

Anacortes City Council Minutes - March 15, 2021

Call to Order

Mayor Pro Tem Bruce McDougall called to order the Anacortes City Council meeting of March 15, 2021 at 6:00 p.m. Councilmembers Jeremy Carter, Anthony Young, Ryan Walters, Christine Cleland-McGrath, Carolyn Moulton, Bruce McDougall and Matt Miller all participated in the meeting in absentia via video conference.

Announcements and Committee Reports

COVID-19 Update: Mr. McDougall shared current case statistics for Anacortes and Skagit County. He referred the public to the city's website and the Skagit County Department of Health website for up to date information as it becomes available.

Skagit County Law and Justice Council: Mr. Miller reported from the LJC meeting held remotely the previous week. The topics discussed included prosecution backlog due to the pandemic and the impact of the *State of WA vs. Blake* case decision in Skagit County.

Finance Committee: Mr. McDougall reported from the committee meeting held the previous week. The topics discussed included Resolution 3025 which would be discussed later on the agenda, adding a public restroom at Washington Park, Lodging Tax awards, and a review of the Socrata software recently demonstrated to Council.

Personnel Committee: Ms. Cleland-McGrath reported from the committee meeting held the previous week. The topics discussed included staffing in the HR department, upcoming bargaining unit negotiations, personnel policy updates, and the planned movement to COVID recovery Phase 3 statewide on March 22.

Public Works Committee: Mr. Walters reported from the committee meeting held earlier in the evening. The topics discussed included the recently issued water system risk and resiliency report, the wastewater treatment plant outfall project, the planned acquisition of the South Fidalgo Water System from Skagit PUD, and the future presentation of wastewater treatment plant solids handling options to City Council.

Appointment to Anacortes Housing Authority Board: Mr. McDougall announced that Mayor Gere had appointed Geoffrey Holmes to the Anacortes Housing Authority Board. Mr. McDougall said Mr. Holmes would complete the term of a recently vacated position on the Board which would expire December 31, 2024.

Public Comment

No one present wished to address the Council on any topic not already on the agenda.

Consent Agenda

Mr. Miller moved, seconded by Mr. Young, to approve the following Consent Agenda items. The motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

- a. Minutes of March 8, 2021
- b. Approval of claims in the amount of \$538,515.90
The following vouchers/checks were approved for payment:
EFT numbers: 99564 through 99618, total \$219,530.21
Check numbers: 99619 through 99628, total \$184,120.77
Wire transfer numbers: 281241 through 281566, total \$134,834.23

- c. Contract Modification: Municipal Broadband Network – Library to MSTs Aerial Areas #19-175-FBR-003
- d. Contract Modification: Skagit River Raw Water Pipeline and Clearwell Project - Construction Management #20-048-WTR-002

OTHER BUSINESS

Anacortes Family Center Social Worker Contract #21-061-IDS-001

Police Captain Dave Floyd presented a contract between the City of Anacortes and the Anacortes Family Center (AFC) to provide assistance to those contacted by City staff who are in need of homeless services, chemical dependency counseling or ongoing case support. Captain Floyd explained the rationale behind implementing the proposed agreement rather than embedding a social worker directly in the Police Department. Councilmembers discussed a number of possible revisions, including the term of the agreement, the reporting period, and the required response time. Dustin Johnson, AFC Executive Director, and Captain Floyd responded on those topics.

Mr. McDougall invited members of the audience to comment on this agenda item.

Katie Eastman thanked Anacortes for implementing the proposed contract, calling it an effective way to provide support to clients in crisis. Ms. Eastman suggested specific data collection points and urged direct, timely communication between service providers and the police.

Will McCracken thanked Anacortes for implementing the proposed contract. Mr. McCracken urged a willingness to discover new things about the support that is needed in the community and thinking of new ways to support people in crisis. He supported the agreement as a one-year contract.

Rochelle Kealoha shared anecdotal evidence of the immense need in the community and said that AFC was not able to meet that need. Ms. Kealoha objected that the meeting packet was released on Thursday but that there had been no opportunity to comment on the proposed contract until the present meeting. She said the proposed solution had not sufficiently included stakeholders. She listed additional features she would like to see in the agreement and called for pursuing alternatives.

Kate Clark urged more communication with the community about when City Council committee meetings are occurring so the community can participate. Ms. Clark called the proposed agreement a great first step towards an embedded social worker in the Anacortes Police Department. She listed a number of specific points about data collection, reporting and analysis under the agreement to enable evaluation of the success of the pilot program.

Teresa Delarosa related an account of a situation in which the AFC social worker provided invaluable assistance in meeting the mental health needs of a vulnerable family member when the only other option had been to call the Police Department.

Eric Johnson thanked Anacortes for proposing the agreement, which culminated a process begun by the Housing Affordability and Community Services Committee back in 2016. At that point stakeholders had identified the need for a co-located social service agency to work with the Anacortes Police Department. Mr. Johnson supported implementing the agreement as soon as possible.

Evan Saxton expressed support for the proposed agreement but said the research about embedded social workers needed to continue as promised by City Council in December. Mr. Saxton said other communities had found vouchers and referrals to be inferior to a true embedded social worker.

Dustin Johnson reiterated that the proposed program was a starting point. He emphasized that the AFC team would be intentional about collecting and analyzing data to reach the best results and would share all information with the public. Mr. Johnson mentioned that he had already worked to bring some of the evening's speakers into conversation about developing the best policies and decisions for vulnerable populations. He invited public thoughts, concerns and feedback.

Mr. Walters requested that staff revise the proposed agreement to set the term at 12 months, require quarterly reporting, and specify data collection standards per input from Ms. Eastman and Ms. Clark, then bring it back to Council for action on the Consent Agenda. Councilmembers agreed and urged adoption as soon as possible.

2021 Stormwater Management Program Plan

Public Works Director Fred Buckenmeyer introduced NPDES Permit Coordinator Diane Hennebert. Ms. Hennebert presented the draft 2021 Stormwater Management Program Plan, which is a requirement of the City's NPDES permit. Ms. Hennebert's slide presentation had been included in the packet materials for the meeting.

Access Anacortes Fiber Internet Update

Administrative Services Director Emily Schuh provided the regular monthly update on Access Anacortes Fiber Internet. Ms. Schuh's slides were added to the packet materials for the meeting. She reported on customers in service, pending orders and revenue received, celebrating 624 customers in service at close of business earlier in the day. She noted the take rate by district, which was exceeding 34.4% overall. Ms. Schuh also reported on 2021 service areas and planned expansion, special projects in progress, and the pending EDA grant.

Resolution 3025: Extending the Duration of Resolution 2082 Providing Temporary Procedures to Respond to the COVID-19 Epidemic

City Clerk Steve Hoglund presented draft Resolution 3025 extending through June 30, 2021 the duration of Resolution 2082 providing temporary procedures to respond to the COVID-19 epidemic. Mr. Hoglund noted that Sections 2C and 2D from original Resolution 2082 were no longer applicable as the Anacortes Public Library prepared to reopen as allowed by state guidance.

Following councilmember discussion, Mr. Walters suggested modifying draft Resolution 3025 to add a Section 3 which would rescind Sections 2C and 2D from Resolution 2082 and specify instead that city facilities would follow published public health guidance. He asked that modified Resolution 3025 come back to City Council for action on the Consent Agenda at its March 22, 2021 meeting. Mr. Hoglund agreed.

Several councilmembers expressed support for continuing options for remote public participation in public meetings indefinitely.

Adjournment

There being no further business, at approximately 8:10 p.m. the Anacortes City Council meeting of March 15, 2021 was adjourned.