

Anacortes City Council Minutes - January 13, 2025

Call to Order

Mayor Matt Miller called to order the Anacortes City Council meeting of January 13, 2025 at 6:00 p.m. Councilmembers TJ Fantini, Ryan Walters, Anthony Young, Carolyn Moulton, and Bruce McDougall were present. Councilmember Amanda Hubik participated in the meeting remotely via Zoom. Councilmember Christine Cleland-McGrath was absent.

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

Pledge of Allegiance

The assembly joined in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Announcements and Committee Reports

Mayor Miller thanked the staff and the community for participation in the Parade of Champions on Sunday morning. He then announced that City Hall would be closed on Monday January 20th in observance of the Martin Luther King Jr. holiday with the next regular City Council meeting scheduled to occur on Tuesday January 21st at 6:00pm.

Historic Preservation Board Appointment

Mayor Miller introduced the proposed appointment of Fletcher McLean, for a three-year term to the Anacortes Historic Preservation Board.

Mr. Fantini moved, seconded by Mr. Young, to appoint Fletcher McLean to a three-year term on the Anacortes Historic Preservation Board. The motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

Finance Committee

Ms. Moulton reported from the Finance Committee meeting held January 9th. The topics discussed included the selection of Tyler Technologies as the vendor for the new enterprise resource planning application, sales tax revenue from 2024 decreasing by a smaller than expected rate of 3.2%, the decision to not immediately replace a senior accountant, a recap of the 2023 state audit, and a coming finance update to the Council at the next regular meeting on January 21st.

Planning Committee

Ms. Moulton reported from the Planning Committee meeting held earlier in the evening. The topics discussed included the Comprehensive Plan update process. She mentioned that the Planning Commission had worked on draft goals and policies, held public hearings and received public comment for the Land Use, Housing, and Transportation elements, adding that the Planning Commission will next be developing draft goals and policies for the Capital Facilities Plan and Utilities. She then announced that the Climate Action Team would meet on Tuesday January 14th at 6pm in Council Chambers.

Mr. Fantini asked if there was information regarding the land on West 6th Street that is planned for use as a park in preparation for a public meeting to be held on January 30th. Ms. Moulton responded that there are wetlands on the site that could present some challenges to development, but that the Public Works department likely had more specific information.

Port / City Liaison Committee

Mr. Walters reported from the Port / City Liaison Committee meeting held January 7th. The principal topic discussed was the future Port / City event center. The committee discussed two main associated issues. The first being that the port operate the center without mandating a caterer to maintain affordability for local non-profits,

and the second being consideration of contingencies should the operation lose money and how the port could be compensated. Possible solutions proposed included the city taking over operations, outsourcing operations, or reimbursing the city for the cost of construction, which were to be reviewed by port outside counsel.

Public Safety Committee

Mayor Miller reported that the Public Safety Committee did meet on January 7th, and that Ms. Cleland-McGrath would provide an update at a later date.

Housing Affordability and Community Services Committee

Mr. Walters reported from the Housing Affordability and Community Services Committee meeting held January 8th. The committee hosted a guest speaker, Chuck Messinger of Volunteers of America, who discussed the national Point in Time Count of homeless people between January 30th and February 5th that will help determine state and federal funding to address homelessness by community. Mr. Walters added that the Anacortes Family Center, Salvation Army, the Samish Indian Nation and the Swinomish Indian Tribal Community will be participating, and that the organizations would be offering supplies to encourage those who are on the margins of homelessness to be counted. More information about the count and how to volunteer can be found at www.voaww.org/pitcount. Mr. Messinger and the committee then discussed Conestoga huts as a low-cost option for those who are unsheltered. The committee then discussed goal setting for the year to include supporting the Comprehensive Plan update process, possible ordinances for a multi-family tax exemption, and amending the sales tax contracts for the Anacortes Family Center and the Anacortes Housing Authority. He concluded by citing an academic article which found that for every 10 market rate homes built, it results in 7 lower-income homes becoming available.

Mr. Young asked if Community Action of Skagit County would be participating in the Point in Time count. Mr. Walters responded that they were not specifically mentioned as a participant, but he thought they likely would be part of the effort.

Personnel Committee

Mr. Fantini reported from the Personnel Committee meeting held January 9th. The topics discussed included a hiring update, with 15 open positions, 9 active job postings, and three positions on pause. He then mentioned that the city would be hosting testing for entry level police officers in June, with recruiting events at three upcoming college career fairs. He then reported that police labor negotiations are scheduled for January 22nd, and that there would be a coming memorandum of understanding between the City of Sedro Woolley and Anacortes for cooperative employment of a new police canine.

Ms. Moulton mentioned, as a board member of Skagit Transit, she attended an event on January 11th at the new Skagit Transit Center that is currently under construction, where Representative Rick Larsen announced the award of a \$19.5 million grant for funding toward the facility that will include hydrogen busses and solar power. She added that an additional \$5 million in funding will be required to complete the project. Mayor Miller mentioned that the new facility will bring the organization's base of operations out of the flood plain. Mr. Young remarked that it was important that Ms. Moulton be present at these events to further the interests of Anacortes and Skagit County.

Public Comment

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

Public comment was given as follows:

Linda Martin of Anacortes commented on the budget process and budget creep she noted in the previous year's planning process, offering suggestions for process improvement.

Nick Genovese of Anacortes commented on the state budget, the proposed associated cuts, and spoke against

possible property tax increases to make up for the shortfall.

Consent Agenda

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

a. Minutes of January 6, 2025

b. Approval of claims in the amount of \$2,320,927.60

The following vouchers/checks were approved for payment:

EFT numbers: 111389 through 111422, total \$999,667.39

Check numbers: 111430 through 111447, total \$1,289,438.99

Wire transfer numbers: 361086 through 361159, total \$31,821.22

c. Special Event: Ragnar Relay Race Northwest Passage

Other Business

Interlocal Agreement #25-026-GIS-001 with Skagit County for Aerial Imagery Services

Public Works Director Andrew Rheaume introduced proposed interlocal agreement #25-026-GIS-001 with Skagit County for aerial imagery services, explaining that this agreement would make the city part of a consortium with other local jurisdictions to obtain high resolution imagery of the county for use in city geographic information systems.

Bruce McDougall moved, seconded by TJ Fantini, to authorize the mayor to execute interlocal agreement #25-026-GIS-001 with Skagit County for aerial imagery services.

Vote: Ayes - Carolyn Moulton, Anthony Young, Ryan Walters, Bruce McDougall, Amanda Hubik, TJ Fantini.
Nays - None. Abstentions - None. Result: Passed

Mr. Young expressed his appreciation for Mr. Rheaume's engagement and assistance in helping a community member through difficulty.

Adjournment

There being no further business, at approximately 6:32 pm the Anacortes City Council meeting of January 13, 2025, was adjourned.