

Anacortes City Council Minutes - December 11, 2023

Call to Order

Mayor Matt Miller called to order the Anacortes City Council meeting of December 11, 2023 at 6:00 p.m. Councilmembers Christine Cleland-McGrath and Bruce McDougall were present. Councilmembers Ryan Walters, Carolyn Moulton and Amanda Hubik participated in the meeting remotely via Zoom. Councilmembers Jeremy Carter and Anthony Young were absent.

Ms. Moulton moved, seconded by Ms. Cleland-McGrath, to excuse the absence of Mr. Young. The motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

Ms. Cleland-McGrath moved, seconded by Ms. Hubik, to excuse the absence of Mr. Carter. The motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

Pledge of Allegiance

The assembly joined in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Announcements and Committee Reports

Mayor Miller commented on the disruption of the City Council meeting on December 4, 2023 by individuals using aliases and false addresses to propagate anti-Semitic and bigoted statements on Zoom during the public comment portion of the agenda. He categorically condemned such statements as gross, obscene and false, and detailed the measures taken to sever the commenters' connection to the meeting. He then mentioned the introduction of Resolution 3142, a joint resolution reaffirming equality and inclusion, and Resolution 3141 amending the City Council procedures to limit public comment to matters specifically pertaining to the City of Anacortes that would be considered later in the meeting.

Mr. Walters moved, seconded by Ms. Cleland-McGrath to move Resolution 3141 to 4.a. on the agenda.

Mayor Miller continued with a recap of recent holiday events and announced that the downtown arch is being refurbished, the Lighted Boat Parade will occur on December 16th at 6pm, the Anacortes Police Department is coordinating a pet supply drive from 15-22 December and an R Avenue Improvement Project update.

Planning Committee

Ms. Moulton reported from the Planning Committee meeting held earlier in the evening. The topics discussed included the upcoming public hearing on code amendments before the Planning Commission on December 13th, the potential multifamily tax exemption program, bonus height incentives for small units, Sharpe's Corner development options, and including funding for land use analysis in the 2024 operating budget.

Port / City Liaison Committee

Mayor Miller reported from the Port / City Liaison Committee meeting held December 5th. The topics discussed included the search for a new director, new officers on the Port Commission, Transit Shed material disposition, and the reopening of Market Street and the North Basin RV Park.

Public Safety Committee

Ms. Cleland-McGrath reported from the Public Safety Committee meeting held earlier in the day. The topics discussed included a staffing update and 2024 legislative priorities.

Library Committee

Ms. Cleland-McGrath shared her experience at the recent pajama time reading event.

Public Comment

Resolution 3141: Amending the City Council's Rules of Procedure to Limit Public Comment to Matters Specifically Pertaining to the City of Anacortes

Mr. Walters introduced Resolution 3141 that would amend the City Council procedures to limit public comment to matters specifically pertaining to the City of Anacortes.

Discussion topics included:

- Benefit of commentary on items not on the agenda.
- Respecting the First Amendment right to free speech.
- Enforcement of the ban on comments unrelated or not pertaining to the City of Anacortes.
- Technical capability to stop undesirable comments.
- Accessibility to community concerns.

AMANDA HUBIK moved, seconded by BRUCE MCDUGALL, to adopt Resolution 3141 amending Resolution 3094 City Council Procedures to limit public comment to matters specifically pertaining to the City of Anacortes. Vote: Ayes - RYAN WALTERS, CHRISTINE CLELAND-MCGRATH, CAROLYN MOULTON, BRUCE MCDUGALL, AMANDA HUBIK. Nays - None. Result: Passed

Public Comment

Mayor Miller invited the public to comment on any item not on the agenda.

Public comment was given as follows:

Terry Kylo of Anacortes thanked the Mayor and the Council for their statements condemning the anti-Semitic comments given last week and spoke of his experience as a member of the Lutheran clergy standing up against religious-based bigotry.

Caitlyn Blair of Anacortes asked that the City Council work on passing a resolution calling for a ceasefire in the Israeli - Palestinian conflict.

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 December 4, 2023

b. Approval of claims in the amount of \$1,330,365.38

The following vouchers/checks were approved for payment:

EFT numbers: 108014 through 108079, total \$1,017,575.92

Check numbers: 108080 through 108093, total \$252,955.48

Wire transfer numbers: 336175 through 336622, total \$59,833.98

Public Hearings

2024 Operating Budget

Mayor Miller announced that the public hearing on the 2024 operating budget will remain open from December 4, 2023, and that a couple of written comments had been received. Senior Accountant, Philip Steffen, confirmed that no additional public comments had been received. At approximately 6:33 pm, Mayor Miller closed the public hearing on the 2024 operating budget.

Other Business

Resolution 3142: 2023 Joint Resolution Reaffirming Equality and Inclusion

Mayor Miller introduced Resolution 3142, a joint resolution of the Council and the mayor reaffirming equality and inclusion by reading the text of the resolution.

Discussion topics included:

- Emotions surrounding the disturbing comments given at the December 4th meeting.
- Responding directly to public comment.
- Affirming support for the resolution content among the newer councilmembers.
- Making it a joint resolution.
- Preserving the First Amendment right to free speech and standing up to reprehensible comments.
- Pride in the community.
- Living the words of the resolution.
- Thanking the community for suggestions on how to stand up to hateful speech.
- Historical perspective.
- The promise to vigorously oppose hateful speech and condemning those comments made last week.
- Moral obligation to stand up for the bullied.
- Waiting to adopt the resolution until all councilmembers are present.

Mayor Miller announced that the resolution would be brought back before the Council at the December 18th regular meeting so that the full membership of the Council would have the opportunity to vote on the resolution.

Ordinance 4066: 2024-2029 Capital Facilities Plan and Ordinance 4064: 2024 Operating Budget

Senior Accountant, Philip Steffen, re-introduced Ordinance 4066, the 2024-2029 Capital Facilities Plan (CFP) and Ordinance 4064 2024 Operating Budget, referring to a presentation that was added to the packet materials for the meeting. Public Works Director, Andrew Rheume, and Parks and Recreation Director, Jonn Lunsford, discussed Guemes Channel Trail funding.

Discussion topics included:

- Inclusion of capital expenses in the budget report.
- Inclusion of fund names and numbers in the budget book.
- Benefit of having the budget book in advance of adoption.
- Attaching the CFP to the budget ordinance, make the CFP document Exhibit A.
- Remove Highway 20 light manufacturing corridor for Fiber in 2025-2026.
- Remove \$3.5 million for City Hall seismic upgrades due to age of estimate.
- Fire department elevator replacement or decommissioning.
- Guemes Channel Trail (GCT) environmental impact study beyond 2024 and details about GCT at Shannon Point.

Interlocal Agreement #24-021-ASC-001 with Skagit County for the 2024 Senior Services Program

Parks and Recreation Director, Jonn Lunsford, introduced the proposed interlocal agreement #24-021-ASC-001 with Skagit County for the 2024 Senior Services Program.

Discussion topics included:

- The Parks and Recreation budget is compensated for the increase in full-time employment for the

Anacortes Senior Activity Center Administrative Assistant.

AMANDA HUBIK moved, seconded by CAROLYN MOULTON, to authorize the mayor to execute interlocal #24-021-ASC-001 with Skagit County for the 2024 Senior Services Program. Vote: Ayes - RYAN WALTERS, CHRISTINE CLELAND-MCGRATH, CAROLYN MOULTON, BRUCE MCDOUGALL, AMANDA HUBIK. Nays - None. Result: Passed

Resolution 3140: A Resolution of the City Council of the City of Anacortes Updating the Unified Fee Schedule

Senior Accountant, Philip Steffen, introduced Resolution 3140 that would update the unified fee schedule to include rental fees for the Depot Arts and Community Center, referring to page 24 of the 2024 [Unified Fee Schedule](#).

CAROLYN MOULTON moved, seconded by BRUCE MCDOUGALL, to approve Resolution 3140 to update the 2024 Unified Fee Schedule. Vote: Ayes - RYAN WALTERS, CHRISTINE CLELAND-MCGRATH, CAROLYN MOULTON, BRUCE MCDOUGALL, AMANDA HUBIK. Nays - None. Result: Passed

Adjournment

There being no further business, at approximately 7:41 p.m. the Anacortes City Council meeting of December 11, 2023 was adjourned.