

Anacortes City Council Minutes - January 5, 2026

Call to Order

Mayor Ryan Walters called to order the January 5, 2026, Anacortes City Council meeting at 6:03 p.m. Councilmembers TJ Fantini, Anthony Young, Christine Cleland-McGrath, Carolyn Moulton, Bruce McDougall and Luke Currier were present.

Pledge of Allegiance

The assembly joined in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Oaths of Office

Skagit County Superior Court Judge Elizabeth Y. Neidzowski administered the oath of office to Councilmembers Currier, McDougall, Moulton, and Young. Judge Neidzowski then administered the oath of office to Mayor Walters.

Announcements and Committee Reports

Mayor Announcements

Mayor Walters announced that 2026 is the 250th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence from Great Britain, the 135th anniversary of the incorporation of Anacortes and three years from the sesquicentennial of the founding of Anacortes. He then added that 2026 is the centennial anniversary of the Port of Anacortes, and the 60th birthday of the original Star Trek. He then provided an outlook on the city's challenging fiscal position, expressing a desire to avoid the layoffs and budget cuts made at the end of 2025 and emphasizing the importance of maintaining staff levels. He then announced that he would issue an executive order that would lay out measures to cut expenses further by prohibiting certain purchases, deferring large expenses early in the year to maintain cash flow, continuing the hiring freeze to evaluate positions before filling them, examining ways to reduce and consolidate the city's vehicle fleet and limitations on a department's ability to shift funds between budget line items. He added that the order will also direct staff to explore alternative revenue sources and facilitate economic growth that generates more sales tax revenue, and issue permits quicker. He mentioned making investments that generate revenue, such as re-paving Commercial Avenue and building the Public Events Facility. He pledged to keep the council and public informed of progress in these areas and that it would not be business as usual, while emphasizing that there is an opportunity to be a more efficient, sustainable and resilient government.

Mayor Walters then announced that he had appointed Ms. Moulton to the Skagit Transit Board, Terry Carroll-Gillis to the Anacortes Housing Authority Board, and recommended to the Skagit County Board of Commissioners that they appoint Jan Robinson to the Skagit Ferry Advisory Committee. He also announced that the Skagit County Board of Commissioners is advertising for the Skagit County Climate Impact Advisory Committee with applications due by January 30th at 4pm.

Police Officers Swearing In

Police Chief Dave Floyd introduced, and Mayor Walters administered the oath of office to Police Officer Carl Wallace, Police Officer Benjamin West, and Records Officer Liz Wingard.

Public Comment

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

Suzanne Rohner of Anacortes commented on the manner of administering the oath of office.

Consent Agenda

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

a. Minutes of December 22, 2025

b. Approval of claims in the amount of \$1,212,591.04

The following vouchers/checks were approved for payment:

EFT numbers: 114428 through 114485, total \$973,246.42

Check numbers: 114486 through 114511 total \$212,677.50

Wire transfer numbers: 381724 through 382348, total \$26,667.12

c. Contract Award: On-Call Fiber General Contractor Services 2026-2028 #25-216-FBR-001

Closed Record Decision Hearing

Port of Anacortes Shoreline Substantial Development Permit (SDP-2023-0003) & Framework Development Plan Agreement (FMW-2023-0001) for the West Basin Redevelopment Project

Senior Planner Grace Pollard introduced the substantial development permit (SDP-2023-0003) and framework development plan agreement (FMW-2023-0001) with the Port of Anacortes for the West Basin Redevelopment project, referring to a slide presentation that was included in the packet materials for the meeting. Port Executive Director John Dumas and Port Commissioners Kathy Pittis, Mary Lafleur, Bob Papadakis, Bonnie Bowers, and Shawn Ottenbreit were in attendance.

Adam Morrow of Pacific Survey and Engineering spoke on behalf of the Port of Anacortes.

Discussion topics included:

- Conditions of approval.

TJ Fantini moved, seconded by Christine Cleland-McGrath, to approve the Port of Anacortes Cap Sante West Basin Redevelopment Shoreline Substantial Development Permit (SDP-2023-0003) consistent with the Planning Commission's recommendation dated Dec 10, 2025, based on the findings of fact and conclusions of law contained in the record and subject to the conditions of approval as presented, and further to authorize the mayor to sign the final decision document on behalf of the City Council.

Vote: Ayes - Carolyn Moulton, Anthony Young, Christine Cleland-McGrath, Bruce McDougall, TJ Fantini, Luke Currier. Nays - None. Abstentions - None. Result: Passed

TJ Fantini moved, seconded by Bruce McDougall, to the Port of Anacortes Cap Sante West Basin Redevelopment Shoreline Substantial Development Permit (SDP-2023-0003) consistent with Planning Commission recommendation dated Dec 10, 2025, based on the findings of fact and conclusions of law contained in the record and subject to the conditions of approval as presented, and further to authorize the mayor to sign the final decision document on behalf of the City Council.

Vote: Ayes - Carolyn Moulton, Anthony Young, Christine Cleland-McGrath, Bruce McDougall, TJ Fantini, Luke Currier. Nays - None. Abstentions - None. Result: Passed

New Business

Election of Mayor Pro Tempore

Mayor Walters introduced the election of Mayor Pro Tempore. Ms. Moulton nominated Ms. Cleland-McGrath to serve as Mayor Pro Tem for 2026-2027. Hearing no other nominations, Mayor Walters called for the vote. Ms. Cleland-McGrath was elected as Mayor Pro Tempore by a unanimous vote.

Other Business

Adoption of a Process to Fill a City Council Vacancy

Human Resources and Labor Relations Director Kendall Moyle introduced the proposed process that the council would follow to fill the vacancy that was created for the Ward 1 position when Mr. Walters submitted his resignation upon taking office as mayor on January 1, 2026, referring to a slide presentation that was

included in the packet materials for the meeting.

Discussion topics included:

- Reason for the executive session in the process.
- Public consideration of the candidates.
- Past appointee experiences.
- Public visibility of the process.

TJ Fantini moved, seconded by Bruce McDougall, to adopt the process to fill a City Council vacancy as presented without the provision for an executive session.

Vote: Ayes - TJ Fantini. Nays - Carolyn Moulton, Anthony Young, Christine Cleland-McGrath, Bruce McDougall, Luke Currier. Abstentions - None. Result: Failed

Carolyn Moulton moved, seconded by Anthony Young, to adopt the process as proposed to fill the vacancy in the City Council's Ward 1 seat.

Vote: Ayes - Carolyn Moulton, Anthony Young, Christine Cleland-McGrath, Bruce McDougall, Luke Currier. Nays - TJ Fantini. Abstentions - None. Result: Passed

Adjournment

There being no further business, at approximately 7:05 pm, the Anacortes City Council meeting of January 5, 2026, was adjourned.