

Anacortes City Council Minutes – November 23, 2020

Mayor Laurie Gere called to order the Anacortes City Council meeting of November 23, 2020 at 6:00 p.m. Councilmembers Anthony Young, Ryan Walters, Carolyn Moulton, Christine Cleland-McGrath, Bruce McDougall and Matt Miller all participated in the meeting in absentia via video conference.

Councilmember Jeremy Carter was absent.

Announcements and Committee Reports

COVID-19 Update: Mayor Gere shared current case statistics for Anacortes, Skagit County, Washington State, and the nation. The mayor compared Skagit County case counts to the metrics required to move to Phase 3 of the Safe Start Washington Plan.

Board and Committee Appointments and Confirmation: Mayor Gere recommended that Amanda Hubik be reappointed to the Housing Authority Board for a term of January 1, 2021 – December 31, 2025 and that Courtney Orrock be appointed as a member of the Library Board of Trustees for a term of January 1, 2021 – December 31, 2025.

Mr. Young moved, seconded by Ms. Moulton, to appoint Courtney Orrock to the Library Board of Trustees. The motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

Ms. Cleland-McGrath moved, seconded by Mr. Miller, to reappoint Amanda Hubik to the Housing Authority Board. The motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

The mayor announced that she had appointed Councilmember Moulton as City Council representative on the Accessible Communities Advisory Committee for a term effective December 1, 2020 until November 30, 2023.

Traffic Safety Committee: Mr. Miller reported from the quarterly committee meeting the prior Tuesday. He said the group had discussed parking in the vicinity of the Guemes Ferry, traffic calming measures for The Crossings development and Tsunami Evacuation Route signs that would be installed soon.

Lodging Tax Advisory Committee: Mr. Miller reported from the committee meeting the prior week. He said the committee discussed carryover funding from the prior year and projections for lodging tax receipts in the year ahead. Mr. Miller indicated that the committee's recommendations for awards would come to Council for consideration and approval in the near future.

Fiber Committee: Mr. McDougall reported from the committee meeting the prior Thursday. He said the group discussed the dark fiber lease agreement template, the fiber business plan, status of the aerial expansion areas, and expansion plans for 2021.

Parks & Recreation Committee: Ms. Moulton reported from the committee meeting the prior week. She said topics discussed included fall recreation events, progress on the Depot restroom project and the Grand View Cemetery expansion project, recent storm damage in the ACFL, Washington Park revenues, Causland Park plaza progress, signage recognizing tribal history and culture, a potential bike skills park location near Whistle Lake, and alternatives to traditional holiday activities in conformance with COVID-19 guidelines.

Tourism Promotion Area (TPA) Advisory Board: Mr. Young reported from the Board's recent meetings and described organizational and budgetary steps being taken by the Board.

Mr. Young moved, seconded by Mr. Walters, to excuse the absence of Councilmember Jeremy Carter. The motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

Public Comment

Rochelle Kealoha addressed inclusivity in the city and implored Council to add an embedded social worker to city staff in 2021 to serve urgent needs in the community.

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 November 16, 2020
- b. Approval of Claims in the amount of: \$798,801.69

The following vouchers/checks were approved for payment:
EFT numbers: 98680 through 98731, total \$593,589.92
Check numbers: 98732 through 98751, total \$74,319.79
Wire transfer numbers: 276262 through 276585, total \$130,203.99

OTHER BUSINESS

First Amendment to Schedule 139 Voluntary Long-Term Renewable Energy Service Agreement

Resource Conservation Manager Russ Pittis requested that Council authorize the Mayor to sign the First Amendment to Schedule 139 Voluntary Long-Term Renewable Energy Service Agreement #WN U-60 with Puget Sound Energy, referring to the packet material for the meeting. Mr. Pittis introduced Tyler O'Farrell from PSE to provide background information on the Puget Sound Energy Skookumchuck Wind Facility and the provisions of the amendment, which would reduce the city's cost to participate in the Green Power program.

Mayor Gere invited members of the audience to comment on this agenda item. No one present wished to address the Council.

Mr. Walters moved, seconded by Mr. Young, to authorize the Mayor to sign the First Amendment to Schedule 139 Voluntary Long-Term Renewable Energy Service Agreement #WN U-60 with Puget Sound Energy. Vote: Ayes – Young, Walters, Cleland-McGrath, Moulton, McDougall and Miller. Motion carried.

Resolution 3007: Making a Declaration of Substantial Need for Setting the Property Tax Levy for 2021

Resolution 3008: Setting the City's Year 2021 Property Tax Regular Levy Increase

Finance Director Steve Hoglund presented Resolution 3007, referring to the packet materials for the meeting. He shared a number of factors demonstrating substantial need.

Mayor Gere recognized members of the public who wished to address Council on this agenda item.

Judy Billings said she had a problem with the salaries the city employees are paid. She objected to increasing property taxes. Ms. Billings suggested cutting city employees instead.

Mr. Hoglund then presented Resolution 3008, referring to the packet materials for the meeting. He emphasized the \$6.03 total annual increase in the property tax bill for an average home in Anacortes if the 1% levy increase were approved.

Mr. Walters moved, seconded by Mr. McDougall, to approve Resolution 3007 making a declaration of substantial need. Vote: Ayes – Walters, Cleland-McGrath, Moulton, McDougall and Young. Nays – Miller. Motion carried.

Mr. Walters moved, seconded by Ms. Moulton, to approve Resolution 3008 authorizing a 1% property tax increase. Vote: Ayes – Cleland-McGrath, Moulton, McDougall, Young and Walters. Nays – Miller. Motion carried.

Ordinance 3080: 2021-2026 Capital Facilities Plan Update

Mr. Hoglund presented Ordinance 3080 for a first read. He reviewed the capital projects in each department, emphasizing the changes in the CFP from the prior year. Mr. Hoglund responded to councilmember questions about various line items. He advised that the public hearing on the CFP was scheduled for December 7, 2020. Several councilmembers recognized a need to rebalance and reprioritize the Fire Department capital projects and planned to address that topic at upcoming Public Safety and Finance committee meetings.

Ordinance 3078: Adopting the 2021 Budget

Mr. Hoglund summarized the public hearing and discussion of the 2021 budget held to date. Mr. Hoglund's slide presentation was added to the packet materials for the meeting. Councilmembers discussed potential changes to the draft budget with Mayor Gere and Mr. Hoglund.

Mayor Gere recognized consensus among councilmembers to add \$500-\$800K to the draft budget for the pavement overlay program, to be funded by REET. She advised that the draft CFP would be revised to match.

Mr. Walters requested the following additional changes to the draft budget. No other councilmembers commented either in support of or in opposition to these requests.

- A list of facilities projects budgeted to use REET, with an option to cut some of those from the budget
- Remove the budgeted IT Systems Administrator position pending a plan for IT staffing
- Remove the \$30K budgeted as a grant match for electric vehicle charging stations
- Remove any budget for Granicus software
- Add explicit text to the budget ordinance formalizing a hiring freeze

There being no further business, at approximately 8:55 p.m. the Anacortes City Council meeting of November 23, 2020 was adjourned.