

Anacortes City Council Minutes – December 7, 2020

Mayor Laurie Gere called to order the Anacortes City Council meeting of December 7, 2020 at 6:00 p.m. Councilmembers Jeremy Carter, Anthony Young, Ryan Walters, Carolyn Moulton, Christine Cleland-McGrath and Bruce McDougall all participated in the meeting in absentia via video conference. Councilmember Matt Miller was absent.

Mr. McDougall moved, seconded by Mr. Young, to excuse the absence of Mr. Miller. The motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

Mayor Gere announced the addition of an executive session at the end of the agenda pursuant to RCW 42.30.110(i) to discuss litigation or potential litigation.

Announcements and Committee Reports

COVID-19 Update: Mayor Gere shared current case statistics for Anacortes, Skagit County, Washington State, and the nation. The mayor noted the significant increase in cases in Skagit County over the prior month.

Port/City Liaison Committee: Mayor Gere reported from the brief committee meeting the prior week.

Public Safety Committee: Mr. Carter reported from the committee meeting the prior week. He summarized the topics discussed including Fire Department capital facilities plan items, Police Department lateral transfers, and Police Department firearms training.

Finance Committee: Mr. McDougall reported from the committee meeting the prior week, at which those present discussed Fire Department capital facilities plan items. Mr. Walters added that the committee also agreed on the need for a better cost estimate for constructing a new Fire Station 3.

Mayor Gere reported from the State Auditor's exit conference earlier in the day. The mayor advised that the City had received a clean audit again for 2019 and received compliments from the State Auditor's Office.

Museum Committee: Mayor Gere advised that the regular committee meeting scheduled for the prior Thursday had been rescheduled.

Fiber Committee: Mr. Walters and Mr. McDougall reported from the committee meeting the prior week. They summarized items discussed including the dark fiber lease template that would be coming to full Council for action soon, staffing for the fiber department, and the fiber business plan.

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

Public Comment

No members of the public wished to address the Council on any topic not on the agenda.

Consent Agenda

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

- a. Minutes of November 23, 2020
- b. Approval of Claims in the amount of: \$370,960.87
- c. Interlocal Agreement for WTSC Pass Through Grant

The following vouchers/checks were approved for payment:
EFT numbers: 98752 through 98800, total \$183,532.35
Check numbers: 98801 through 98830, total \$177,556.99
Wire transfer numbers: 276635 through 277087, total \$9,856.23

PUBLIC HEARINGS

Public Hearing: Ordinance 3080: 2021-2026 Capital Facilities Plan Update

OTHER BUSINESS

Ordinance 3078: Adopting the 2021 Budget

Finance Director Steve Hoglund summarized the revisions to the draft CFP and draft budget since those documents were last considered by City Council at its November 23, 2020 meeting. Mr. Hoglund's slide presentation was added to the packet materials for the meeting. It included revised versions of both Ordinance 3080 adopting the 2021-2026 CFP and Ordinance 3078 adopting the 2021 budget.

Ms. Moulton asked for additional information about the cost of the proposed 3rd floor breakroom project to enable Council to properly prioritize spending for that item. Mr. Walters said that the Council Finance Committee had suggested reducing the \$200K included in the draft CFP for the March Point Fire Station for 2021 to \$50K to be spent on determining a more accurate cost estimate for that project. No councilmember objected to either of those requests.

Councilmembers discussed at some length the \$1.55M included in the draft CFP for annual pavement maintenance and means of increasing that to \$1.8M, including possibly allocating additional REET or reallocating funding from facilities projects or reallocating funding from elsewhere in the budget.

At approximately 6:45 p.m. Mayor Gere opened the public hearing on Ordinance 3080 adopting the 2021-2026 Capital Facilities Plan Update.

Kate Clark commended Council for finding a way to include \$50K in the 2021 police department budget for a social worker. She requested clarification on whether that amount was for studying such a position or if it would actually be used to purchase social services. She indicated that her group's analysis of 911 calls showed that 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. was the peak time for calls appropriate for involvement of a social worker so that a single position would have a significant impact.

Judy Billings said she was sorry to see that Council had decided to fund \$50K for a social worker. She reported that in Seattle an embedded social worker had been stabbed to death on a call. Ms. Billing said the funds would be better spent on police officers.

No one else wishing to address the Council, at approximately 7:00 p.m. Mayor Gere closed the public hearing on Ordinance 3080.

Mr. Walters proposed adding four additional sections to the text of the budget ordinance, noting that he had distributed those via email to all councilmembers the prior day.

New Section 4. A hiring freeze remains in effect until December 31, 2021, prohibiting any new hire (including new positions or filling vacant positions) that is funded in any part from any City governmental fund without approval by City Council resolution. The Police and Fire Departments, and the position of HR Director, are not subject to this hiring freeze.

New Section 5. No general revenue (e.g., funds derived from sales tax, property tax, utility tax) may be expended as match for the Department of Commerce Electrification of Transportation Systems Program grant.

New Section 6. The City Council Finance Committee is directed to investigate and evaluate options for an interactive data platform with the objective of improving transparency, accountability, and governance by providing the City Council and the public with useful self-service access to the City budget, the City's financial performance, City employee salaries, and a running list of all transactions. The Council Finance Committee must report its findings and recommendation to the City Council by April 30, 2021.

New Section 7. The City Council Housing Affordability & Community Services Committee is directed to work with existing community services providers, city departments, and the public to identify the social services needs of city residents in financial, emotional, or mental health crisis and develop a plan to strengthen and ensure those services or resources are provided by city or third-party providers. The plan must be data-driven and must identify appropriate and sustainable funding sources. The HACS Committee must report its findings and recommendation to the City Council and community by June 30, 2021.

Councilmembers Moulton, McDougall, Cleland-McGrath and Young expressed support of the language proposed by Mr. Walters. No councilmember expressed objection to it.

Mayor Gere indicated that staff would bring revised versions of Ordinances 3080 and 3078 to City Council for consideration and possible action at its December 14, 2020 meeting.

Executive Session

Mayor Gere announced that City Council and the City Attorney would convene in Executive Session per RCW 42.30.110 (i) for approximately 20 minutes to discuss potential litigation or litigation. The mayor advised that the regular meeting would then adjourn with no action having been taken. Councilmembers Jeremy Carter, Ryan Walters, Christine Cleland-McGrath, Carolyn Moulton and Bruce McDougall attended the executive session.

There being no further business, at approximately 8:04 p.m. the Anacortes City Council meeting of December 7, 2020 was adjourned.