

Anacortes City Council Minutes - December 8, 2025

Call to Order

Mayor Matt Miller called to order the December 8, 2025, Anacortes City Council meeting at 6:00 p.m. Councilmembers TJ Fantini, Ryan Walters, Anthony Young, Christine Cleland-McGrath, Carolyn Moulton, and Amanda Hubik were present. Councilmember Bruce McDougall was absent.

Ms. Moulton moved, seconded by Mr. Young, 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 announced that he attended the Community Leadership Forum at Naval Air Station Whidbey Island and thanked Mr. Fantini for emceeing the tree lighting ceremony over the weekend. He then detailed upcoming events, including the Winter Wonderland Walk from 5-8pm at Washington Park on December 12th and 13th. He also announced that, due to heavy rain forecast for the region, the Water Treatment Plant is preparing for high water conditions.

He then presented a 1-year Pride in Service Award to Mr. Fantini, a 5-year Pride in Service Award to Ms. Cleland-McGrath, a 10-year Pride in Service Award to City Attorney Darcy Swetnam, and a 25-year Pride in Service Award to Administrative Services Director Emily Schuh.

Civil Service Commission Appointments

Mayor Miller announced the appointments of Marla Mellies and Peter Allen to the Civil Service Commission. Their respective terms are effective through December 31, 2028.

Port / City Liaison Committee

Ms. Cleland-McGrath reported from the Port / City Liaison Committee meeting held December 2nd. The topics discussed included partnership regarding the Port's West Basin development project, with the Port Commission reviewing the easements for Market Street and 9th Street on December 18th and the city holding a public hearing to relinquish those easements. The committee also discussed that the Planning Commission will consider the West Basin framework permit on December 10th and ensure that the committee will continue to meet on the first Tuesday of each month during 2026.

Planning Committee

Mr. Walters reported from the Planning Committee meeting held earlier in the evening. The main topic discussed was the absence of holiday lights in the trees downtown and holiday decorations in the context of Downtown Streetscape improvements for following seasons, which will be discussed at the next Downtown Streetscape meeting in January 2026.

Public Safety Committee

Mr. Fantini reported from the Public Safety Committee meeting held December 2nd. Police topics discussed included a presentation on the new boat, for which much of the funding comes from registration fees, the education requirements for grant funding for the boat, and free boat training classes for law enforcement. The committee also discussed that the Citizens Police Training Academy would be returning to Anacortes and that the Police Annual Report would be published in February 2026.

Fire topics included acceptance of the Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) grant that will add three new firefighters by March 23, 2026. The committee also reviewed the level of service standards

in the Comprehensive Plan update and discussed providing peer support to students, teachers, and counselors following the recent tragic loss of Anacortes High School Teacher Edmundo Corrales.

Ms. Moulton announced that she, Mr. Fantini, Mr. Walters, and Councilmember-elect Luke Currier attended a training session for elected officials sponsored by the Association of Washington Cities.

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 December 1, 2025

b. Approval of claims in the amount of \$1,741,191.86

The following vouchers/checks were approved for payment:

EFT numbers: 114223 through 114265, total \$911,714.24

Check numbers: 114266 through 114289 total \$812,499.14

Wire transfer numbers: 380631 through 380830, total \$16,978.48

Other Business

Resolution 3191: 2026 Lodging Tax Allocations

Mr. Walters introduced Resolution 3191 that would allocate lodging tax funds for 2026. He mentioned that the committee met three times during the year and pointed out that the Lodging Tax Advisory Committee recommended funding mostly the same applications in similar amounts as last year, and that the city is banking \$200k annually to save towards the event facility. He added that lodging tax receipts continue to be strong with committee hoteliers providing insight into events that bring in overnight guests, which would be a principal element of funding allocation decisions in the coming year.

Discussion topics included:

- Event facility design funding is part of the total project.
- Obtaining better data from hoteliers to inform funding allocation.

Carolyn Moulton moved, seconded by Amanda Hubik, to approve Resolution 3191 Awarding 2026 Lodging Tax Funds.

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

Resolution 3193: Updating the Unified Fee Schedule

Finance Manager Rhonda Peck introduced Resolution 3193 that would provide for the annual update of the Unified Fee Schedule effective January 1, 2026, 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:

- Garbage tote cleaning fee is a request-driven service.
- Expecting an estimated \$400k of additional revenue will be generated by the fee increases.

- Fee change notifications will be placed on the back of utility bills and on the city website.

Christine Cleland-McGrath moved, seconded by Anthony Young, to approve Resolution 3193 Updating the Unified Fee Schedule.

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

Contract Award: Social Worker Agreement #26-007-APD-001

Police Chief Dave Floyd re-introduced the proposed contract #26-007-APD-001 to fund a Social Worker through the Anacortes Family Center for 2026 at \$30,000 that the Council had directed during the 2026 budget development and approval process. He also mentioned that Fire Chief Bill Harris is working on grant proposals that would make up for the \$30k reduction in funding allocation for the 2026 budget, and added that the contract is similar to those executed in previous years.

Ms. Cleland-McGrath announced that she would abstain from the vote due to her membership on the Anacortes Family Center Board of Directors.

TJ Fantini moved, seconded by Anthony Young, to authorize the mayor to execute contract #26-007-APD-001 with Anacortes Family Center in the amount of \$30,000.00.

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

Interlocal Agreement #26-005-APD-001 with Skagit County for Vessel Registration Fees

Police Chief Dave Floyd re-introduced the proposed interlocal agreement #26-005-APD-001 with Skagit County for vessel registration fees, referring to a slide presentation that was added to the packet materials for the meeting.

Discussion topics included:

- OPSG = Operation Stonegarden, a federal cross-border anti-smuggling effort, which the city has been participating in since 2018.
- Will not diminish the department's capacity to respond to land-based incidents.
- Capture the time commitment the boat program will incur.
- Part of the broad responsibilities of law enforcement on Fidalgo Island.
- Present statistics that determine the necessity of this capability moving forward.
 - Compared to other cities.
- The boat will not operate with support of general revenue.

Ryan Walters moved, seconded by TJ Fantini, to authorize the mayor to sign the interlocal agreement with Skagit County for Vessel Registration Fees.

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

Resolution 3194: City of Anacortes Legislative Priorities — 2026

Administrative Services Director Emily Schuh introduced Resolution 3194 that would set the 2026 legislative priorities for the city, referring to a slide presentation that was added to the packet materials for the meeting.

Discussion topics included:

General

- Ordering of priorities relative to each item's importance to the city.

- Fewer priorities with more emphasis.

Community Event Facility

- Highlight the community event facility in cooperation with the Port and potential development of land in the area to generate sales tax and lodging tax revenue.
 - Lodging tax funds to stimulate the economy.

Behavioral Health Treatment Capacity

- Coordinate language with other cities and Skagit County.

Preserve State-Shared Revenue

- Public Works Trust fund.

Public Notice Modernization

- Newspaper Association would not favor.
- Needs of the community for paper-based notifications.
- Strike for now

Affordable Housing

- Providing time to implement state housing legislation
 - Setting realistic expectations for implementation considering state fiscal challenges.
- Not including this is in line with the Association of Washington Cities.

State Highway Maintenance Within Cities

- Highlight the Commercial Avenue funding request.
 - Local representatives on the Transportation Committee in the House and Senate.
 - The city has requested to participate in the advisory committee to review the MOU between Washington State Department of Transportation and the Association of Washington Cities.

Federal Funding Pass-Through Access for Cities

- Strike

Nutrient General Permit - Wastewater Treatment Impacts

- Beneficial to support the city without increased regulations.

Meals on Wheels

- The state legislature may not be the correct entity to push for this initiative.
- The state House Agriculture and Natural Resources committee have this on their radar.
- The Senior Center Foundation Board is working diligently to address this problem.

Mayor Miller announced that this resolution would come back for council consideration at the next regular meeting.

SEPA Threshold Determination Appeal of Ordinance 5013 and Ordinance 5014

City Attorney Darcy Swetnam provided an overview of the procedures for the SEPA Threshold Determination appeal of Ordinance 5013 and Ordinance 5014, which are codified in [Anacortes Municipal Code 18.04.250](#) and [Resolution 3189](#).

Ryan Walters moved, seconded by Carolyn Moulton, to direct city staff to prepare findings of fact and conclusions of law consistent with the denial of the appeal for the December 15, 2025, City Council meeting. Vote: Ayes - Carolyn Moulton, Anthony Young, Ryan Walters, Christine Cleland-McGrath, Amanda Hubik, TJ Fantini. Nays - None. Abstentions - None. Result: Passed

Adjournment

There being no further business, at approximately 7:38 pm the Anacortes City Council meeting of December 8, 2025, was adjourned.