

Anacortes City Council Minutes - November 20, 2023

Call to Order

Mayor Matt Miller called to order the Anacortes City Council meeting of November 20, 2023 at 6:00 p.m. Councilmembers Jeremy Carter, Ryan Walters, Anthony Young, Christine Cleland-McGrath, Bruce McDougall and Amanda Hubik were present. Councilmember Carolyn Moulton participated in the meeting remotely via Zoom.

Pledge of Allegiance

The assembly joined in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Announcements and Committee Reports

Mayor Miller thanked the Senior College for having him as a guest speaker on November 14th, provided an R Avenue improvement project update, detailed Thanksgiving holiday closures and trash pickup schedules, announced Anacortes High School's upcoming football state semifinal game at 3pm on November 25th, and encouraged people to travel safely and find something to be thankful for during the season of Thanksgiving.

Economic Development Committee

Mr. Young reported from the Economic Development Committee meeting held November 14th. The topics discussed included the economic development plan, reviewing participant businesses, consideration of the resources that are needed to accomplish the work, partnership with the Economic Development Alliance of Skagit County, and determining how to ensure all stakeholders are included in the effort.

Housing Affordability and Community Services Committee

Ms. Cleland-McGrath reported from the Housing Affordability and Community Services Committee meeting held on November 15th. The topics discussed included cold weather shelter funding coordination between the Salvation Army and the Anacortes Family Center (AFC) and access to social services, the Housing Consortium of Skagit County, rental assistance funding available through the Salvation Army and AFC, identifying where homeless, community or human services should be located within the Anacortes development code, housing grant opportunities through the Department of Commerce, and coordinated entry funding being awarded to Volunteers of America.

Public Works Committee

Mr. Walters reported from the Public Works Committee meeting held earlier in the evening. The topics discussed included cross-street signal timing adjustment by the Washington State Department of Transportation on Commercial Avenue at 32nd Street, 22nd Street and 17th Street, a traffic study to increase efficiency at 32nd Street and Commercial Avenue, and potential right-of-way maintenance code provisions.

Parks and Recreation Committee

Ms. Hubik reported from the Parks and Recreation Committee meeting held November 16th. The topics discussed included a Christmas luncheon to be held on December 21st at the Anacortes Senior Center, skate park funding, and a soft ribbon cutting for the skate park on December 7th at 3pm with a much larger event planned for the spring.

Ms. Cleland-McGrath moved, seconded by Mr. Walters to add item 7.a. Ordinance 4062: An Ordinance Adopting New AMC Chapter 2.08 Regarding Appointive Officers of the City to the agenda.

Public Comment

Mayor Miller invited the public to comment on any item not on the agenda. Public comment was given as follows:

Judy Billings of Anacortes thanked Mayor Miller for his professionalism in handling his duties as mayor, adding that his job is difficult with a City Council that is anti-American, arrogant and determined to undermine his progress. She thanked the mayor for his leadership and efforts in keeping Anacortes safe.

Donna Manning of Anacortes thanked Mayor Miller and his family for their service and sacrifice to the country, adding that she considered him an honorable man and was glad to have him as mayor of Anacortes. She also expressed appreciation for the Afghanistan plaque being up on the memorial wall and the overall clean and well-maintained condition of Causland Memorial Park.

Suzanne Rohner of Anacortes thanked Mayor Miller for having the political courage and moral will to present the America Proud resolution to the City Council on June 26, 2023. She expressed disappointment that the City Council did not raise a motion and cited misinformation in City Council emails that wrongly associated the resolution with the Proud Boys organization. She added that the local effort behind the resolution had no website and that the national website could not be linked to the Proud Boys or white supremacy.

Consent Agenda

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

a. Minutes of November 13, 2023

b. Approval of claims in the amount of \$561,107.76

The following vouchers/checks were approved for payment:

EFT numbers: 107869 through 107921, total \$500,261.47

Check numbers: 107907 through 107920, total \$10,825.43

Wire transfer numbers: 334918 through 335271, total \$50,020.86

c. Special Event Application: Anacortes Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony

Public Hearings

Public Hearing: 2024 Revenue Sources, Including an Increase in the Property Tax Levy

Senior Accountant, Philip Steffen, opened the discussion on revenue sources, pointing out that the public hearing has been open since October 23, 2023, and no public comment had yet been received. He added that information regarding revenue sources is available on the [city's website](#).

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

At approximately 6:30pm, Mayor Miller closed the public hearing on 2024 Revenue Sources.

Ordinance 4061: Setting the 2024 Property Tax Levy

Senior Accountant, Philip Steffen, introduced Ordinance 4061 that would set the 2024 property tax levy, noting that this year's ordinance differs from past years due to the levy lid lift ballot measure, which passed in the April 2023 special election.

Discussion topics included:

- November 30th deadline for passing the ordinance.
- Annual 1% property tax increase versus the tax levy allowed under the public safety ballot measure.

Mayor Miller invited members of the audience to comment on this agenda item. Public comment was given as follows:

Steve Anderson of Anacortes commented that it was not 100% of voters or citizens that approved the levy lid lift, but rather was a majority.

Mayor Miller clarified that 67.4% of voters voted to approve the levy lid lift.

Mr. Walters moved, seconded by Ms. Hubik, to suspend the City Council's two-read rule for ordinances. The motion carried by voice vote.

CHRISTINE CLELAND-MCGRATH moved, seconded by AMANDA HUBIK, to adopt ordinance 4061 Setting the 2024 Property Tax Levy. Vote: Ayes - JEREMY CARTER, ANTHONY YOUNG, RYAN WALTERS, CHRISTINE CLELAND-MCGRATH, CAROLYN MOULTON, BRUCE MCDOUGALL, AMANDA HUBIK. Nays - None. Result: Passed

Public Hearing: Ordinance 4063 - Evans Vacation Petition

City Attorney, Darcy Swetnam, introduced Ordinance 4063 that would approve a petition to vacate the city right-of-way in exchange for an easement that would provide public benefit of stormwater drainage service for the area, referring to a slide presentation that was added to the packet materials for the meeting. She added that to date no public comments had been received on the proposed right-of-way vacation. Public Works Director, Andrew Rheame, outlined the public benefit for the city in vacating the right-of-way. The applicant, Bob Evans, commented on a general utility easement, expressing no objection to including water and / or fiber utilities in the easement area.

Discussion topics included:

- Restrictions on building over the 20-foot stormwater easement area.
- Generic utility easement instead of a stormwater easement.
- Vote timing and transfer of the land to the petitioner.
- Community garden.

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

CHRISTINE CLELAND-MCGRATH moved, seconded by BRUCE MCDOUGALL, to adopt Ordinance 4063 vacating right of way in exchange for a utility easement.

RYAN WALTERS moved, seconded by CAROLYN MOULTON, to delete the second recital in the draft ordinance. Vote: Ayes - JEREMY CARTER, ANTHONY YOUNG, RYAN WALTERS, CHRISTINE CLELAND-MCGRATH, CAROLYN MOULTON, BRUCE MCDOUGALL, AMANDA HUBIK. Nays - None. Result: Passed

Mr. Walters moved, seconded by Mr. Young to suspend the council's two-read rule for ordinances. The motion passed by voice vote.

CHRISTINE CLELAND-MCGRATH moved, seconded by BRUCE MCDOUGALL, to adopt Ordinance 4063 vacating right of way in exchange for a utility easement with the second recital deleted from the draft ordinance. Vote: Ayes - JEREMY CARTER, ANTHONY YOUNG, RYAN WALTERS, CHRISTINE CLELAND-MCGRATH, CAROLYN MOULTON, BRUCE MCDOUGALL, AMANDA HUBIK. Nays - None. Result: Passed

Other Business

Ordinance 4062: An Ordinance Adopting New AMC Chapter 2.08 Regarding Appointive Officers of the City

Ms. Cleland McGrath re-introduced Ordinance 4062, announcing that the had Council received the mayor's veto and accompanying objections to the ordinance on November 15th. She asked that the mayor's objections be introduced into the record. She continued that reconsideration of the mayor's veto is considered in accordance with RCW 35A.12.130.

Discussion topics included:

- Additional time for discussion of the issues between the mayor and councilmembers.
- Control and communication between the legislative and executive branches.
- Process with respect to management and policy decisions.
- Ensure the structure of city government that includes a human resources director.
- Action is important for the budget process.
- Possibility for future code amendment.

CHRISTINE CLELAND-MCGRATH moved, seconded by CAROLYN MOULTON, to adopt Ordinance 4062 adopting new Chapter 2.08 regarding appointive officers as adopted on Nov 6th.

Vote: Ayes - RYAN WALTERS, CHRISTINE CLELAND-MCGRATH, CAROLYN MOULTON, BRUCE MCDOUGALL, AMANDA HUBIK. Nays - JEREMY CARTER, ANTHONY YOUNG. Result: Passed

Interlocal Agreement: Fidalgo Pool and Fitness Center

City Attorney, Darcy Swetnam, introduced the interlocal agreement with Fidalgo Pool and Fitness Center to place a ballot measure to create a metropolitan park district. She then introduced Fidalgo Pool and Fitness District Executive Director, Rob Peterson, who outlined the proposed agreement and creation of a metropolitan park district separate from the city, referring to a slide presentation that was included in the packet materials for the meeting.

Discussion topics included:

- Community value of the facility.
- Commissioners will be elected in the same manner, but will be open to a larger area.
- Laying the groundwork for future work.
- The future pool facility and public bond funding for construction.

Mayor Miller invited members of the audience to comment on this agenda item.

Connie Miller of Anacortes asked if there would be no more levies required and advocated caution about how tax dollars are spent.

Mr. Peterson responded that it would be extended into perpetuity and any increase in excess of 1% annually would need to go before the voters.

Connie Russell of Anacortes wondered if there was an offset for the county tax levy, citing a 30% increase in property values over the last two years and the recent public safety levy.

Mr. Peterson responded that the proposed metropolitan park district would replace the current parks and recreation district, thus providing the offset.

AMANDA HUBIK moved, seconded by ANTHONY YOUNG, to authorize the mayor to sign the interlocal agreement with the Fidalgo Parks and Recreation District. Vote: Ayes - JEREMY CARTER, ANTHONY YOUNG, RYAN WALTERS, CHRISTINE CLELAND-MCGRATH, CAROLYN MOULTON, BRUCE MCDOUGALL, AMANDA HUBIK. Nays - None. Result: Passed

Resolution 3137: Fidalgo Pool and Fitness Center

Mayor Miller asked the Council if they had additional questions or comments for Mr. Peterson in addition to the earlier discussion.

Discussion topics included:

- Replacing the existing district with the new district.
- Distributing maintenance and operating costs to more property owners.

BRUCE MCDOUGALL moved, seconded by AMANDA HUBIK, to adopt Resolution 3137 as presented. Vote: Ayes - JEREMY CARTER, ANTHONY YOUNG, RYAN WALTERS, CHRISTINE CLELAND-MCGRATH, CAROLYN MOULTON, BRUCE MCDOUGALL, AMANDA HUBIK. Nays - None. Result: Passed

Contract Award: AMI Mono Pole Antenna Installation - Water Meter Reading Project #21-137-WTR-002

Public Works Director, Andrew Rheame, introduced the proposed contract for the AMI Mono Pole Antenna Installation - Water Meter Reading Project #21-137-WTR-002, detailing the responsive bid of \$281,313.28 that came in under the \$400,000 engineer's estimate.

Discussion topics included:

- Prior discussions of the project and its cost effectiveness.

RYAN WALTERS moved, seconded by CAROLYN MOULTON, to authorize the mayor to execute contract #21-137-WTR-002. Vote: Ayes - JEREMY CARTER, ANTHONY YOUNG, RYAN WALTERS, CHRISTINE CLELAND-MCGRATH, CAROLYN MOULTON, BRUCE MCDOUGALL, AMANDA HUBIK. Nays - None. Result: Passed

Public Works Committee Recommendations

Public Works Director, Andrew Rheame, and Public Works Administrator, Sidney Neel, introduced recommendations from the Public Works Committee regarding traffic safety items, referring to a presentation that was added to the packet materials for the meeting. Mr. Walters clarified that the majority of the issues raised came during the code amendment process and that the committee deemed that action on these concerns should be deferred until now.

Mayor Miller invited members of the audience to comment on this agenda item.

Marilyn Sage of Anacortes addressed the bus lane on Sands Way near the park, pointing out that two-way traffic would be constricted with authorized parking on both sides of the street. She added that the curbs near a hydrant and bus stop are not marked appropriately. Mr. Rheame responded that hydrants are not typically

marked and that the county would be responsible for marking the area associated with the bus stop.

Barbara Smart of Anacortes wondered if the proposed diagonal parking for 6th Street between T Avenue and Market Street would impact Farmers Market vendors and recommended the Council hold off on taking action until the Port finished its North Basin RV Park project.

Rob Peterson of Anacortes commented that Market Street is very narrow and there is not sufficient space for parking on both sides of the street.

Discussion topics included:

- Sands Way two-way traffic and parking space.
- The standard for painting curbs throughout the city.
- No trailer parking on Coho Lane, Geer Lane, Sunset Avenue, Pacific Avenue, Washington Boulevard, and Storm Place to minimize the impact of Washington Park on local neighbors.
- Painting a curb versus posting a no-parking sign. (17th Street and Georgia).
- Defer action and continue monitoring 17th Street and Georgia
- Take no action on Cay Way.
- Angled parking on 6th Street between Market Street and T Avenue - cost of going into the right-of-way to create more space.
- Defer action on Guemes Ferry holding area extension. Test striping of area in the parking lane in front of driveways to discourage ferry traffic from blocking the area.
- Adding Market Street to the no parking zone - understand the ownership of the roadway. Parking time limits on the west side of Market Street.
- 32nd Street and Commercial Avenue Intersection - dedicated left turn lane and right / straight lane. Incorporating current signal technology.
- Safety concerns should be brought to the attention of public works and the police.

Adjournment

There being no further business, at approximately 8:15 p.m. the Anacortes City Council meeting of November 20, 2023 was adjourned.