

Anacortes City Council Minutes - May 13, 2024

Call to Order

Mayor Matt Miller called to order the Anacortes City Council meeting of May 13, 2024 at 6:00 p.m. Councilmembers TJ Fantini, Ryan Walters, Anthony Young, Christine Cleland-McGrath, Carolyn Moulton, Bruce McDougall and Amanda Hubik were present.

Pledge of Allegiance

The assembly joined in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Announcements and Committee Reports

Mayor Miller announced that the Anacortes Boat and Yacht Show opens on Thursday, May 16th at 10am and continues until Saturday, May 18th at 6pm, and that there will be a ribbon cutting for the Samish 34th Street housing project on Friday, May 17th at 2pm. He then thanked the Police and Parks and Recreation departments for their support in managing the unexpected crowds at Washington Park on Friday night during the aurora borealis viewing. He continued by announcing that the flower baskets would be up this Friday, and that the Skagit County Board of Commissioners would hold a public hearing on solid waste rates on Tuesday, May 21st at 8:30 am. He concluded by thanking the Parks and Recreation department for maintaining the ball fields in preparation for hosting high school boys baseball state playoff games over the coming weekend.

Finance Committee

Ms. Cleland-McGrath reported from the Finance Committee meeting held May 9th. The topics discussed included the timing for replacement of two discharge meters for the Water Treatment Plant. She mentioned that it is a project that might be reimbursable by the Federal Emergency Management Agency after damage sustained during a levee breach in the 2021 flood.

Housing Affordability and Community Services Committee

Ms. Moulton reported from the Housing Affordability and Community Services Committee meeting held May 9th, which consisted of a visit by the Washington Senate Committee on Land Use, Government, and Tribal Affairs. The topics discussed included the affordable housing sales tax and a possible sales tax exemption for builders of affordable housing.

Planning Committee

Mr. Walters reported from the Planning Committee meeting held earlier in the evening. The topic discussed was impact and connection fee waivers for low income housing and accessory dwelling units, and that the committee considered consolidation of existing code provisions and an update to reflect recent changes in state legislation.

Public Safety Committee

Mr. Fantini reported from the Public Safety Committee meeting held May 7th. The Fire / Emergency Medical Services topics discussed included a hiring and training update, the timeline for delivery of the new ladder truck scheduled to arrive earlier than anticipated in June and the associated "Push-In" ceremony, and Brush 29 readiness for state deployment.

Police topics included a Skagit County Drug Task Force presentation to the Council in the next month, a training update for recent hires, a hiring update, the promotional testing process, a recent meeting with law enforcement leaders and local state legislators, financial fraud awareness, and mental health issues.

Planning Commission Reappointment

Mayor Miller introduced the re-appointment of Paul Ryan to the Planning Commission for a six-year term.

Ms. Hubik moved, seconded by Mr. Young, to approve the re-appointment of Paul Ryan to the Planning

Commission for a six-year term. The motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

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 addressed the links between the World Economic Forum (WEF), United Nations (UN) and Habitat for Humanity, which she asserted are the source for the terms 'affordable housing', 'climate change' and 'sustainable development', which are being used to introduce 3,000 units of affordable housing into the community of 18,000 residents. She pointed out that Anacortes has an existing agreement with [ICLEI USA | Local Governments for Sustainability](#), and that this and other non-governmental organizations (NGOs), including Habitat for Humanity, are working with the UN and WEF. She added that the City of Olympia, Washington is working with ICLEI to curb greenhouse gas emissions and continued by reading an excerpt from a document authored by cities who had severed ties with ICLEI. It alleged that ICLEI in concert with local government seeks to control citizens' lives under the guise of environmental concern. She then listed additional NGOs that she said support illegal immigration.

Suzanne Rohner of Anacortes commented on Irwin Development LLC, describing the firm's recent developments in other areas and detailing their housing proposal for development of 100 units of housing plus an additional 20 units if certain affordability conditions are met on city-owned land at Sharpes Corner. She mentioned two themes regarding the housing situation in Anacortes: that housing is unaffordable, which she attributed to the recent rise of inflation, economic policies and increases in regulations; and that there are people who want to live in Anacortes that are unable to live in Anacortes because of a limited housing supply. She asked if anyone had conducted research to determine the number of individuals who fall into that category?

She then asked if it were the default assumption that everyone who lives in Anacortes want to live there? She provided alternative possibilities, including that there could be those who work in Anacortes that want to live elsewhere for family or economic considerations. She asked if it had been considered if a significant portion of Anacortes residents work elsewhere and if a significant portion of the 120 proposed units would be taken by such individuals. She continued that population growth rate is not well-defined, citing statistics that the birth rate in the United States is decreasing and the death rate recently increased slightly after a period of decline, asserting that population growth is largely attributable to uncontrolled immigration. She wondered if this could be the cause for the housing shortage.

Consent Agenda

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

a. Minutes of May 6, 2024

b. Approval of claims in the amount of \$1,256,994.83

The following vouchers/checks were approved for payment:

EFT numbers: 109335 through 109400, total \$969,186.76

Check numbers: 109401 through 109418, total \$252,702.92

Wire transfer numbers: 346722 through 347208, total \$35,105.15

Public Hearings

Public Hearing for Amendment to the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) 2023-2027

Consolidated Plan

Planning, Community, and Economic Development Coordinator Stephanie Snyder re-introduced the proposed amendments to the CDBG 2023-2027 Consolidated Plan, adding that no public comment had been received.

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

At 6:24 pm, Mayor Miller closed the public hearing.

Discussion topics included:

- Funding for curb cuts 24th Street and H Avenue to facilitate Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) access to public transit
- Exterior maintenance of Anacortes Family Center emergency housing shelter.

CAROLYN MOULTON moved, seconded by AMANDA HUBIK, to approve recommended amendments to the Community Development Block Grant 2023-2027 Consolidated Plan.

Vote: Ayes - ANTHONY YOUNG, RYAN WALTERS, CHRISTINE CLELAND-MCGRATH, CAROLYN MOULTON, BRUCE MCDUGALL, AMANDA HUBIK, TJ FANTINI. Nays - None. Result: Passed

Other Business

Community Action Quarterly Report

Planning, Community, and Economic Development Director John Coleman introduced Community Action Resource Center Manager Dulce Vasquez-Cruz, who presented the Council with a report of the organization's activities for the first quarter of 2024, referring to a slide presentation that was added to the packet materials for the meeting.

Discussion topics included:

- Continued support for those in need in Anacortes.
- Supportive donations from the Anacortes community.
- Benefits of having the Resource Center in Anacortes.
- Types of referrals are for seniors to commodity and energy assistance.
- Homelessness prevention.

Downtown Anacortes Alliance Year-in-Review

Downtown Anacortes Alliance Executive Director Jordan Hay and Jonelle McCoy of the State of Washington Main Street team presented the organization's activities over the last year, referring to a slide presentation and hand-outs that were included in the packet materials for the meeting.

Discussion topics included:

- Importance of attracting visitors and locals to downtown businesses.
- Block parties.
- Parklets.
- Pedestrianization of streets.
- Increased parking downtown.
- Future outlook - more community spaces and city scape design.
- Community energy and stakeholder.
- Comprehensive Plan informing strategy.
- Limitations - financial donations from community and tax incentives.
- Community status and tax credit eligibility - Business & Occupation (B&O) tax credit - 2024

application at the end of June.

- 2024 – Lodging Tax Advisory Committee funding and service contract.
- Taking on smaller community projects.
- How do community members volunteer? Go to [Volunteer – Downtown Anacortes Alliance](#)

Contract Modification: City Engineer of Record for Streets and Stormwater #23-292-ENG-001

Public Works Director Andrew Rheume introduced proposed contract #23-292-ENG-001 for City Engineer of Record for streets and stormwater with H.W. Lochner, Inc. He outlined the principal purposes of the modification, including continuing on-call support for traffic engineering and stormwater management expertise and to plan and implement ADA ramps and multimodal features along Commercial Avenue from 13th Street to 34th Street. He estimated that a shovel-ready project design would be ready by the end of the month and that grant and legislative funding would be pursued. He reported that the estimated project cost is \$3 million, including paving and ADA ramp, and multimodal feature construction and installation.

Discussion topics included:

- Grant or legislative funding or not, complete the paving project.
- Water main replacement and phasing of the project.
- Other utilities that might need to be replaced.
- PS&E = Engineering plan set.
- WSDOT = Washington State Department of Transportation channelization plan approval timeline.

RYAN WALTERS moved, seconded by BRUCE MCDOUGALL, to approve modification to contract #23-292-ENG-001.

Vote: Ayes - ANTHONY YOUNG, RYAN WALTERS, CHRISTINE CLELAND-MCGRATH, CAROLYN MOULTON, BRUCE MCDOUGALL, AMANDA HUBIK, TJ FANTINI. Nays - None. Result: Passed

Adjournment

There being no further business, at approximately 7:17 p.m. the Anacortes City Council meeting of May 13, 2024 was adjourned.