Anacortes City Council Minutes - April 7, 2025

Call to Order
Mayor Matt Miller called to order the Anacortes City Council meeting of April 7, 2025 at 6:00 p.m. Councilmembers TJ Fantini, Ryan Walters, Anthony Young, Christine Cleland-McGrath, Carolyn Moulton, and Amanda Hubik were present. Councilmember Hubik participated in the meeting remotely via Zoom. Councilmember McDougall was absent. Ms. Moulton moved seconded by Mr. Young to excuse Mr. McDougall. Motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

Pledge of Allegiance
The assembly joined in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Announcements and Committee Reports
Mr. Miller explained that to be consistent with state law public comment would not be taken on the hospital levy. He also discussed the city code around discharge of firearms in the city limits. He also touched on the upcoming ballot due date, as well as the egg dash this Friday April 11. He also reminded the public of the residential cleanup (free dump) day from 9:00 AM - Noon on April 19th, free to Anacortes Citizens. Proof of Anacortes residency (generally a utility bill or similar) is needed. Mayor Miller also stated the WT Preston and Maritime Heritage center are now on Spring hours; as well as reporting on a NorthStar meeting that was held the prior week which was oriented around the opioid settlement monies.
Mr. Walters also gave an update on the Guemes ferry haul out, including the parking issue that has been incurred as a result of that.
Mr. Fantini also brought attention to Chinook Enterprises and the great work they have been doing in the community for the past 45 years.

Food Waste Prevention Week
Mayor Miller shared a proclamation for Food Waste Prevention Week.

Fiber Committee
Mr. Walters reported from the Fiber Committee meeting held 2 weeks prior, and explained the progress on continued expansion in the southern part of the city, as well as a few other projects done by the department.

Information Technology Committee
Mr. Walters also reported from the IT Committee meeting held 2 weeks prior, and talked about the results of a successful audit by the State Auditors Office on the City's SCADA system, and the strengths identified around those and other systems operated by the City. He noted there were additional results from the audit that were communicated to the IT department, but it was a generally successful audit.

Finance Committee
Ms. Moulton reported on the Finance Committee meeting held April 27th. The topics discussed included sales tax revenues, including an increase from boat sales but generally flat in other sectors of the sales tax revenues. She noted the economy appears to be in flux, indicating there will be some that the mayor and council will need to do be ready for the upcoming budget process.

Housing Affordability and Community Services Committee
Ms. Cleland-McGrath reported from the HAACS Committee meeting held the previous week. The topics discussed included an update on the CDBG funding, and the nice job staff have done to get current on the funding that was in a carry over status from prior years. She also reported on a workforce housing concept in discussion that would include the County and Housing Authority, as well as the City, and the potential use of the Affordable Housing sales tax revenues to support it. She also mentioned a June 6 NorthStar symposium, with a keynote speaker who is a published author from the University of Washington.

Library Committee

Library committee did not meet.

Port / City Liaison Committee

Mr. Walters reported from the Committee meeting held the previous week. The topics discussed center primarily around the Events Center project, as well as the success of the heavy haul route that City Council authorized 2 weeks prior.

Public Safety Committee

Ms. Cleland - McGrath reported that the committee met April 1 and discussed a few openings the PD and FD currently have, as well as the contract that is on the consent agenda to replace current radios with UHF radios. She also reported Chief Floyd gave an update on the success of the new Police training academy in Arlington. She also reported the need to replace the City's tasers, which is a new type that will be used by the APD moving forward. She also mentioned the discharge of a firearm in relation to a deer incident that occurred in the Old Town neighborhood in the prior week, and Mr. Young and Mayor Miller exchanged comments on same.

Personnel Committee

Mr. Fantini reported from the Committee meeting held the previous week. The topics discussed included upcoming new hires in the Fiber and GIS departments. He also gave an update on police recruiting, including at college campuses.

Public Comment

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

Susan Stevenson addressed the Council on parking in her neighborhood, specifically related to a no parking sign that was removed in front of her house, but 2 other signs in the same neighborhood were left in place.

Andy Culbertson addressed the Council about the great community we live in, and one of the things that make the community what it is, are the great people that are here, and have come before, and one of those is the trestle trail's namesake, Tommy Thompson. He expressed how pleased he is that Council is considering improvements to that wonderful amenity.

Sheila Tomas addressed the Council describing the episode where she heard what she thought were gunshots, and an ensuing death of a deer in the Old Town neighborhood. She described calling 911 and the ensuing event that took place. She expressed thanks to many citizens, council members, and the 911 call center involved.

Bosi Morris also addressed the council on the parking issue in old town due to the Guemes ferry haul out, and her dissatisfaction with the lack of communication from the county on the haul out and parking plan.

Malcom McCutcheon also addressed the Council on the parking issue from the ferry, expressing his concern with multiple cars angle parked across lawns and the potential to damage residential water infrastructure.

Consent Agenda

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

a. Minutes of March 24, 2025

b. Approval of claims in the amount of $1,842,949.28
The following vouchers/checks were approved for payment:
EFT numbers: 112124 through 112150, total $1,510,243.33
Check numbers: 112172 through 112189, total $298,330.63
Wire transfer numbers: 366931 through 366897, total $34,375.32

c. Special Event: Shipwreck Fest

d. Special Event: Pride Parade

e. Free Movie Night on Kingsway

f. Contract Award: Fire Department Motorola APX Next Radios #25-081-AFD-001

g. Contract Award: WTP Filter Rotork Actuators #25-103-WTR-001

h. Contract Award: Paper To Digital Permitting - Large Format Building Files Digitization #24-282-PLN-002

Public Hearings

City Attorney Darcy Swetnam introduced the Master Permit renewal application and provided a few slides to provide background and information. She explained City code provides these permits for 5 years, and renewal requires notice and public hearing requirements. She explained that the applicant was the Access Fiber department of the City, and Administrative Services Director Emily Schuh, who oversees the Fiber department, was also available to answer any questions that may come up. Staff have reviewed the permit application and recommend approval.

Approval of Renewal of a Master Permit for Telecommunications Use of Right of Way for City of Anacortes / ACCESS Anacortes Fiber Internet Installation in accordance with AMC Chapter 5.38.160

Administrative Services Director Emily Schuh presented a map of the City showing areas of Fiber service in the City, which includes an update on an estimate of when service would be available in the areas not yet served. She also described where on the City website that an interactive map can be found to find out when service is estimated to be available when an address in typed in. Mr. Young made comments on the good work the Fiber department has done, and how he is pleased that Access Fiber is nearing availability in his neighborhood. Mr. Miller invited the public to speak, and with members of the public offering any comments, he closed the public hearing. Mr. Walters asked for clarification on the map, due to the legend included. He also clarified the process for citizens to sign up and get hooked up.

Other Business

Mayor Miller noted Chairman Wooten from the Samish Indian Nation was in attendance tonight, and thanked him for being at the meeting.

Thompson Trail Trestle Feasibility Study

Parks Director Jonn Lunsford pointed out the large number partners the City had in this project, including the Samish, and Washington State. Mr. Lunsford introduced Chairman Wooten who made a few comments on the long historied nature of this project, and thanked the Council for partnering with them to explore the removal and replacement of the existing trestle and trail.

Tod Woodard from the Samish Nation made a number of comments on the benefits of the trail, and their desire to keep a trail in place. He also went into some detail of the detrimental nature of the existing trestle. He also noted how the inner bay is starting to fill in due to lack of water flow because its inhibited by the causeway and pilings under the trestle. He explained the tribe would like to see a more environmentally friendly replacement, as well as something more robust that could support an ambulance if necessary (which was the original intent of the decking put in place but it is now known the decking is not strong enough for that).

Lauren Schroedter from Hanson Engineering explained the findings that were identified in a variety of tests that were conducted, including soils sampling, channel identification, bridge location, and bridge alignment. Mr. Walters asked about potentially removing part of the causeway vs the entire thing. Mr. Woodard responded that there is some evidence that stopping the causeway at the end of Weaverling spit may be viable.

Ms. Schroedter then illustrated the results of the conceptual design that was conducted as part of the review, including the preference to increase the height of the trestle trail, and the pros and cons and different types of material that could be used in the replacement trestle. Mr. Walters asked if the proposed height of the bridge would be sufficient for future surge activity, and Ms. Schroedter responded additional wave and surge modeling would be reviewed but the 25' proposed height should be sufficient for predicted future wave and surge action.

She then presented visual demonstrations of what the replacement trestles could look like, as well as estimated costs of $62M and $102M, depending on the material used. She explained the project could potentially be phased if costs required phasing, and what that could look like.

Mayor Miller invited the public to ask questions, being none he then invited Council to ask questions.

Mr. Fantini asked about funding, as well as the benefits of both options of concrete and fiberglass, and additional discussion ensued. Mr. Young asked follow-up questions on the presentation, including funding options, and additional discussion ensued. Mr. Walters made comments in support of figuring out how to do this project as soon as possible, and be postured in the event funding becomes available, and pointed out at some point the City may be directed to remove it for environmental reasons without replacement funding being made available. Ms. Cleland-McGrath also asked questions of the project, including potential credit for removing piles, and Ms. Schroedter talked briefly about the piling removal credit program. Ms. Hubik then asked about potentially creating a dead zone during the deconstruction of the trestle, and Ms. Schroedter explained the protections that are put in place to mitigate such. Ms. Moulton thanked Ms. Schroedter and the tribe, and looked forward to next steps.

Interlocal Amendment: Grant Funding For 2025 Periodic Comprehensive Plan Update #24-036-PLN-002

Planning Director John Coleman addressed the Council on the amendment to the interlocal agreement, which outlines a grant agreement with the state, and explained it was a no cost modification to that agreement. Mr. Walters moved seconded by Mr. Fantini to approve the mod as presented.

Contract Award: WTP High Service Pump #4 VFD Retrofit #25-055-WTR-001

Public Works Director Andy Rheaume introduced Water System Manager Terry Nemeth, who addressed the Council on a contract with Veca Industries to replace the #4 high service pump at the Water Treatment Plant, which he explained was failing and the nature of such, and the presented contract was the low bid for the project. Mr. Walters asked clarifying questions about the final price of the contract which Mr. Nemeth and Mr. Rheaume bot responded to. Mr. Walters moved seconded by Mr. Young to approve the contract as presented.

Adjournment

Being no further business the mayor adjourned the assembly at roughly 7:55 PM.