

Anacortes City Council Minutes - March 25, 2024

Call to Order Special Joint Meeting with the Port of Anacortes Commission

Mayor Matt Miller called to order the advertised special joint meeting of the Anacortes City Council and the Port of Anacortes Commission at 5:00 p.m. Councilmembers TJ Fantini, Ryan Walters, Anthony Young, Christine Cleland-McGrath, Carolyn Moulton, and Bruce McDougall were present. Councilmember Amanda Hubik was absent.

Port of Anacortes Commission President Jon Ronngren called the meeting to order for the Port.

Other Business

Interlocal Cooperative Agreement between the City and the Port for Conceptual Design of an Event Venue

Mayor Miller presented the proposed interlocal cooperative agreement between the City and the Port for conceptual design of an event venue, 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.

Public comment was given as follows:

Mary LaFleur of Anacortes commented on the marina and the noise a community event center would generate, proposing the event center be located at an alternate location.

Jesica Kiser of the Anacortes Chamber of Commerce asked if rental returns would cover facility overhead and maintenance or would supplemental funding from annual Lodging Tax Advisory Committee (LTAC) outlays be necessary? She also asked if LTAC funds would be allocated for procurement of a temporary space to keep regular events going during facility construction?

Marta McClintock, Executive Director of the Island Health Foundation and Rotary President-elect, expressed enthusiastic support for the proposal.

Meredith McIlmoyle, Director of the Anacortes Arts Festival and representative for the Anacortes Creative District expressed support for the project and advocated that the Council and Commission consider all possible funding models and reference the work previously done on this initiative in 2017-18.

Luke Currier, board member for the Anacortes Chamber of Commerce and business owner, expressed enthusiastic support for the project.

Brenda Ramsdale, President of the Anacortes Youth Sports Coalition, voiced support for an event center that would accommodate at least 300 people.

Pat Barrett of Anacortes expressed support for an event center, and warned against using LTAC funds exclusively for its maintenance, as the funds benefit other organizations in the city. He pointed out that Cap Sante marina is primarily a vacation marina and not a live aboard marina.

Pat Gardner of Anacortes expressed support for the event center and suggested that the dirt area of the marina be expanded for adequate parking.

Mark Lione, owner of the Cap Sante Inn, member of the board of the Chamber of Commerce, Anacortes Family Center, and Anacortes Arts Festival, expressed support for the event center in the proposed location, and concern about spending annual LTAC funds for ongoing operations and maintenance, and a possible bond for construction.

Allen Rhoades, owner of the Rockfish Grill, asked where the city is on the approval of the Port Redevelopment Plan, pointing out that a delay with the approval process could stall progress on the event center.

Discussion topics included:

- Spirit of cooperation and collaboration between the Port and City.
- An agreement for cost and design.
- Northwest basin master plan.
- Support for are non-profits.
- Partners well with the Depot and Seafarers.
- Walkability from downtown.
- Discussions with the Economic Development Alliance of Skagit County
- Looking at other regional event venues
- Lodging Tax Advisory Committee funds.
- Public - private partnership.
- Land vacation conversations early in the process.
- Financing: total cost estimate: \$6 million - \$1.5 million in LTAC capital reserve and bond funding for the remainder.

RYAN WALTERS moved, seconded by CHRISTINE CLELAND-MCGRATH, to approve the interlocal cooperative agreement between the City & Port for conceptual event center design . Vote: Ayes - ANTHONY YOUNG, RYAN WALTERS, CHRISTINE CLELAND-MCGRATH, CAROLYN MOULTON, BRUCE MCDOUGALL, TJ FANTINI. Nays - None. Result: Passed

The Port Commission approved the interlocal agreement.

Adjournment

There being no further business, at approximately 6:00 p.m. the Anacortes City Council special joint meeting with the Port of Anacortes Commission was adjourned.