

# **Anacortes City Council Minutes - May 4, 2026**

## **Call to Order**

Mayor Ryan Walters called to order the May 4, 2026, Anacortes City Council meeting at 6:01 p.m. Councilmembers Marcia Hunt, Luke Currier, Anthony Young, Christine Cleland-McGrath, Bruce McDougall and TJ Fantini were present. Councilmember Carolyn Moulton was absent.

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

## **Pledge of Allegiance**

The assembly joined in the Pledge of Allegiance.

## **Announcements and Committee Reports**

Mayor Walters made announcements, referring to a slide presentation that was added to the packet materials for the meeting, regarding upcoming Parks and Recreation and Library events, the ongoing [Guemes Island ferry maintenance period from 4 to 17 May](#), and the 12th Street and Commercial Avenue intersection project.

### **Public Works Committee**

Mr. Fantini reported from the Public Works Committee meeting held earlier in the evening. The topics discussed included a draft ordinance for right-of-way maintenance guidelines, potential rules and regulations for parklets, the 12th Street and Commercial Avenue intersection project, and the movable speed monitors currently deployed on Oakes Avenue that belong to the city.

## **Public Comment**

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

Public comment was given as follows:

Pat Gardner of Anacortes suggested informing residents in the rural areas of the city through an insert in city utility bills regarding the recent passage of [Ordinance 5026 prohibiting the feeding of wild animals](#).

Ellen Israel, Public Affairs Specialist for the US Small Business Administration, spoke about federal aid available after the December 2025 flooding disaster in the region. She reported that applications for assistance can be submitted at [sba.gov/disaster](https://sba.gov/disaster) with deadlines to apply for a physical disaster loan being June 10, 2026, and for economic injury on January 7, 2027. She added that one-on-one application assistance is also available at the Burlington Parks and Recreation building Wednesday–Saturday through May 9th and again on June 6th.

Pat Barrett of Anacortes and Chair of the Anacortes Housing Authority Board of Directors commended the Planning Department on quick action on recent environmental permitting applications, and spoke about the Anacortes Housing Authority's recent leadership changes and the organization's willingness to continue to partner with the city on the Olson Building project.

## **Consent Agenda**

Ms. Hunt moved, seconded by Mr. Young, to approve the following Consent Agenda items.

a. Minutes of April 27, 2026

b. Approval of claims in the amount of \$1,074,890.70

The following vouchers/checks were approved for payment:

EFT numbers: 115476 through 115508 total \$1,016,893.44

Check numbers: 115509 through 115529 total \$52,869.68

Wire transfer numbers: 387969 through 388300, total \$5,127.58

c. Ordinance 5028: Amending regulations for vehicle and boat repair and boat sales in the Industrial zone

d. Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law and Decision on the SEPA DNS appeal of the Stormwater Master Plan

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

### **Other Business**

#### **Resolution 3213: Adopting the Anacortes Community Forest Lands Plan**

Assistant Parks and Recreation Director Bob Vaux introduced Resolution 3213 that would adopt the Anacortes Community Forest Lands (ACFL) Plan.

Discussion topics included:

- Good step forward for the next five years and thanks to the Forest Board and staff.
- Potential plan adaptation for use and climate change.
- Living document.
- Significant community-based support.
- Aspirational document that needs metrics for accountability and analysis moving forward.
- Analysis of how well we are balancing the community's competing desires for recreational use and conservation.
- Need for additional details on fire safety.
- Thanks for the public feedback.
- Thanks to the organizations who contributed their expertise to the plan (Forest Advisory Board, Friends of the Forest, community scientists, and others).
- The plan is understandable to the average community member.
- The community is invited to enjoy and appreciate the forest lands.
- Well organized document.
- 30-minute review in 1–2 years as to what is working and not working well.
- A potential annual report to the council and public.

Anthony Young moved, seconded by Christine Cleland-McGrath, to approve Resolution 3213 adopting the Anacortes Community Forest Lands Plan as presented. The motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

#### **Ordinance 5029: Anacortes Community Forest Lands**

Parks and Recreation Director Jonn Lunsford introduced proposed Ordinance 5029 for the ACFL that would create a new municipal code section (8.10.130) establishing penalties for violating posted restrictions on trail use, or traveling off-trail, within the ACFL and a new municipal code chapter (12.18) governing management of the ACFL, codify the conservation easement program into the municipal code (12.18.100), create standards for later updates to the ACFL plan (12.18.120), and formally adopt the boundaries of, and parcels within the ACFL, referring to a slide presentation that was added to the packet materials for the meeting.

Discussion topics included:

#### **Section 8.10.130**

- Trail use enforcement provision would be clarified and codified in this ordinance.
- Anacortes Police Department would respond and enforce any code violations except in the few parcels that are not yet inside city limits.
- Increased summer enforcement with the presence of the School Resource Officer in the ACFL.

- Specific provision for maintaining dogs on a leash is unnecessary, as it is the law throughout the city under [AMC 6.04.100](#).
- More signs about the leash law in the ACFL could be helpful.

#### Section 12.18 Governing ACFL Management

- AMC 12.18.060 cross-reference error should be AMC 12.18.040.

#### Section 12.18.100

- The \$2000 fee for conservation easements is the same fee as adopted in 1998, adjusted for inflation.
- Process for handling donations or bequests for conservation easements.
- Some donors are giving well above the \$2000 minimum level.
- Individuals can give to the forest lands outside the conservation easement program through vehicles like the Forest Endowment Fund or toward the purchase of lands that are yet to be acquired.

#### Section 12.18.120

- Titled the 2025 plan but adopted in 2026. How will this affect the renewal cycle?
- Use of chemical agents to eliminate invasive plants or noxious weeds in the ACFL is a last resort and at the discretion of the Parks Director.

#### ACFL Boundaries

- 12.18.080(a) management map needs to be constructed by GIS.

#### Other Items

- Possibly designate areas where drones could be used legally.
- Update the review frequency on the plan.

Mayor Walters invited members of the audience to comment on this agenda item. Public comment was given as follows:

Wim Houppermans of Anacortes and a board member of Evergreen Islands, expressed opposition to capital projects in the ACFL, and proposed limitations on capital projects in the ACFL to the top of Mount Erie and Heart Lake.

Brian Wetcher of Anacortes reminded the council that best available science is the overriding guiding principle of actions taken by the city or the Forest Advisory Board, such as controlling invasive species, and that this principle should guide all decisions regarding city lands and jurisdictions. He also mentioned that the ACFL is next to the airport and the use of drones must at least comply with Federal Aviation Administration regulations.

Mayor Walters noted that the Capital Facilities Plan must include items that are a certain dollar threshold for projects that have a life span of 10 years and that the drone policy articulated only covers takeoff and landing. He then announced that staff would make the adjustments highlighted during the discussion and bring the ordinance back on the regular agenda at the next regular meeting.

#### Cemetery Fee Update

Mr. Lunsford and Parks and Recreation Administrative Assistant Darby Jordan introduced the proposed fee schedule for green burials and columbarium services at Grand View cemetery, referring to a slide presentation

that was included in 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.

Discussion topics included:

- Maintenance requirements for the niches, which are the responsibility of the city.
- Funds from these sales are only placed in the cemetery fund.
- Sustainability of this concept over the long term.
- Appreciation for the city's work to provide clear pricing and services to the public, when the private alternative can be far more costly for grieving families.
- Cost of niches covers purchase, installation and insurance against tree fall damage.
- Costs are reasonable when looking at the comparable prices of other local facilities.

### **Adjournment**

There being no further business, at approximately 7:12 pm, the Anacortes City Council meeting of May 4, 2026, was adjourned.