

Anacortes City Council Minutes - March 23, 2026

Call to Order

Mayor Ryan Walters called to order the March 23, 2026, Anacortes City Council meeting at 6:00 p.m. Councilmembers Marcia Hunt, 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.

Mr. Currier moved, seconded by Mr. Fantini, without objection to excuse the absence of Mr. Young.

Announcements and Committee Reports

Mayor Walters provided announcements, referring to a slide presentation that was added to the packet materials for the meeting, regarding [Senior Activity Center events and programs](#), [March Meals on Wheels fundraising events](#), [Parks and Recreation spring and summer events and programs](#), the [Community Development Block Grant Annual Plan](#) public comment period, the Guemes Island Ferry maintenance haulout schedule for May 4–17, the [project information page](#), and safe storage or disposal of firearms. He also mentioned the upcoming April 6th State of the City Address and the April 13th All-Department first quarter update to the council and public.

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

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

a. Minutes of March 16, 2026

b. Approval of claims in the amount of \$492,036.90

The following vouchers/checks were approved for payment:

EFT numbers: 115152 through 115180, total \$119,475.58

Check numbers: 115181 through 115201, total \$340,946.13

Wire transfer numbers: 386030 through 386382, total \$31,615.19

c. Contract Award: Whistle Lake Road Pipe Arch Modifications #25-044-WTR-002

Other Business

Skagit Tourism Bureau Update

Chief Executive Officer of the Skagit Tourism Bureau Kristen Keltz provided a presentation on the bureau's projects, goals, and programs, referring to a slide presentation that was included in the packet materials for the meeting. Ms. Keltz and Vice President of Marketing and Operations Elizabeth Tyler answered questions from the council

Discussion topics included:

- Appreciation for the 'Always Here' campaign targeting Canadian visitors.
- Film liaison.
- Property tax break number. How is it derived?
- Tourism spending figures in the presentation.
- How geo-fencing works regarding advertising.

- How Canadian and other international visitors are tracked, and the associated impact.
- Availability of data for local chambers of commerce.

Waste Management Annual Report

Operations Manager WiL Ludemann introduced Waste Management Senior Manager, Public Sector Solutions Robin Freedman, Education and Outreach Coordinator Grace Fletcher, and Skagit District Manager Chris Clark, who delivered the Waste Management 2025 annual report for Anacortes, referring to a slide presentation that was included in the packet materials for the meeting.

Discussion topics included:

- Contamination outreach and education.
 - Customers are contacted quarterly via phone and email and 'oops tags' for blatant cases.
 - Smart truck technology can measure the effectiveness of the campaign.
 - The trend line for contamination is decreasing where education and outreach programs and smart truck systems are in place.
- Potential reasons for 2025 lower tonnage numbers for recycling, organics and garbage versus 2024.

Resolution 3206: Authorization for Ship Harbor Grant Applications

Parks Manager Nicole Johnston introduced proposed Resolution 3206 that would authorize the city to apply for a grant through the Washington State Recreation and Conservation Office for the restoration of sections of the Ship Harbor trail from the Washington State Ferry terminal and a boardwalk that were damaged during a king tide in 2022, referring to a slide presentation that was included in the packet materials for the meeting.

Discussion topics included:

- The importance of providing safe and accessible means for getting the public down to the viewing platform that protects surrounding critical areas.

Christine Cleland-McGrath moved, seconded by TJ Fantini, to approve Resolution 3206 as presented. The motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

Annual Stormwater Maintenance Plan

Stormwater Manager Aaron Esterholt introduced the 2026 Stormwater Maintenance Plan, referring to a slide presentation that was included in the packet materials for the meeting.

Discussion topics included:

- Moving vehicles for street sweeping.
- Mapping of the tree canopy and how it affects stormwater management.
- Handling of material collected during street sweeping operations.
- Determining where high risk outfalls are located.

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

Interlocal Agreement #20-198-APD-002 for Skagit County Multiple Agency Response Team (SMART) Contracted Administrator

Police Chief Dave Floyd introduced proposed interlocal agreement #20-198-APD-002 for funding the Skagit County Multiple Agency Response Team (SMART) Contracted Administrator. He provided a brief overview of

how the response team came to be a required entity to independently investigate use of force incidents after the passage of [Initiative 940](#) in 2018. He outlined the structure of the team that includes lieutenants and captains from local law enforcement agencies in Skagit and Island counties. He added that the administrative burden has become increasingly onerous and requires a contracted administrator to comply with state requirements for training and vetting of new detectives, as well as providing information to state officials in the case of an audit. The total cost for the position is \$50,000 annually, shared equally across participating agencies, for which Anacortes' share is \$7,142.86. He added that the funds are available in the current year's budget.

Discussion topics included:

- Contracted administrator's duties are administrative in nature only. They do not participate in the investigations.

TJ Fantini moved, seconded by Bruce McDougall, to authorize the mayor to execute interlocal #20-198-APD-002 for Skagit County Multiple Agency Response Team (SMART) Contracted Administrator. The motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

Interlocal Agreement #26-127-AFD-001 with WA DOH for Overdose Data to Action in States (OD2A-S) Grant

Assistant Fire Chief Mannix McDonnell introduced proposed interlocal agreement #26-127-AFD-001 with the Washington State Department of Health for Overdose Data to Action in States (OD2A-S) Grant. He elaborated that this money is available to any community with a Washington Cares program, of which the total amount is \$19,576 with no match requirement. He added that the city must provide education, Narcan leave behind kits, and two reports due in June and September of the current year.

Discussion topics included:

- Ensure that funds would not be at risk if the Community Paramedic incumbent were to change prior to signing the agreement.
- Layered approach to treating the opioid epidemic.

Luke Currier moved, seconded by Marcia Hunt, to authorize the mayor to execute interlocal agreement #26-127-AFD-001 with the Washington State Department of Health for Overdose Data to Action in States (OD2A-S) grant. The motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

Wastewater Treatment Plant Alternatives Analysis

Wastewater Treatment Plant Manager Brian Walker introduced Gregory Mockos of Brown and Caldwell, who provided an overview of the Wastewater Treatment Plan alternatives analysis for handling biosolids, referring to a slide presentation that was included in the packet materials for the meeting.

Discussion topics included:

- Perhaps using technology that meets all staff goals except for the requirement not to require 24-hour staffing.
- Some options are standalone; others can be combined.
- Screened technologies that would fit on site or need to be accommodated off site.
- Timeline for technology implementation.
- Life span of the existing incinerator.
- Attributes of each technology option will be vague to preclude bias.
- Agencies are moving away from incinerators because of the cost of maintenance and permitting.
- \$4.6 million is a conservative estimate for upgrading the existing incinerator and based on maintenance

information from the past year.

- The city could be responsible for the cost if regulatory changes or community response to per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) being present in biosolids.
- Staff successfully modified the incinerator to comply with mercury and cadmium emission levels.
- The permitting process depends on the choice of new technology. A permitting specialist would be hired to identify the steps and produce a matrix.

Mayor Walters announced that there would be a project web page including the presentation in the packet, the future survey that the council would complete, and next steps in the process.

Adjournment

There being no further business, at approximately 8:07 pm, the Anacortes City Council meeting of March 23, 2026, was adjourned.