincerely,

Michael Furze