

Anacortes City Council Minutes - March 4, 2024

Call to Order

Mayor Matt Miller called to order the Anacortes City Council meeting of March 4, 2024 at 6:00 p.m. Councilmembers TJ Fantini, Ryan Walters, Anthony Young, Carolyn Moulton, and Bruce McDougall were present. Councilmembers Christine Cleland-McGrath (left the meeting at 7:06 pm) and Amanda Hubik participated in the meeting remotely via Zoom.

Pledge of Allegiance

The assembly joined in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Announcements and Committee Reports

Mayor Miller shared an R Avenue Improvement Project update, encouraged the public to submit Fourth of July Parade applications, announced a joint press release by the city and the port regarding funding and concepts for a new event center, and reminded the public that daylight savings time begins this weekend.

Public Works Committee

Ms. Moulton reported from the Public Works Committee meeting held earlier in the evening. The topics discussed included traffic safety issues at D Avenue and 23rd Street, West 10th Street and Minnesota Avenue, Kansas Avenue, and Coho Lane, the Water Treatment Plant emergency, bids for the Wastewater Treatment Plant outfall replacement, and a \$1.9 million pavement grant for south Commercial Avenue.

Economic Development Committee

Mr. Young reported from the Economic Development Committee meeting held the previous week. The meeting included a discussion with representatives from Western Washington University's Center for Economic Development regarding the committee's mission and processes.

North Star Advisory Group

Ms. Moulton reported from the North Star Advisory Group meeting held last week, which included breakout group discussions on housing and behavioral health.

Skagit County Solid Waste Advisory Committee

Ms. Moulton reported from the Skagit County Solid Waste Advisory Committee meeting held the previous week. The meeting included a discussion of a thirty percent rate increase for Skagit County that was effective October 1, 2023, of which a certain percentage would be passed on to cities and households on September 1, 2024.

Homeless Service Providers Meeting

Ms. Moulton reported attending the Homeless Service Providers meeting hosted by Volunteers of America who manage Skagit County's coordinated entry program.

Public Comment

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

Public comment was given as follows:

Linnea McCord of Anacortes commented on the proposed Habitat for Humanity lease, advocating for ample opportunities for public input in the process.

Kelleen List of Anacortes commented on the proposed Habitat for Humanity lease, requesting that the proposal be brought forth to the Council and signage be posted on the property.

Xuhua Mu of Anacortes commented on the proposed Habitat for Humanity lease, pointing out that the proposed development would not integrate cleanly into the existing neighborhood. She asked about the approval process for the project and for open two-way communication between the city and the community regarding the project.

Tarn Ohana of Anacortes addressed the proposed Habitat for Humanity project, saying that the project would be a benefit to the city and looked forward to more communication.

Jason Goold of Anacortes commented on the short-term rental issue discussed at the previous Planning Commission meeting, citing statistics on the total number of housing units, rental units and vacant units in support of allowing short term rentals in the city.

Pat Gardner of Anacortes addressed the MJB development, advocating for open information to the public on the project.

Consent Agenda

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

a. Minutes of February 26, 2024

b. Approval of claims in the amount of \$362,135.41

The following vouchers/checks were approved for payment:

EFT numbers: 108729 through 108780, total \$251,792.39

Check numbers: 108781 through 108799, total \$100,152.30

Wire transfer numbers: 342065 through 342591, total \$10,190.72

c. Contract Award: O Avenue ADA & Sidewalk Connectivity Project #24-090-TRN-001

Other Business

Solarize Skagit Presentation

Mayor Miller introduced Mary Wohleb, Joan Cross, Marylee Chamberlain, and Greg Whiting from Skagit Valley Clean Energy Alliance, who presented information on the organization's Solarize Skagit campaign, referring to a presentation that was added to the packet materials for the meeting.

Discussion topics included:

- Cost-effectiveness of solar energy.
- Battery storage for excess energy.
- Obstacles to participation - shaded lots and access to financing.

Commercial Avenue Complete Streets Project Phase I Update

Public Works Director Andrew Rheume introduced project consultants Brandon Gonzalez and Adrian Esteban from Alta Planning and Design and Michelle Mach of Transportation Solutions. Mr. Gonzalez detailed the Commercial Avenue Complete Streets Project Phase I, referring to a map overhead view of the project area and reviewed the approval process for project design with the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT). He then outlined the process for attaining the necessary right-of-way for the project and upcoming traffic analysis regarding the Safeway parking lot and the intersection at 11th Street and Commercial Avenue.

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

Jerry Ziegler of Anacortes asked about making the roundabout traffic flow one way entry-only into the Safeway parking lot.

Pat Gardner of Anacortes asked if Safeway could move to the MJB project area to alleviate the traffic problem.

Natalie Clark of Fidalgo Island commented on the potential timing of the project, hoping that it would be undertaken outside the peak tourist season in consideration of downtown businesses.

John Hein of Anacortes asked if it had been considered to close off the entrance / exit from the roundabout into Safeway completely and re-designing the parking lot.

Barbara Smart of Anacortes suggested that having structures in the middle of the roundabout would cause a visual obstruction in the roundabout and also ensuring there is adequate space in the roundabout for large vehicles.

Discussion topics included:

- One-way traffic ingress / egress into the Safeway parking lot.
- Prohibiting left turns on 11th Street from Commercial Avenue.
- Four-way stop at Commercial Avenue and 11th Street.
- Eliminating the right turn lane on Commercial Avenue between 12th Street and 11th Street.
- Studying or observing traffic flow at peak times.
- Recommendations on timing of lights or possibly adding stoplights to stagger traffic.
- Changing the parking stall direction in the Safeway parking lot to facilitate inbound traffic flow.
- Project information on the city website.
- Seasonal traffic patterns.
- Project timeline and duration – construction beginning of 2025 and six-month duration.
- Roundabout use and etiquette.
- Curb cuts and street access.
- Traffic modeling inputs.
- View corridor northbound down Commercial Avenue.
- Landscaping or fountain in the middle of the roundabout.
- Incorporating bike and pedestrian flow into the roundabout - softening the turn for cyclists.
- Signage and striping plan at 60% design.
- Traffic model being undertaken in the next couple of weeks.

Ordinance 4074: Title 9 Update

City Attorney Darcy Swetnam and Police Chief Dave Floyd re-introduced Ordinance 4074 - Title 9 Update, summarizing the edits to the updated draft of the ordinance.

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

Discussion topics included:

- Provoking assault versus disorderly conduct.

- Giving law enforcement tools to prevent harm from those who abuse free speech.

TJ FANTINI moved, seconded by ANTHONY YOUNG, to adopt Ordinance 4074. Vote: Ayes - ANTHONY YOUNG, RYAN WALTERS, CAROLYN MOULTON, BRUCE MCDOUGALL, AMANDA HUBIK, TJ FANTINI. Nays - None. Result: Passed

Interlocal Amendment with Skagit County for Indigent Defense Screening Services #24-019-MCT-001

Administrative Services Director Emily Schuh introduced the proposed amendment to interlocal agreement #24-019-MCT-001 with Skagit County for Indigent Screening Services,

Discussion topics included:

- Costs associated with the amendment.

ANTHONY YOUNG moved, seconded by BRUCE MCDOUGALL, to authorize the mayor to sign the amendment to interlocal agreement 24-019-MCT-001 with Skagit County. Vote: Ayes - ANTHONY YOUNG, RYAN WALTERS, CAROLYN MOULTON, BRUCE MCDOUGALL, AMANDA HUBIK, TJ FANTINI. Nays - None. Result: Passed

Ordinance 4073: Adoption of Updated Washington State Building Codes

Planning, Community, and Economic Development Director John Coleman summarized the changes to the draft ordinance, including format changes from the previous draft. He then introduced Building Official Rob Frisinger, who detailed the changes to the proposed Ordinance 4073 that would adopt updated Washington State building codes.

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

Discussion topics included:

- Violations section 115.4 integrated with Title 20.
- Deadline for adoption is 15 March 2024.
- Wild land - urban interface regulations are applicable for new construction and new work on existing homes.
- Controversy over wild land - urban interface code.

CAROLYN MOULTON moved, seconded by ANTHONY YOUNG, to adopt Ordinance 4073. Vote: Ayes - ANTHONY YOUNG, RYAN WALTERS, CAROLYN MOULTON, BRUCE MCDOUGALL, AMANDA HUBIK, TJ FANTINI. Nays - None. Result: Passed

Resolution 3151: Ratifying the Declaration of Emergency and Bidding Waiver for the WTP Generator Controls Upgrade

Public Works Director Andrew Rheume introduced Water System Manager Brian McDaniel, who detailed the justification for Resolution 3151 that would ratify the emergency declaration and waive the bidding requirements for the Water Treatment Plant Generator Controls Upgrade project.

Discussion topics included:

- Project included in the Capital Facilities Plan.
- No substantial costs due to the emergency.
- Fail-safe measures during the upgrade.
- Other systems with outdated operating systems?

BRUCE MCDOUGALL moved, seconded by TJ FANTINI, to approve Resolution 3151. Vote: Ayes - ANTHONY YOUNG, RYAN WALTERS, CAROLYN MOULTON, BRUCE MCDOUGALL, AMANDA HUBIK, TJ FANTINI. Nays - None. Result: Passed

Executive Session

Potential litigation per RCW 42.30.110(1)(i) (20 minutes)

Mayor Miller 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 final action having been taken. Councilmembers TJ Fantini, Anthony Young, Ryan Walters, Carolyn Moulton, Bruce McDougall and Amanda Hubik attended the executive session.

Mayor Miller announced that the Executive Session would be extended an additional 10 minutes until 8:54 pm.

Adjournment

There being no further business, at approximately 8:54 p.m. the Anacortes City Council meeting of March 4, 2024 was adjourned.