

Anacortes City Council Minutes - August 25, 2025

Call to Order

Mayor Matt Miller called to order the August 25, 2025, Anacortes City Council meeting at 6:00 p.m. Councilmembers TJ Fantini, Ryan Walters, Anthony Young, Carolyn Moulton, and Amanda Hubik were present. Councilmembers Christine Cleland-McGrath and Bruce McDougall were absent.

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

Pledge of Allegiance

The assembly joined in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Announcements and Committee Reports

Mayor Miller reminded the public that the formal comment period for the [2025 Comprehensive Plan update](#) ends on August 28th (comments can be submitted via email to CompPlan@anacorteswa.gov). He then detailed the solid waste collection schedule for the Labor Day holiday, and announced several events taking place on September 13th, including residential cleanup day from 9am-12pm at the city operations facility, the Senior Resource Fair from 10am-2pm at the Senior Activity Center, and Fidalgo Bay Day sponsored by the Skagit Marine Resources committee at the Fidalgo Bay Resort from 11am-3pm.

Planning Committee

Mr. Walters reported from the Planning Committee meeting held earlier in the evening. The topics discussed included a constituent inquiry on how to build a house on a vacant lot in the middle of a block that is not accessible via a road, and the plan for providing sufficient middle housing under the Growth Management Hearings Board case *Futurewise v. Mercer Island*, the Housing Authority's Olson Building project. He then reminded the public of the North Star housing forum on Tuesday, September 9th, from 6-8pm at the Mount Vernon Library Commons and that attendees can register in advance on the [North Star Skagit website](#).

North Star Interlocal Agreement

Mr. Walters reported from a meeting that occurred the previous week that discussed an interlocal agreement for the North Star project. The topics discussed included editing draft agreement provisions to avoid duplication and unnecessarily boxing in the city with certain language and remaining general regarding the structure of the North Star Project. Skagit County will produce a draft agreement that will be available in late September with a joint meeting to finalize the draft.

Parks and Recreation Committee

Mr. Young reported from the Parks and Recreation Committee meeting held August 21st. The topics discussed included pickleball, the upcoming Senior Resource Fair, upcoming Washington Park events, the Parks Foundation retreat, a proposed electronic check-in process at the Senior Activity Center, the Parks Maintenance Technician opening, HF Sinclair work day at John and Doris Tursi Park, a roundup of the summer recreation season and the upcoming fall season, the October 18th Mount Erie Run, volunteer opportunities for the October 25th Haunted Forest and the December 12th and 13th Winter Wonderland Walk, and phase two of the Ben Root Skate Park project.

Ms. Moulton thanked volunteers and community members for their efforts and participation during the successful Open Streets festival the past Sunday. She also announced that she would be present at the Senior Activity Center on Wednesday, August 27th at 1:30pm for coffee with a councilmember.

Public Comment

Mayor Miller invited the public to comment on any item not on the agenda. No one present wished to address

the Council on any topic not already on the agenda.

Consent Agenda

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

- a. Minutes of August 18, 2025
- b. Joint Special Meeting Minutes of August 18, 2025
- c. Approval of claims in the amount of \$347,640.41

The following vouchers/checks were approved for payment:

EFT numbers: 113361 through 113397, total \$195,166.51

Check numbers: 113360 through 113407, total \$132,686.78

Wire transfer numbers: 374463 through 374757, total \$19,787.12

- d. Contract Award: Downtown Beautification and Main Street Support #25-222-PLN-001

Other Business

Chamber of Commerce Presentation: Marketing Anacortes - Tourism That Boosts Our Local Economy

Planning, Community, and Economic Development Director John Coleman introduced Jessica Kiser, President and Chief Executive Officer of the Anacortes Chamber of Commerce, and Chance Newman of Last Chance Productions, who delivered a slide presentation entitled, "*Experience Anacortes - Your Island Getaway - 2025 Digital Pacing*", that was added to the packet materials for the meeting.

Discussion topics included:

- Good tools to have considering the competition for tourist dollars.
- The diversity of people who are depicted in the advertisements.
- Canadian visitors are being more actively pursued.
- Campaign personas
 - Streaming platforms exhibited the highest rate of video play-throughs.
 - 60% mobile website visits
 - Airports are targeted
- How do we know if advertising is drawing videos?
 - Geo-fencing.
 - Adjust messages based on target groups.
- Origin of personas
- The Arts Festival re-targeted advertising to the south. Is this indicative of a trend?
 - 30% fewer visitors from Canada.
 - Gradually shift north, but stay targeted to the south.
- Downtown Anacortes Alliance appealed to local audiences to cover the shoulder and winter seasons.

Water System Plan - Status Update and Draft Capital Facilities Plan

Public Works Director Andrew Rheume introduced Aurelie Nabonnand of Carollo Engineers, who presented the Water System Plan update, referring to a slide presentation that was included in the packet materials for the meeting. Finance Manager Rhonda Peck presented the 6-year expense estimates for the water system, referring to a slide presentation that was added to the packet materials for the meeting.

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

Discussion topics included:

- Accuracy of cost estimates
- Adjacent purveyors are all entities that share a boundary with Anacortes.
- The Department of Health will ask for more specificity or clarification.
- The city can rely on the draft for capital facilities planning.
- No system capacity issues over the next 20 years.
- The plan will identify where gaps exist to provide capacity for increased density.
- Upsizing means increasing both pressure and quantity.
- Plan information and data will be useful to help plan for areas of increased density.
- Individual projects will be reviewed during the Capital Facilities Plan presentations during the September 15th and 22nd regular meetings.

Contract Awards: Treatment Plant Chemicals 2025-2027 #25-168-IDS

Public Works Director Andrew Rheume introduced proposed contracts 25-168-IDS-001 through 25-168-IDS-007 for water and wastewater treatment plant chemicals for the 2025-2027 cycle.

Discussion topics included:

- Next steps for items that did not receive bids.
 - Procurement at the market, not a fixed price.

Anthony Young moved, seconded by Amanda Hubik, to authorize the mayor to sign contracts 25-168-IDS-001, 002, 003, 004, 005, 006, and 007 for the 2025-2027 cycle.

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

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

City Attorney Darcy Swetnam re-introduced Ordinance 4096 that would clarify that appeals of SEPA threshold determinations for non-project actions, referring to a slide presentation that was added to the packet materials for the meeting.

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

Mark Nihart of Anacortes expressed concern about the cost associated with an individual bringing an appeal to the Growth Management Hearings Board by removing the local appeal step from the process.

Discussion topics included:

- Public engagement will be consistent with current legislative actions.
- Required by the Open Public Meetings Act and the Growth Management Act.
- Is there a fee for appealing to the Hearing Examiner?
 - Unified fee schedule - \$200, which is reimbursed if the individual wins the appeal.
- No fee for Growth Management Hearings Board appeal, but an attorney is recommended.
- Fees would not exist for making public comments to the Planning Commission and City Council if the local appeal to the hearing examiner is removed from the process.
- Threshold impacts for hearing examiner appeal are limited to the appellant.
- Origin of the problems around the hearing examiner process.

Amanda Hubik moved, seconded by TJ Fantini, to adopt Ordinance 4096 updating Title 18 of the Anacortes Municipal Code regarding appeals of SEPA threshold determinations for nonproject actions using option 1 for

Exhibit A.

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

Amendment 1 to Interlocal Agreement 24-228-PRK-001 for Depot Market Plaza Expansion Project Funding

Parks and Recreation Director Jonn Lunsford introduced amendment 1 to interlocal agreement #24-228-PRK-001 with Skagit County for Depot Market Plaza expansion project funding, referring to a slide presentation that was added to the packet materials for the meeting. He explained that the amendment would extend the term of the agreement from March 31, 2026 to May 31, 2026, which will allow the City sufficient time to complete the project, including applying for a shoreline substantial development permit and allowing for potential weather delays.

Discussion topics included:

- The plaza expansion will allow some vendors to move off of R Avenue with new utility services and allow for the Old Anacortes Rowing Society to move their boats.
- Anacortes Community Boating Group will be in favor of the arrangement.

Ryan Walters moved, seconded by Amanda Hubik, to authorize the mayor to execute amendment 1 to interlocal agreement 24-228-PRK-001 with Skagit County for Depot Market Plaza Expansion Project Funding.

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

Adjournment

There being no further business, at approximately 8:04 pm the Anacortes City Council meeting of August 25, 2025, was adjourned.