

Anacortes City Council Minutes - March 9, 2026

Call to Order

Mayor Ryan Walters called to order the March 9, 2026, Anacortes City Council meeting at 6:00 p.m. Councilmembers Marcia Hunt, Luke Currier, Anthony Young, Christine Cleland-McGrath, Carolyn Moulton, Bruce McDougall and TJ Fantini were present.

Pledge of Allegiance

The assembly joined in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Announcements and Committee Reports

Mayor Walters made announcements on the following topics: Conversation with the Mayor and Parks and Recreation Open House March 10th at the Senior Activity Center, [Senior Activity Center Programs](#), spring [Parks and Recreation programs](#), and city [project information](#), referring to a slide presentation that was added to the packet materials for the meeting.

Information Technology and ACCESS Anacortes Fiber Internet Committee

Mr. McDougall reported from the Information Technology and ACCESS Anacortes Fiber Internet Committee meeting held March 3rd. Information technology topics discussed included the targeted data migration for the enterprise resource planning software implementation in July 2026, the nearly completed change of city cell phone service providers to Verizon, increasing storage on a main server cluster, and heightened information security measures due to global events. Fiber topics included a subscription update with the service surpassing 3,000 online customers, potential dark fiber agreements, an EDA grant update with the final reimbursement coming in the second quarter, and future upgrades for fiber upstream routers in 2028 that would give customers a 10 GB service option.

Housing Affordability and Community Services and Planning

Ms. Moulton reported from the Housing Affordability and Community Services and Planning Committee meeting held earlier in the evening. The topics discussed included Ordinance 4092 that is on tonight's agenda and a future amendment to final plat approval procedures for a plat of 10 or more separate plats that will be designed to streamline the process. Mayor Walters pointed out that final plat approval is a ministerial action that does not require discretion.

Public Safety Committee

Ms. Cleland-McGrath reported from the Public Safety Committee meeting held March 3rd. Police topics discussed included a hiring and training update, noting that full staffing is providing a notably increased presence in the community, the ability to have an officer in the forest lands during the summer if staffing levels stay as they are, combined rescue task force training with the fire department to train for active threat situations with Skagit and Island counties, the EvidenceonQ system that is being used across the county, the SMART Team composed of representatives from Island and Skagit counties to analyze incidents that require third-party review, animal control fees being added to the unified fee schedule, and an upcoming in-house bicycle patrol officer training class in May.

Fire and Emergency Medical Services topics discussed included the Fire Station 1 remodel project, the most recent behavioral health and crisis outreach response and education joint grant application from the University of Washington with the City of Mount Vernon, Skagit County Sheriff's Office and Skagit County Public Health. Under the grant, the Anacortes Fire Department would receive \$270,000 over 18 months that would fund the Anacortes Community Paramedic, a community outreach representative through the Anacortes Family Center, and other community outreach programs in Skagit County. Ms. Moulton added that the grant would bring the Anacortes Family Center back to full funding.

Mr. Fantini thanked Parks department staff and volunteers with the Friends of the ACFL who were out over the weekend maintaining trails around Cranberry Lake.

Mayor Walters announced he would deliver the State of the City address during the April 6th regular meeting and that the April 13th meeting would feature department updates in work session format.

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

a. Minutes of March 2, 2026

b. Approval of claims in the amount of \$550,452.03

The following vouchers/checks were approved for payment:

EFT numbers: 115023 through 115070, total \$494,914.45

Check numbers: 115071 through 115084, total \$42,281.83

Wire transfer numbers: 385287 through 385502, total \$13,255.75

Public Hearings

2026 Community Development Block Grant Annual Action Plan

Planning, Community, and Economic Development Coordinator Stephanie Snyder introduced the 2026 Community Development Block Grant Annual Action Plan, referring to a slide presentation that was included in the packet materials for the meeting.

Discussion topics included:

- Impact on grant funding availability due to the federal government shutdown and the federal Department of Government Efficiency.
- Merits of staff recommendations.
- Possible duplication of public services and funding allocation.
- Allocation of funds to meet economic development goals included in the consolidated plan.
- Federal policy requirements that restrict the use of CDBG funds.
- The US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) requires continually expanding services.
- Rebalancing of priorities due to current political and fiscal conditions.
- Community Action does not get enough funding to accomplish their mission.
- The need for funding far eclipses the availability.
- CDBG funding as a springboard to other grant funding. Look for similar opportunities.

At 6:52pm, Mayor Walters opened the public hearing. No one present wished to address the Council. At 6:53 pm, Mayor Walters closed the public hearing.

Ms. Snyder outlined that next steps are writing the HUD Plan, followed by a 30-day public comment period, and a second public hearing during the regular city council meeting on April 27th.

Other Business

Ordinance 4092: AMC Title 19 Permit Review Time Periods

Planning Manager Libby Grage introduced Ordinance 4092 that would revise permit review time periods under Anacortes Municipal Code (AMC) Title 19, referring to a slide presentation that was included in the packet

materials for the meeting.

Discussion topics included:

- The applicability of the changes to Table 19.41.050.
- Helping Homeowners Associations understand the changes applicable to residential zones in the development code.
 - This proposed ordinance does not address regulations in residential zones.
- Changes to the underlying law and regulations since the ordinance was originally introduced.
- On-call permitting reviews are within the budget for 2026.
- Defensible options chosen for permit reviews.

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

Mr. McDougall moved, seconded by Mr. Young, without objection to place the ordinance on the consent agenda for the next regular meeting.

Ordinance 5025: Amending AMC 6.16.040 - Dangerous Animals Exemption

City Attorney Darcy Swetnam introduced proposed Ordinance 5025 that would amend AMC 6.16.040 — Potentially Dangerous Wild Animals — Exemptions, referring to a slide presentation that was added to the packet materials for the meeting.

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

Luke Currier moved, seconded by Anthony Young, to waive the two-read rule and adopt Ordinance 5025. Vote: Ayes - Carolyn Moulton, Anthony Young, Christine Cleland-McGrath, Bruce McDougall, TJ Fantini, Luke Currier, Marcia Hunt. Nays - None. Abstentions - None. Result: Passed

Interlocal Agreement 26-104-EXE-001 with Skagit County for the Skagit STAR Center Funding

Ms. Swetnam introduced proposed interlocal agreement 26-104-EXE-001 with Skagit County for the Skagit STAR Center funding, pointing out that the city is contributing \$250,000 to the startup costs for the first year of operation of the facility and that the agreement has the same terms as those that other cities in Skagit County are concluding as well. She added that the agreement requires the county to provide quarterly reports on the use of the funds, and the term of the agreement goes through June 2028. She then provided an overview of the funds the city had received from various settlements with opioid producers, totaling \$299,277 at the end of 2025, and that the city anticipates collecting approximately \$485,000 in additional settlement funds through 2035.

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

Susan Hill of 34th Street and Q Avenue in Anacortes expressed her support for the council providing funding for the STAR Center.

Discussion topics included:

- Other cities and their commitment to the STAR Center.
- Funding for the School Resource Officer for 2026.

Anthony Young moved, seconded by Bruce McDougall, to authorize the mayor to execute interlocal 26-104-EXE-001 with Skagit County. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

Contract Award: Fire Station 1 Remodel Project #25-035-AFD-002

Fire Chief Bill Harris introduced proposed contract #25-035-AFD-002 with Lazer Construction LLC to perform the Fire Station 1 Remodel Project, for which 90% of the project total of \$260,704 will be covered by fire impact fees. He then detailed the major points of the project to include expansion of the kitchen and dining areas, increased workspace and storage and replacement of the flooring and paint on the upper level.

Bruce McDougall moved, seconded by Anthony Young, to authorize the mayor to sign contract #25-035-AFD-002 with Lazer Construction LLC. The motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

Mayor Walters announced that Chief Harris had accepted a new position with the City of Oak Harbor, thanking him for his efforts over the last four years in improving the department. The council, mayor and all present gave Chief Harris a standing ovation.

Executive Session

Potential Litigation or Litigation per [RCW 42.30.110\(1\)\(i\)](#) (20 minutes)

Mayor Walters announced that City Council and the City Attorney would convene in Executive Session per RCW 42.30.110 (1)(i) for approximately 20 minutes to discuss potential litigation or litigation. The mayor advised that the regular meeting would then adjourn with no final action having been taken. Councilmembers TJ Fantini, Anthony Young, Christine Cleland-McGrath, Carolyn Moulton, Bruce McDougall, Luke Carrier, and Marcia Hunt attended the executive session.

Adjournment

There being no further business, at approximately 8:05 pm, the Anacortes City Council meeting of March 9, 2026, was adjourned.