

Anacortes City Council Minutes - August 18, 2025

Call to Order

Mayor Matt Miller called to order the August 18, 2025, Anacortes City Council meeting at 6:00 p.m. Councilmembers TJ Fantini, Ryan Walters, Anthony Young, Christine Cleland-McGrath, Carolyn Moulton, and Bruce McDougall were present. Councilmember Amanda Hubik participated in the meeting remotely via Zoom.

Pledge of Allegiance

The assembly joined in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Announcements and Committee Reports

Mayor Miller announced that the city will be repainting streets in partnership with Mount Vernon, that the Open Streets festival will be Sunday, August 24th from 11am-3pm on Commercial Avenue between 4th Street and 10th Street, that the Naval Air Station Whidbey Island open house will be on Saturday, August 23rd from 10am-2pm, and that the draft [2025 Comprehensive Plan update](#) is open for public comment via email to CompPlan@anacorteswa.gov until August 28th or at a public hearing during the August 27th Planning Commission meeting.

Police Officers Swearing In

Police Chief Dave Floyd introduced Officer Gabriel Thomas and Officer Tim DeBarge. Mayor Miller administered the oath of office to Officer Thomas and Officer DeBarge.

Economic Development Committee

Mr. Young reported from the Committee meeting held on August 12th. The topics discussed included a discussion of the [results of the consumer survey](#) conducted by the Downtown Anacortes Alliance, which gave the committee ideas on how to move forward on issues such as traffic, parking, Sharpes Corner, and cruise line location and timing.

Finance Committee

Ms. Moulton reported on a Finance Department update, though the Finance Committee did not meet. The topics addressed in the update included that the 2025 financial audit begins this week, the Capital Facilities Plan is progressing as planned with the City Council beginning consideration in September, and the 2026 budget schedule is being reviewed internally and will be formalized in the next few weeks. The tentative schedule includes a revenue presentation on October 6th, the mayor's budget message on October 20th, and public hearings starting November 10th with adoption anticipated on December 1st.

Public Comment

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

Public comment was given as follows:

Pat Barrett of Anacortes addressed the timing of the preceding joint special meeting with the Port of Anacortes Commission, remarking that citizens who are employed were not able to attend and encouraged the Council to consider this when planning future meetings.

Consent Agenda

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

a. Minutes of August 11, 2025

b. Approval of claims in the amount of \$455,223.70

The following vouchers/checks were approved for payment:

EFT numbers: 113291 through 113335, total \$383,025.52

Check numbers: 113336 through 113356, total \$43,046.92

Wire transfer numbers: 373967 through 374388, total \$29,151.26

c. Contract Award: Fidalgo Bay Road Stormwater Improvements #25-127-ENG-001

d. Contract Modification: Generator Replacement Project #24-151-ERR-001

Other Business

Oak Harbor Police Department Training Range

Mayor Miller welcomed Oak Harbor Mayor Ronnie Wright and Oak Harbor Police Chief Tony Slowick. Chief Floyd and Chief Slowick spoke about possible cooperative use of a training range, referring to a slide presentation that was added to the packet materials for the meeting. Chief Floyd mentioned that the Anacortes Police Department had used a range in Whatcom County that is now closed with no timeline for reopening and that the proposed cooperative range would afford the Anacortes Police Department reliable access to training, and the ability to train for other mission areas such as co-response and de-escalation training. He also added that investing now would give Anacortes priority over other non-investing or later investing agencies. He asked that the council provide directions on pursuing the initiative with the City of Oak Harbor.

Discussion topics included:

- The current Anacortes Police Department training location is a private indoor range in Burlington and an outdoor range outside of Oak Harbor.
- A \$150,000 initial investment would fund 20 years of training.
- \$287,000 currently available opioid funds.
- North Star would also like to use opioid settlement funds and has asked the cities to specify their needs.
- The location for de-escalation training is in different locations depending on what is open and available.
- Oak Harbor would be responsible for maintenance and upkeep of the facility.
- Rise in prices for range time at private ranges.
- The new facility would significantly increase the capacity for training and would be available year-round for all types of training.
- No additional funding would be needed after the initial investment.
- All jurisdictions in Skagit and Island counties will be invited to participate.
- An itemized list of cost savings by training cooperatively compared with the current situation.
 - Quantitatively demonstrate the cost savings of the proposed arrangement.
- Appreciation that Oak Harbor is thinking creatively.
- The Criminal Justice Training Commission (CJTC) should operate it.
 - CJTC has been tasked with additional responsibilities and has limited capacity.
- Business model: Will it be open to the public?
 - It would be a law enforcement-only range.
 - It would bring instructors to our region.
- Clarification of tiered system for use.
- Oak Harbor's contracted purchase price is \$2.7 million for the facility.
- Anacortes would not be a partner in owning or operating the facility.
- A neutral basis for shared use of the facility
- No daily rate for training if the city provides the requested buy-in.
- Is there an additional buy-in after the initial term, number of days for use?
- Bilateral versus multilateral interlocal agreement.
- Economies of scale are advantageous in the current fiscal environment.
- Law enforcement training is an allowed use of opioid settlement funds.
- Additional opioid settlement payouts of \$560,000 are expected over the next 14 years.

- Training areas are becoming increasingly difficult to find due to decreasing inventory of available land.

Mayor Miller announced that staff would work on a bilateral interlocal agreement with the City of Oak Harbor for future council consideration.

Ordinance 4096: State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) Legislative Actions

City Attorney Darcy Swetnam introduced Ordinance 4096: State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) Legislative Actions, referring to a slide presentation that was added to the packet materials for the meeting. Planning, Community, and Economic Development Director John Coleman answered questions from the council.

Mayor Miller invited members of the audience to comment on this agenda item.

Courtney Orrock of Anacortes asked about the legislative process and how it related to the current and proposed appeal process, expressing concerns about taking away an individual's ability to appeal. Mayor Miller responded that the council is the highest local authority on legislative matters and that individuals can appeal the matter to a higher authority if so desired.

Discussion topics included:

- Have there been recent appeals regarding non-project legislative actions?
 - Only one, and it is currently pending.
- Administrative non-project actions should be distinguished from those that are legislative.
- Are we creating extra process?
- How is public comment different from a local appeal?
- Not offering legislative appeals for legislative non-project actions but retaining it for administrative non-project actions.
- Make it more difficult for a party to drag out the process of adopting important legislative actions.
- Three options: leave the code as is, streamline the process to allow for appeal directly to the council, or remove the option for local appeal.
- The appearance of fairness doctrine does not apply to legislative actions.
- The process started because it does not make sense to have a hearing examiner as part of the legislative process.
- Streamline things rather than make them more complicated.
- Eliminate local appeals to the SEPA threshold determination.
- Adopting state-mandated permit timelines is overdue.
- Flow chart of processes and SEPA checklist in the packet when brought back before the council.
- List of categorical exemptions

Interlocal Agreement #24-120-PLN-004 with WA Dept. of Commerce for the 2025-2027 Climate Planning Grant

Planning, Community, and Economic Development Director John Coleman introduced the amendment to Interlocal Agreement #24-120-PLN-004 with the Washington State Department of Commerce for the 2025-2027 Climate Planning grant, which expired at the end of June 2025. He explained that when the state extended the timeline for the Comprehensive Plan to the end of 2025, the grant timeline also needed to be extended.

Carolyn Moulton moved, seconded by Ryan Walters, to authorize the mayor to execute interlocal agreement #24-120-PLN-004 with the Washington State Department of Commerce for the 2025-2027 Climate Planning Grant.

Vote: Ayes - Carolyn Moulton, Anthony Young, 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 7:42 p.m. the Anacortes City Council meeting of August 18, 2025, was adjourned.