

Anacortes City Council Minutes - November 8, 2021

Call to Order

Mayor Laurie Gere called to order the Anacortes City Council meeting of November 8, 2021 at 6:00 p.m. Councilmembers Jeremy Carter, Ryan Walters, Anthony Young and Bruce McDougall participated in the meeting remotely via Zoom. Councilmembers Christine Cleland-McGrath, Carolyn Moulton and Matt Miller attended the meeting in City Council chambers.

Pledge of Allegiance

The assembly joined in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Announcements and Committee Reports

COVID-19 Update: Mayor Gere shared current case statistics and vaccination progress for Anacortes, Skagit County and Washington State.

Port/City Liaison Committee: Ms. Cleland-McGrath reported from the Committee meeting held the previous week. The topics discussed included 2022 capital improvement projects.

Housing Affordability and Community Services Committee: Ms. Moulton reported from the Committee meeting held the previous week. The topics discussed included the multifamily tax exemption program recently enacted by the state legislature and the committee's upcoming presentation to the public regarding social service gaps in the community.

Planning Committee: Mayor Gere announced that the committee meeting scheduled for earlier in the evening had been cancelled.

Public Comment

Mayor Gere invited the public to comment on any item not on the agenda. No one present wished to address the Council on any topic not already on the agenda.

Consent Agenda

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

- a. Minutes of November 1, 2021
- b. Approval of claims in the amount of \$927,126.51
The following vouchers/checks were approved for payment:
EFT numbers: 101643 through 101687, total \$881,798.30
Check numbers: 101688 through 101699, total \$37,640.32
Wire transfer numbers: 293271 through 293580, total \$6,957.88
- c. Contract Award: WWTP & WTP Servers Upgrade Purchase #22-006-ITS-001
- d. Street Fair Application: Anacortes Santa Run December 11, 2021
- e. Resolution 3060: Anacortes Community Forest Lands Plan Update

PUBLIC HEARINGS

Ordinance 3099: 2022-2027 Capital Facilities Plan

Finance Director Steve Hoglund introduced the advertised public hearing.

Mayor Gere opened the public hearing. No one present wished to address the Council.

Councilmembers asked Mr. Hoglund to bring back additional information on several topics in the CFP, including removal of the Safe Routes to School project, the fiber loan, and other fiber information. Mr. Miller noted that changes to the proposed budget may also require corresponding changes in the CFP prior to adoption.

Mayor Gere left the public hearing open to a future meeting.

Ordinance 4000: 2022 Budget

Mr. Hoglund introduced the advertised public hearing on the 2022 annual budget.

Mayor Gere opened the public hearing.

Mike Cortright referenced public comment by Jeff Graf at the October 18, 2021 meeting arguing against the proposed 1% property tax increase. Mr. Cortright said there appeared to be a \$12.2M budget shortfall for 2021. He asked what justified \$54K of additional property tax when that .05% could surely be covered by savings or reserves. Mr. Cortright suggested that if Council wanted to make Anacortes more affordable, it should find cost savings of \$54K and not take the 1% property tax increase.

Dennis Clark, 3805 M Avenue, said he had followed the street maintenance program for 7 years. He urged continued support for street maintenance.

John Wilkinson referenced his comments which had been submitted prior to the meeting and included in the packet materials regarding the outfall project and other major capital projects for which the revenue sources were unclear.

Jeff Graf, 2406 Washington Court, reiterated his comments from the October 18, 2021 meeting urging Council not to raise the property tax levy by 1% and to find \$54K in budget savings instead. Mr. Graf said he had not seen councilmembers questioning any of the expenditures proposed in the budget.

Councilmembers listed a number of topics that required more discussion.

Mayor Gere left the public hearing open to a future meeting.

OTHER BUSINESS

Anacortes Waterfront Alliance Update

Recreation Manager Dustin South introduced Matt Halliday of the Anacortes Waterfront Alliance to present an update on the Alliance's Learn to Sail summer programs. Mr. Halliday's slide presentation was added to the packet materials for the meeting. Mr. Halliday responded to councilmember questions.

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, revenue received, and cash flows. She reported 900 customers in service. She noted the take rate by district, which was exceeding a 42% take rate in current service areas. Ms. Schuh also reported on the status of construction in the west end. She announced that earlier in the day the city had been invited to apply for the Washington State Broadband Office infrastructure acceleration grant. She also reported on special projects.

Port Projects Update

City Attorney Darcy Swetnam presented an update on ongoing projects that involve the Port of Anacortes, including the Outfall Project, the 2nd Street Agreement, and GFC charges for the Port's Pier 2 stormwater runoff. Ms. Swetnam's slide presentation was added to the packet materials for the meeting. Ms. Swetnam and Port Executive Director Dan Worra responded to councilmember questions.

Adjournment

There being no further business, at approximately 7:50 p.m. the Anacortes City Council meeting of November 8, 2021 was adjourned.