

Anacortes City Council Minutes - November 14, 2022

Call to Order

Mayor Matt Miller called to order the Anacortes City Council meeting of November 14, 2022 at 6:00 p.m. Councilmembers Jeremy Carter, Ryan Walters, Anthony Young, Christine Cleland-McGrath, Carolyn Moulton, Bruce McDougall and Amanda Hubik were present.

Pledge of Allegiance

The assembly joined in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Announcements and Committee Reports

Mayor Miller thanked the Port of Anacortes for a great Veterans Day event and shared an update regarding the Tommy Thompson Trail Trestle repair project, announcing a fundraising kickoff on December 6 at 5pm in City Council Chambers with the Anacortes Parks Foundation leading the effort. He then announced a public safety roundtable discussion at 5:00pm before the City Council meeting on November 21st. He concluded by mentioning the City is hosting a meeting of the Washington State Transportation Commission meeting tomorrow and Wednesday, which requires pre-registration at wtc.wa.gov.

Economic Development Committee

Ms. Hubik reported from the Economic Development Committee meeting held November 8th. The topics discussed included the outline from the Economic Development Alliance of Skagit County focusing on how to talk about economic development, who to reach out to, which topics could be discussed, which stakeholders to add to certain conversations, and a timeline for the coming year.

Public Safety Committee

Ms. Cleland-McGrath reported from the Public Safety Committee meeting held on November 9th. The topics discussed included a discussion of parking, trespassing and sidewalk ordinances, questions about the jail and feedback from the police department on suggested changes to the proposed ordinances, and a potential levy lid lift discussion for Police and Fire department staffing. On November 10th the committee met with Police Chief, Dave Floyd, and discussed the four vacancies in the police department and the associated scheduling challenges, and what would go in to adding more positions. They met earlier today with Fire Chief, Bill Harris, and discussed what options there are to address ongoing staffing challenges in light of community growth and increasing population density.

Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission Re-Appointments

Mayor Miller asked for Council confirmation to re-appoint Brad Adams and JoAnn York-Gilmore to the Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission for a five-year term effective through December 2027.

Ms. Moulton moved, seconded by Mr. Young to confirm the re-appointment of Brad Adams and JoAnn York-Gilmore for a five-year term to the Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission. The motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

Arts Commission Re-Appointments

Mayor Miller asked the Council to confirm the re-appointment of Zachary Wight and Laura Hamilton to the Arts Commission for a three-year term effective through December 2025.

Ms Hubik moved, seconded by Mr. Carter to confirm the re-appointment of Zachary Wight and Laura Hamilton to the Arts Commission. The motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

Forest Advisory Board Appointment

Mayor Miller introduced Nathan Schwarck as the nominee to be appointed to the Forest Advisory Board for a

five-year term effective through December 2027.

Mr. Young moved, seconded by Ms. Hubik to confirm the appointment of Nathan Schwarck to the Forest Advisory Board for a five-year term effective through December 2027. The motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

Public Comment

Mayor Miller 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. McDougall moved, seconded by Ms. Hubik, to approve the following Consent Agenda items. The motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

a. Minutes of November 7, 2022

b. Approval of claims in the amount of \$682,306.71

The following vouchers/checks were approved for payment:

EFT numbers: 104738 through 104789, total \$ 431,408.59

Check numbers: 104790 through 104806, total \$ 235,884.54

Wire transfer numbers: 313002 through 313340, total \$ 15,013.58

c. Amendment #1 to Interlocal Agreement IL265 with Anacortes School District 103 for the School Resource Officer Program

d. Street Fair Event - Chamber Coastal Christmas Tree Lighting Event

Public Hearings

Capital Facilities Plan Ordinance 4033

Finance Director, Steve Hoglund, introduced the latest version of Ordinance 4033, Capital Facilities Plan (CFP) 2023-2028 and invited the Council to ask questions regarding the latest version.

Mayor Miller invited the public to comment as part of the continued public hearing which had begun at the regular City Council meeting on November 7, 2022. No one present or online wished to comment on the agenda item.

Councilmembers requested more time to review the ordinance and details prior to taking action. Mr. Walters asked if the proposed CFP would replace the six-year financing plan provisions of the Comprehensive Plan. Mr. Hoglund affirmed this was the case. Mr. Young expressed appreciation for the staff work that went in to producing the proposed CFP. Mayor Miller encouraged the Council to review the CFP prioritization scheme. Mr. Walters asked if priorities were included in the OpenGov stories. Mr. Hoglund responded that priorities were included in the initial budgeting process and are not included in the .pdf version.

Mayor Miller left the public hearing open for a future meeting.

2023 Budget Ordinance 4034

Finance Director, Steve Hoglund, pointed out proposed changes to the budget including 2 additional full-time employees for the Fire department and funding for running a Levy Lid Lift ballot proposition, referring to a document that was added to the packet materials for the meeting. He proposed bringing back the amended budget next week for Council consideration. Mayor Miller referred to discussions at the Council retreat in May regarding the use of Staffing For Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) grant funding for the additional Fire department employees, saying he was nearly certain that this funding would not be available in

2023, adding that the City could possibly add the requested full-time positions by undertaking a Levy Lid Lift. He proposed using the Ambulance Service Fund to cover the gap in SAFER grant monies to fund the needed positions. Fire Chief, Bill Harris, detailed a proposal for two additional full-time employees that would allow for three shifts of 9 employees each to meet staffing needs in light of increased instances of simultaneous calls.

Councilmembers, Mayor Miller and Chief Harris discussed a proposed Levy Lid Lift measure to fund additional full-time positions in the police and fire departments, including funding considerations, numbers of positions, and ballot measure timing. Mayor Miller concluded the discussion, saying the next step would be to bring a resolution before the Council and determine what information would be necessary to move the resolution forward.

Mr. McDougall and Ms. Hubik expressed support for moving ahead with funding the two positions. Mr. Walters reiterated his reservations about spending reserves on ongoing expenses and added that he would not want to come up short on funding for needed equipment such as police vehicles or training, concluding that he would favor adding the positions after the Levy Lid Lift measure passes. Ms. Hubik asked if staff could provide inclusive cost estimates for onboarding additional employees, including equipment and training to the Public Safety Committee on a quarterly basis, so that the discussions surrounding these issues could be more well informed in the future. Mayor Miller pointed out that the two additional full-time employees would have a significant impact on Fire Department operations. Chief Harris provided a detailed example of improved response capability and operational flexibility with two additional firefighters. Ms. Moulton asked that the Council consider the proposal and continue the discussion next week. Mayor Miller agreed and moved the discussion to include the proposed half-time parking enforcement officer. Ms. Moulton asked if there would be any overlap in enforcement with the Planning Department and requested an overview of how this position will help the Police Department. Police Chief, Dave Floyd, responded that this position would handle parking enforcement in the City overall, with a significant amount of time spent addressing the situation on T Avenue, which would add 20 hours per week of dedicated parking enforcement in order to address complaints in a more timely manner. Ms. Moulton wondered if parking enforcement was working on T Ave. Chief Floyd responded that it is only one area of focus in the City and that there are additional areas such as Washington Park and near the Guemes Island ferry terminal, and that those efforts would help discourage those individuals from long-term parking in any part of the city. Mayor Miller added that parking enforcement has reduced the number of vehicles parked on T Avenue. Chief Floyd remarked that the position must be funded out of law enforcement funding to give them access to the appropriate vehicle databases. Mr. Walters commented that there needs to be more code enforcement in general, including parking, land use, civil code violations and drug houses. Mayor Miller pointed out that uniformed officers are used in enforcement actions related to drug houses.

Mr. Walters asked to clarify if the proposed full-time employee would be part-time stormwater work and part-time stormwater code enforcement. Mayor Miller clarified that it is one person half-time stormwater and half-time code enforcement for budgeting purposes. Public Works Director, Henry Hash, detailed the requirements for the .5 FTE for stormwater and code enforcement with the Planning Community and Economic Development department that it is required to fulfill the requirements of the source control program, which is required under the City's stormwater permit, adding that staffing is currently not adequate to comply with permit requirements. Mr. Hash added that the employee would assist the Planning, Community and Economic Development department with site plan reviews and front counter service to the public in City Hall. Mr. Walters asked if this person is going to be stormwater focused and not able to do considerable code enforcement. Mr. Hash confirmed this to be the case.

Mayor Miller invited the public to comment as part of the continued public hearing which had begun at the regular City Council meeting on November 7, 2022. No one present or online wished to comment on the 2023 budget proposal.

Mr. Walters proposed the Levy Lid Lift, an expansion of the utility discount program, shifting the parking enforcement officer to the Planning department and a civil deputy that would add \$18,000 over the current contracted deputy prosecutor and invited discussion on those proposals. Mayor Miller responded that the long-term costs of a full-time attorney would exceed the contractor's price. City Attorney, Darcy Swetnam, addressed the proposal stating that the contractor earns \$80,000 this year with an additional \$15,000 to assist with police related issues, whereas the proposed full-time staff attorney would amount to between \$137,000 to \$171,000 including benefits. She cited concerns about having a new Police Chief and upcoming projects such as expanding Laserfiche to the Municipal Court as reasons she did not include this request in the Legal department budget request. Mr. Walters asked for information specifying the cost basis for the comparable wage calculations. Ms. Swetnam responded she would provide the information.

Mr. Walters suggested that the City fund a Community Action office here in Anacortes. Mr. Young expressed support for Community Action, saying it is an investment in supporting those in need in Skagit County, and that a physical presence on Fidalgo Island would be complimentary to the services already available. Mayor Miller asked Mr. Hoglund to remind the Council of how much is budgeted in support of Community Action. Mr. Hoglund responded that \$10,000 is budgeted for 2023 and that there are Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding opportunities as well. Mr. Walters clarified that it would require \$60,000 to establish a Community Action office in Anacortes and that CDBG funds are limited to ten percent for services, which are currently allocated to the Family Center. Ms. Moulton shared Mr. Walters' concerns about the CDBG grant funding and pointed out that she agreed that the costs associated with those losing their homes far outweigh the cost of funding an office here in Anacortes. Ms. Hubik expressed support for Community Action, as it will connect Anacortes with the statewide organization. Mayor Miller acknowledged the Council's desires.

Mr. Walters asked for details of how much is expended on a payment management program for 2022 and 2023 and projections of real estate excise tax (REET) expenses. Mr. Hoglund responded that he did not have the payment history for the payment management program. He then provided overall real estate excise tax expenditures from 2016-2022 and projections from 2023-2028 referring to a spreadsheet that was added to the packet materials for the meeting. Mr. Walters asked that the REET projections and the payment management software cost estimate be provided to the Council. Mayor Miller promised to get the requested information to the Council.

Mr. Hoglund asked for firm directions on what to prepare for the Council for the next meeting regarding the addition of 2 full-time firefighters. Ms. Cleland-McGrath asked that the Police Chief and Fire Chief present what funding from a potential Levy Lid Lift would look like for each department. Mayor Miller remarked that the additional hires that would come with an approved Levy Lid Lift measure does not factor into the 2023 budget and that he would like something concrete for the Council to vote on. Ms. Moulton asked for additional time to talk with fire and police union representatives about their staffing needs.

Mayor Miller left the public hearing open for a future meeting.

Other Business

Mt Erie Cell Tower: Memorandum of Agreement with the Anacortes Kiwanis Club

Parks and Recreation Director, Jonn Lunsford, introduced the proposed memorandum of agreement with the Anacortes Kiwanis Club referring to a presentation that was added to the packet materials for the meeting. Mr. Lunsford and Cynthia Richardson of the Kiwanis Club answered Councilmember questions. ANTHONY YOUNG moved, seconded by CAROLYN MOULTON, to approve the memorandum of agreement with the Anacortes Kiwanis Club. Vote: Ayes - JEREMY CARTER, ANTHONY YOUNG, RYAN WALTERS, CHRISTINE CLELAND-MCGRATH, CAROLYN MOULTON, BRUCE MCDUGALL, AMANDA HUBIK. Nays - None. Result: Passed

Adjournment

There being no further business, at approximately 8:25 p.m. the Anacortes City Council meeting of November 14, 2022 was adjourned.