

Anacortes City Council Minutes - January 26, 2026

Call to Order

Mayor Ryan Walters called to order the January 26, 2026, Anacortes City Council meeting at 6:00 p.m. Councilmembers Luke Currier, Christine Cleland-McGrath, Carolyn Moulton, Bruce McDougall and TJ Fantini were present. Councilmember Anthony Young was absent.

Pledge of Allegiance

The assembly joined in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Ms. Moulton moved without objection to excuse the absence of Mr. Young.

Announcements and Committee Reports

Recognition of Emily Schuh's Service to the City of Anacortes

Mayor Walters, City Attorney Darcy Swetnam, and Fiber Manager Jim Lemberg recognized Administrative Services Director Emily Schuh for her twenty-six years of service to the city. Former Mayor Laurie Gere expressed her appreciation for Ms. Schuh's mentorship, support, and service during her eight-year tenure as mayor.

Mayor's Announcements

Mayor Walters announced, referring to a slide presentation that was added to the packet materials for the meeting, that he had re-appointed Zachary Wight and Kami Bratton to 3-year terms on the Arts Commission. He also announced the appointment of Ms. Cleland-McGrath to the North Star Housing Task Force, and reminded the public of the opportunity to [submit an application](#) for the vacant Ward 1 council position, which will close at noon on February 3, 2026. He concluded by providing a brief recap of the successful Downtown Streetscapes Open House held on January 21st.

Finance Committee

Ms. Moulton reported from the Finance Committee meeting held earlier in the day. The topics discussed included the 2025 year-end update that Finance Director Steve Hoglund would give to the Council later on in the agenda.

City Action Days

Mr. Fantini reported from his visit to Olympia as the Association of Washington Cities district representative for City Action Days. The topics he covered included an address by Governor Ferguson which announced a state policy of budgeting revenues according to the actual growth estimates and recognized the collaborative efforts of first responders and community stakeholders in the response to recent flooding. Mr. Fantini mentioned that he was able to meet with local representatives during the event, and that it seemed unlikely that the city would receive the requested state funding to resurface South Commercial Avenue in 2026, though a state bond for transportation improvements could provide funding for the project in 2027. He added that there was optimism in his conversations with state legislators that the city could receive the requested \$500,000 for the community events facility. He then mentioned [House Bill 2163](#) and [Senate Bill 5913](#) that seek to clarify indigent defense case load standards and a separate bill that would potentially classify e-bikes as motorcycles.

North Star Housing Task Force

Ms. Cleland-McGrath reported from the North Star Housing Task Force meeting held earlier in the day. She announced that there would be a housing symposium on May 21, 2026, which would be open to the public. She asked that Councilmembers provide feedback regarding issues they would like to hear about during the event.

Addressing the City's Role in Immigration Enforcement

Mayor Walters acknowledged community concerns regarding recent events involving federal Immigration and Customs Enforcement officers in Minneapolis and other communities in the United States. He pointed out that local law enforcement involvement in immigration matters is governed by the [Keep Washington Working Act](#), which provides that local law enforcement will not conduct immigration enforcement on behalf of the federal government, collect information regarding a person's immigration or citizenship status or place of birth, or detain people upon request without a warrant. He added that the first duty of city elected officials and staff is to the truth and the rule of law, promising that the city would follow local, state and federal law.

Public Comment

Mayor Walters 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

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

a. Minutes of January 20, 2026

b. Approval of claims in the amount of \$1,340,527.27

The following vouchers/checks were approved for payment:

EFT numbers: 114701 through 114747, total \$543,310.49

Check numbers: 114700, 114748 through 114764, total \$788,368.61

Wire transfer numbers: 383165 through 383476, total \$8,848.17

Other Business

2025 Year-End Finance Update

Mr. Hoglund provided a 2025 year-end finance update, referring to a slide presentation that was added to the packet materials for the meeting.

Discussion topics included:

- Fund structure and how property tax revenue is distributed.
- Billing to the correct fund.
- The lowest point in available cash is now until the first payment of property tax comes in.
- Cutting road maintenance in 2026.
- Equipment rental and replacement is unfunded except for utilities in 2026.

Human Resources and Labor Relations Director Kendall Moyle presented three position changes for 2026, referring to a slide presentation that was added to the packet materials for the meeting. The changes included the replacement of the Administrative Services Director with a Fiber Manager, updating the Fire Administrative Assistant from 0.5 to 1.0 FTE, and adding 1.0 Human Resources Assistant. Fire Chief Bill Harris answered questions from the Council regarding the Fire Administrative Assistant funding. Mayor Walters announced without objection that the changes would be brought back before the Council for ratification at a later date.

Ordinance 5016: 2025 Year-End Budget Amendment

Mr. Hoglund introduced proposed Ordinance 5016: 2025 Year-End Budget Amendment, referring to a draft copy of the ordinance that was included in the packet materials for the meeting.

Discussion topics included:

- Format of budget amendment documents.

TJ Fantini moved, seconded by Carolyn Moulton, to approve Ordinance 5016 amending the 2025 budget.
Vote: Ayes - Carolyn Moulton, Christine Cleland-McGrath, Bruce McDougall, TJ Fantini, Luke Currier. Nays - None. Abstentions - None. Result: Passed

Contract Award: Verizon Frontline Communication System #26-036-ITS-002

Ms. Schuh introduced the proposed contract with Verizon Frontline Communications #26-036-ITS-002, referring to a slide presentation that was included in the packet materials for the meeting.

Discussion topics included:

- Cost savings over current service provider.

Carolyn Moulton moved, seconded by Bruce McDougall, to authorize the mayor to sign the contract #26-036-ITS-002 with Verizon Wireless for wireless, voice, text and data service plans along with ancillary equipment and services.

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

Grand View Cemetery Fees

Parks and Recreation Director Jonn Lunsford introduced the discussion regarding fees for Grand View Cemetery, referring to a slide presentation that was included in the packet materials for the meeting. Parks and Recreation Administrative Assistant Darby Jordan answered questions from the Council.

Discussion topics included:

- Would any existing plot owners be affected by fee increases?
- Appreciation for in-house data production.
- Recovery of costs at a minimum.
- Legislative process for fee updates.
- Annual consumer price index adjustment.
- Timeline for enactment.

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

Theresa Baker of Anacortes asked about the proposal for composted burials. Mr. Lunsford replied that the code changes associated with the proposal for composted burials would come before the council in the late first quarter or second quarter of this year.

Adjournment

There being no further business, at approximately 7:20 pm, the Anacortes City Council meeting of January 26, 2026, was adjourned.