

Anacortes City Council Minutes - March 11, 2024

Call to Order

Mayor Matt Miller called to order the Anacortes City Council meeting of March 11, 2024 at 6:00 p.m. Councilmembers TJ Fantini, Ryan Walters, Anthony Young, Christine Cleland-McGrath, and Carolyn Moulton were present. Councilmembers Bruce McDougall 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 update on the short-term rental issue, including the total number of housing units and vacant units per 2022 census data. He then explained that the proposed Habitat for Humanity project is located in the R2A zone and that the city would assist Habitat for Humanity with a neighborhood meeting before any formal action is taken by the Council, including formal notification of neighbors within 300 feet of the project prior to the meeting taking place. He then announced that the Anacortes Downtown Arch would be installed by the end of March, and provided an R Avenue Improvement Project update.

Finance Committee

Ms. Cleland-McGrath reported from the Finance Committee meeting held March 7th. The topics discussed included the proposed Habitat for Humanity lease and a parcel to be dedicated to a park in that same neighborhood, sales tax receipts, a staffing update, and that there will be no check run on April 8th.

Housing Affordability and Community Services Committee

Ms. Moulton reported from the Housing Affordability and Community Services Committee meeting held March 7th. The topics discussed included a deep dive into the technical aspects of the contract with Volunteers of America for the coordinated entry program.

Planning Committee

Mr. Walters reported from the Planning Committee meeting held earlier in the evening. The topics discussed included the planning processes proposed by the Downtown Anacortes Alliance, including improvements to the downtown street scape, improvements to parking downtown and the connection between Commercial Avenue and the marina via Ninth Street. The committee also discussed a proposed amendment to the Anacortes Cinema lease, SmartGov software implementation, and the coming Comprehensive Plan update.

Public Safety Committee

Mr. Fantini reported from the Public Safety Committee meeting held March 5th. The fire topics discussed included a staffing and training update for new hires and final inspection and delivery of the ladder truck set for May and July respectively. Police topics included a staffing and training update for new hires, a presentation on xylazine and the recent discovery of the substance during enforcement action in Anacortes, and a succession plan for Police Dog T-Bone,

Personnel Committee

Ms. Cleland-McGrath reported from the Personnel Committee held on March 7th. The topics discussed included police recruiting, general recruiting, the replacement for the Enterprise Resource Planning application Eden, re-structuring Museum staffing to create a full-time position, the roll-out of NeoGov online recruiting software, and upcoming diversity, equity and inclusion training for all city staff.

Mr. Young spoke about the recent Women of Anacortes celebration held recently at the Croatian Center. He then added that all seven members of the Council must be kept informed about matters coming before the body

and that the entire Council must be consulted prior to entering into negotiations.

Public Comment

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

Linnea McCord of Anacortes spoke about city spending, the federal deficit, private and public debt, and general economic conditions.

Consent Agenda

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

a. Minutes of March 4, 2024

b. Approval of claims in the amount of \$1,544,928.00

The following vouchers/checks were approved for payment:

EFT numbers: 108800 through 108850, total \$1,216,419.29

Check numbers: 108851 through 108868, total \$301,465.39

Wire transfer numbers: 342691 through 343055, total \$27,043.32

c. Special Event Application: Anacortes Waterfront Festival and Car Show

d. Special Event Application: Oyster Run

e. Special Event Application: Gut Run Car Show

Other Business

Anacortes Chamber of Commerce Presentation

Planning, Community, and Economic Development Director John Coleman introduced Anacortes Chamber of Commerce Director Jessica Kiser, who provided an overview of programs funded by Lodging Tax Advisory Committee funds. Marketing and Membership Director Elizabeth Tyler spoke about the advertising budget, print and digital ads, the Experience Anacortes marketing campaign, commercial advertising, maritime strategic plan support, and event survey results, referring to a slide presentation that was included in the packet materials for the meeting.

Discussion topics included:

- Focus on tourism.
- Visitor center issues addressed.
- Digital and commercial advertising.
- Event center or space.
- Impressions and engagement with digital advertising.
- Brochures and QR codes.
- High traffic areas on anacortes.org website.
- Advertising reports on cost versus click.

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

Pat Gardner of Anacortes commented on the Chamber of Commerce events calendar, asking that events for the coming month be visible in further in advance.

Skagit County Update on Skagit Dam Federal Relicensing

City Attorney Darcy Swetnam introduced Commissioner Ron Wesen, Jenna Friebe, Executive Director Skagit Drainage and Irrigation Districts Consortium LLC, Daryl Hamburg, Director of Operations at Skagit County Dike District 17, and Skagit County Chief Civil Attorney Will Honea who presented an update on the Skagit Dam federal re-licensing process, referring to a slide presentation that was included in the packet materials for the meeting.

Discussion topics included:

- November 2021 flood.
- Potential impact of flooding on the Anacortes Water Treatment Plant.
- Tribal pushes for clean water.
- Drawdown process.
- Flood storage and timing of flood events due to climate change.
- Regional equities in the entire Skagit River delta.
- Balancing regional water rights.
- Target date for achieving flood storage.
- Anacortes interests tied to fish passage.

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

Barbara Smart of Anacortes commented on the inclusion of the picture of Diablo Dam in the presentation, suggesting that a picture of Ross Dam would be more appropriate, and the production of hydroelectric power that benefits the region.

Joseph Coomer of Oak Harbor commented on flood control, proposing to maintain reservoirs as dry lakes and that the land owner would be compensated annually to leave it available for flood control. He then spoke about airport, aircraft, and structural design.

Emergency Medical Services Levy Presentation

Fire Chief Bill Harris introduced Skagit County Director of Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Josh Pelonio, who presented an update on the emergency medical services levy renewal process, referring to a slide presentation that was added to the packet materials for the meeting.

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

Wil Houppermans of Anacortes expressed support for the levy.

Connie Russell of Anacortes compared the increase of the rate of this levy to the recent City of Anacortes Public Safety levy lid lift and asked what exactly the increase will mean in terms of services provided.

Discussion topics included:

- The total amount that the current levy and proposed levy would bring into the system.
- How will the levy increase be allocated?
- Funding formula and documentation of how the proposed levy rate was determined.
- Is the increase necessary now versus at a later date in light of economic conditions?
- Is the rate increase immediate or gradual?

- EMS fund management and maintenance.
- Applicability of levy to Emergency Medical Service and use of those funds versus paying for transport.
- Providing specificity to how the increases will actually manifest themselves to the voters.
- Percentage of EMS calls that result in a transport.
- Annual increase of levy over time.
- Consequences if EMS levy does not pass.
- Fiscal impact of levy on the City of Anacortes Fire/EMS.
- Clear communication of public value of the levy increase.
- Detailed EMS fund expense amounts and trends over time.
- www.skagitcounty.net/emslevy

Contract Award: Dedicated Internet Access - NoaNet #24-102-FBR-001

Administrative Services Director Emily Schuh introduced the proposed contract #24-102-FBR-001 with NoaNet for dedicated internet access, referring to a slide presentation that was added to the packet materials for the meeting.

Discussion topics included:

- Extra costs associated with high usage periods.
- How will this contract compare to what is being currently paid?
- Temporary burst above 12 Gbps if needed.
- Geographic diversity of the redundancy between providers.
- Common points of failure.

ANTHONY YOUNG moved, seconded by BRUCE MCDOUGALL, to authorize the mayor to sign contract #24-102-FBR-001 with NoaNet. Vote: Ayes - ANTHONY YOUNG, RYAN WALTERS, CHRISTINE CLELAND-MCGRATH, CAROLYN MOULTON, BRUCE MCDOUGALL, AMANDA HUBIK, TJ FANTINI. Nays - None. Result: Passed

Contract Award: Stormwater Master Plan Update #24-103-STM-001

Public Works Director Andrew Rheume introduced proposed contract #24-103-STM-001 with Osborn Consulting, Inc. for the Stormwater Master Plan Update.

Discussion topics included:

- Why is consulting necessary?
- Why this consultant?
- Grant from the Department of Ecology.
- Stormwater Master Plan development and approval process.
- Improving plan after 17 years.
- In-person and virtual public engagement.
- List of capital projects that need to be accomplished and then prioritized by the Council.
- Stormwater repair and replacement program.
- Stormwater model.
- Informing the scope of work for parcel development.

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

Marlene Finley of Anacortes and board member of Evergreen Islands asked that there be public engagement throughout the process, asserting that it was not specifically mentioned in the contract.

RYAN WALTERS moved, seconded by CAROLYN MOULTON, to authorize the mayor to sign contract 24-103-STM-001 with Osborn Consulting. Vote: Ayes - ANTHONY YOUNG, RYAN WALTERS, CHRISTINE CLELAND-MCGRATH, CAROLYN MOULTON, BRUCE MCDUGALL, AMANDA HUBIK, TJ FANTINI. Nays - None. Result: Passed

Contract Award: Transportation Master Plan #24-098-TRN-001

Public Works Director Andrew Rheame introduced proposed contract #24-098-TRN-001 with Transpo Group to assist the city in updating the Transportation Element of the Comprehensive Plan, detailing the elements of the plan and adding that the same consultant will be accomplishing the update for Skagit County.

Discussion topics included:

- When does the process start?
- Will the process account for projects under consideration?
- Consideration of future growth.
- Multi-modal elements of the plan.
- Unopened right-of-way.
- Funding strategies.
- Integration into Geographic Information System.
- Transportation impact fees.
- Consistency with the entire Comprehensive Plan.

CHRISTINE CLELAND-MCGRATH moved, seconded by ANTHONY YOUNG, to authorize the mayor to sign contract 24-098-TRN-001 with Transpo Group. Vote: Ayes - ANTHONY YOUNG, RYAN WALTERS, CHRISTINE CLELAND-MCGRATH, CAROLYN MOULTON, BRUCE MCDUGALL, AMANDA HUBIK, TJ FANTINI. Nays - None. Result: Passed

Adjournment

There being no further business, at approximately 8:44 p.m. the Anacortes City Council meeting of March 11, 2024 was adjourned.