

Anacortes City Council Minutes - February 24, 2025

Call to Order

Mayor Matt Miller called to order the Anacortes City Council meeting of February 24, 2025, at 6:00 p.m. Councilmembers TJ Fantini, Ryan Walters, Christine Cleland-McGrath, and Bruce McDougall were present. Councilmembers Carolyn Moulton and Amanda Hubik participated in the meeting remotely via Zoom. Councilmember Anthony Young was absent.

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

Pledge of Allegiance

The assembly joined in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Announcements and Committee Reports

Mayor Miller announced that there would be remote staff presentations during the meeting. He then reported that he, Administrative Services Director Emily Schuh and Mr. Fantini attended the Association of Washington Cities City Action Days in Olympia where they advocated for state assistance with the planned overlay of Commercial Avenue and the potential unfunded mandate regarding indigent defense. He then announced that the [Senior Needs Assessment Survey](#) closes on Friday, February 28th, and that the Forest Advisory Board is reviewing the first draft of the 2026 Forest Plan Update, which is open for [public comment](#) through Tuesday, March 4th at 5 pm.

Planning Committee

Mr. Walters reported from the Planning Committee meeting held earlier in the evening. The topics discussed included outstanding code enforcement cases, right-of-way issues, alley paving and associated stormwater impacts to allow for in-fill development. He also mentioned proposed state legislation ([SB 5332](#) and [HB 1443](#)) for allowing mobile dwelling units and the associated negative impacts on neighboring properties.

North Star Housing Task Force

Mr. Walters reported from the North Star Housing Task Force meeting held earlier in the afternoon. The topics discussed included a review of the organization's presentations, upcoming presentations the task force will receive from various non-profit housing providers, and including the task force in the local able housing initiative to provide disabled adults with housing.

Personnel Committee

Ms. Cleland-McGrath reported from the Personnel Committee meeting held February 14th. The topics discussed included a public defender update, an assessment of personnel exits from the city over 2024, options for remote work in the pending personnel policy revision, and recent police recruitment efforts at Washington State University and Eastern Washington University.

Public Safety Committee

Mr. Fantini reported from the Public Safety Committee meeting held February 11th. The Fire / Emergency Medical Service topics discussed included a recruiting update for an open paramedic position and the possibility of training paramedics in-house, and the ongoing investigation of the recent Skyline area fire that is nearing completion. Police topics included a recruiting update, a public safety test will be offered on March 1st and August 10th. Additionally, he reported that four candidates passed the recent oral boards and two new officers will attend the Arlington Academy. He concluded by reporting that Marathon Refinery will shut down from mid-March through the end of May and has requested police public safety support that Marathon would fund during the shutdown period.

Finance Committee

Ms. Cleland-McGrath reported from the Finance Committee meeting held February 13th. The topics discussed included revenue sources, the financial challenges of bonding for financing the proposed event center, a coming Finance update in March, and accounting methods. Additionally, the committee discussed Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) fund reimbursement for the Wastewater Treatment Plant outfall replacement project as well as the status of FEMA funds that have not yet been approved that were to be used to cover significant elements of the 2024 and 2025 budgets. She advocated that the discussion on revenue sources should be held prior to the upcoming City Council - Mayor retreat.

Mayor Miller outlined the two principal sources of federal funding, Community Development Block Grant funds through the Department for Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and FEMA funds that are promised to cover three natural disasters dating back to 2020. He detailed that the city had received \$10 million of the promised \$17 million for the outfall project and an alternative project for the destruction of a trail that was recently negotiated to be reimbursed for \$2.5 million. He concluded that the trail reimbursement funds are subject to FEMA regional office approval and that city staff are monitoring the status of the approval.

Skagit County Law and Justice Council

Mr. Fantini reported from the Skagit County Law and Justice Council meeting held on February 10th. The council heard a presentation from Homeless Outreach Stabilization and Transition (HOST) to include their ongoing harm-reduction services in Skagit County with the aim of reducing the impact on local emergency services. The organization's team includes three case managers for Skagit County with capacity for 15 clients each, active case management and cooperation on encouraging referrals from local service providers, and means by which the services can be provided to community youth.

Mr. Fantini then spoke about his experience at City Action Days in Olympia and the positive experience he had with local state legislators, including advocating for action on a proposed parking requirements bill for new developments that would have adversely affected a city the size of Anacortes, lobbying for funds for the event center project, and increased flexibility for the uses of real estate excise tax funds. He then announced that he would hold a town hall on February 25th at 6pm in the library community room with Port Commissioner Bonnie Bowers.

Public Comment

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

Public comment was delivered as follows:

Janean Jolly of Anacortes addressed road safety on Oakes Avenue near the Channel Landing neighborhood and expressed concern over the response from city staff regarding possible future measures to improve safety.

Shawna Kitzan of Anacortes addressed road safety on Oakes Avenue near the Portalis and Channel Landing neighborhoods to prevent harm and injury after several recent traffic incidents, and expressed concern regarding city staff response.

Consent Agenda

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

a. Minutes of February 10, 2025

b. Approval of claims in the amount of \$2,565,619.82

The following vouchers/checks were approved for payment:

EFT numbers: 111710 through 111770, total \$2,395,405.08

Check numbers: 111771 through 111797, total \$136,467.67

Wire transfer numbers: 363738 through 360840, total \$33,747.07

c. Contract Award: WWTP Annual Incinerator Emissions Testing #25-042-SEW-001

Other Business

North Star Presentation

Director of Strategic Initiatives Monica Negrila from the Skagit County Commissioners' office presented current activities and initiatives for the [North Star](#) public-private partnership, referring to a slide presentation that was added to the packet materials for the meeting.

Discussion topics included:

- Housing Task Force housing call to action and the importance of having all jurisdictions agree on a common approach.
- North Star brings local jurisdictions and the community together to solve significant problems.
- Exploring services for community youth. Upstream interventions.
- Financial challenges of providing services. Engaging with local tribes.
- What benefits one, benefits all in the community and brings people together.
- Appreciation for the [Julota system](#).
- Ensuring the continuum of care is available.
- Low barrier to entry for services for the most vulnerable.
- Making support available to those on the brink of being in extremis.
- Support for the senior and aging population in the community.

Contract Modification: WWTP Outfall - Permitting & Monitoring Services #20-032-SEW-014

Public Works Director Andrew Rheume introduced the proposed modification to contract #20-032-SEW-014 with Widener and Associates for permitting and monitoring services related to the Wastewater Treatment Plant outfall project, due to the project switching from blasting to micro-tunneling.

Discussion topics included:

- Reason(s) for switching from blasting to micro-tunneling.
- Re-surfacing the road in the trench area.

TJ Fantini moved, seconded by Ryan Walters, to authorize the mayor to sign the modification to contract #20-032-SEW-014 with Widener and Associates for permitting and monitoring services related to the Wastewater Treatment Plant outfall project.

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

Contract Award: RingCentral VoIP Software Telephone System #25-053-ITS-002

Administrative Services Director Emily Schuh introduced the proposed software contract with RingCentral for a voice over internet protocol (VoIP) telephone system, referring to a slide presentation that was added to the packet materials for the meeting.

Discussion topics included:

- Evaluation of cloud Mitel and native Teams done separately from Maverick Networks.
- The possible uses of three separate video conferencing options and potential cost savings.
- Can integrate with the Teams application or run as its own separate application from Teams if Microsoft starts to charge additional fees for Teams licenses.

- Physical phone units to be phased out.
 - Transition to virtual equipment.
- Teams not fully featured to provide desired capabilities.
 - Fax is integrated all inclusively.
 - Call routing and handling are more capable in RingCentral.
- Cell phone integration.
- Fees per line, per month are separate from cell phones.

Bruce McDougall moved, seconded by Christine Cleland-McGrath, to authorize the mayor to sign contract #25-053-ITS-002 with RingCentral Inc. for a voice over internet protocol (VoIP) telephone system.

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

Contract Award: RingCentral VoIP Software Telephone System - Implementation & Materials #25-053-ITS-001

Administrative Services Director Emily Schuh introduced the proposed contract for implementation and materials with Maverick Networks Inc. for a voice over internet protocol (VoIP) telephone system, referring to a slide presentation that was added to the packet materials for the meeting.

Ryan Walters moved, seconded by Amanda Hubik, to authorize the mayor to sign contract #25-053-ITS-001 with Maverick Networks Inc. for implementation and materials with Maverick Networks Inc. for a voice over internet protocol (VoIP) telephone system.

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

Draft Interlocal Agreement Between the Cities of Burlington, Mount Vernon, Anacortes, & Sedro Woolley for Coordination on Procurement for Public Defense Services

Administrative Services Director Emily Schuh introduced the proposed interlocal agreement between the cities of Burlington, Mount Vernon, Anacortes, and Sedro-Woolley for coordination on the procurement of public defense services, referring to a slide presentation that was added to the packet materials for the meeting.

Discussion topics included:

- Keep the independent third-party auditor provision.
- Scaled assistance to Anacortes needs.
- Precedent for the current agreement between Burlington and Mount Vernon.
- The out for the city is that the contract is a request for qualifications, not a request for proposal.
- Cost-sharing for the agreement will look back to the prior year, and would become each city's percent allocation for the annual cost.
 - Percent allocation does not consider the complexity of the cases.
 - Have billing be allocated to each city based on case location.
- Adequate coverage for overflow needs could be absorbed by a larger firm.
- Percentage allocation to each party for the cost of the auditor.

Interlocal Agreement #25-072-AFD-001 for Moorage with the Port of Anacortes

Fire Chief Bill Harris introduced the proposed interlocal agreement #25-072-AFD-001 with the Port of Anacortes for moorage of the city's emergency response vessel. It would be provided in exchange for two training courses per year for port staff on marine-related emergency response.

Discussion topics included:

- Reason for choosing the Cap Sante marina.
 - Only public marina in the area.

Ryan Walters moved, seconded by Amanda Hubik, to authorize the mayor to sign interlocal agreement #25-072-AFD-001 with the Port of Anacortes.

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

Contract Award: Commercial Avenue Enhancement Project – Design #19-097-TRN-001

Public Works Director Andrew Rheume introduced the proposed design contract with Osborn Consulting, Inc. for the Commercial Avenue Enhancement Project.

Discussion topics included:

- Q Avenue to R Avenue proposed improvements on 29th Street not part of this contract.
- 34th to 30th Street on Q Avenue is an important portion for pedestrian and vehicular traffic improvements.
- 29th Street and Commercial Avenue pedestrian improvements are important.
- Q Avenue is important for bicyclists going north and avoiding high-speed areas of Commercial Avenue.
- Bike lanes and ADA ramps are required for the overlay.
- Carefully consider the 29th Street and Commercial Avenue intersection for funding.
 - A cost estimate is needed for pedestrian improvements.
- 29th Street frontage to be improved by the new bowling alley property owner.

Ryan Walters moved, seconded by TJ Fantini, to authorize the mayor to sign contract 19-097-TRN-001 with Osborn Consulting Inc. for the design of the Commercial Avenue Enhancement Project.

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

Contract Modification – Dedicated Internet Access at NoaNet's Burlington Point of Network Presence #24-102-FBR-001

Administrative Services Director Emily Schuh introduced the proposed contract modification to contract #24-102-FBR-001 with NoaNet to increase the Dedicated Internet Access at NoaNet's Burlington point of network presence from 12 Gbps to 15 Gbps and extend the term for an additional 24 months.

Discussion topics included:

- 11 Gbps means educating the public on transitioning many from cable TV to live-streaming.
- Early action before it becomes a problem.

TJ Fantini moved, seconded by Bruce McDougall, to authorize the mayor to sign the modification to contract #24-102-FBR-001 with NoaNet to increase the Dedicated Internet Access at NoaNet's Burlington point of network presence from 12 Gbps to 15 Gbps and extend the term for an additional 24 months.

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

Adjournment

There being no further business, at approximately 8:28 pm the Anacortes City Council meeting of February 24, 2025 was adjourned.