

Anacortes City Council Minutes - July 27, 2026

Call to Order

Mayor Ryan Walters called to order the July 27, 2026, Anacortes City Council meeting at 6:00 p.m. Councilmembers Marcia Hunt, Luke Currier, Anthony Young, Carolyn Moulton, Bruce McDougall and TJ Fantini were present. Councilmember Christine Cleland-McGrath participated in the meeting remotely via Zoom.

Pledge of Allegiance

The assembly joined in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Announcements and Committee Reports

Mayor Walters made announcements regarding the 12th Street and Commercial Avenue intersection [project](#); vacancies on the Arts Commission, the Anacortes Housing Authority Board, and Library Board of Trustees ([information on boards and commissions and how to apply](#)); a new page on the website that includes [property tax information](#); upcoming [August events at the Library](#); the Anacortes Arts Festival this coming weekend from July 31st - August 2nd; and National Night Out at Storvik Park on August 6th from 6-8pm; referring to a slide presentation that was added to the packet materials for the meeting.

Finance Committee

Ms. Moulton reported from the Finance Committee meeting held July 23rd. The committee discussed the 2nd Quarter Finance update that would be presented later in the meeting.

Library and Museum Committee

Ms. Hunt reported from the Library and Museum Committee meeting held July 23rd. The topics discussed included the many cultural tourism initiatives in the community, increased visitation statistics to museum facilities despite reduced hours and staff cuts, the demand for authentic tourism experiences, and how the extensive archives of photos, documents and artifacts form the cultural infrastructure of Anacortes. Ms. Hunt encouraged her fellow Councilmembers to tour the archives to fully appreciate the valuable cultural resources present in the collection.

Public Safety Committee

Ms. Hunt reported from the Public Safety Committee meeting held July 21st. Fire and Emergency Medical Services topics included procurement details and mission roles for the fire boat, establishing a means of billing for the boat providing emergency medical services to surrounding island communities, the contract modification for the Fire Station 1 remodel, interviews for Firefighter openings, and the imminent posting of the Assistant Fire Chief position.

Police topics included discussion of the proposed Ordinance 5032 that would regulate personal transportation devices and would be considered later on the agenda. The committee also considered information on providing helmets for children under 18 years old via available grant funding for those who need them but cannot afford them. Mr. Young mentioned that there are ample supplies of low-priced bicycle helmets at the semi-annual sale held by the local Catholic Church.

North Star Housing Task Force

Ms. Cleland-McGrath reported from the North Star Housing Task Force Committee meeting held just prior to the meeting. The topics discussed included the three-year plan for North Star that includes a survey for all Councilmembers to complete for which data will be used to formulate the plan that should be available for review by year-end.

Public Comment

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

Pat Gardner of Anacortes spoke about unruly children on their bicycles at the annual Open Streets event, suggesting that it could serve as a forum for some guidance on rules of the road for children and parents alike.

Consent Agenda

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

a. Minutes of July 20, 2026

b. Approval of claims in the amount of \$306,030.31

The following vouchers/checks were approved for payment:

EFT numbers: 165 through 189, total \$114,380.43

Check numbers: 116065 through 116083, total 167,262.53

Wire transfer numbers: 49 through 164 total \$24,387.35

c. Approval of Request for Work Under Interlocal Agreement #25-064-IDS-001

d. Contract Award: Water Treatment Plant (WTP) High Service Pump Station (HSPS) Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning (HVAC) Improvement — Design #C2026-0212

Other Business

Ordinance 5032: Repealing AMC 10.38 "Motorized Scooters" and Replacing it with New Chapter AMC 10.38 "Personal Transportation Devices"

Police Chief Dave Floyd re-introduced Ordinance 5032 that would repeal AMC 10.38 "Motorized Scooters" and replace it with new Chapter AMC 10.38 "Personal Transportation Devices", referring to a slide presentation that was added to the packet materials for the meeting.

Discussion topics included:

- Acknowledgment of written public comments.
- Positive reinforcement of the new rules as a successful implementation process.
- Formalized education and outreach to the community regarding the new rules.
- Speed limit of 15 miles per hour

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

Pat Gardner of Anacortes wondered about the possibility of having an all-ages training curriculum for the safe use of personal transportation devices.

Mark Nihart of Ward 2, Anacortes expressed a concern about safety regarding personal transportation devices on shared use trails with pedestrians and suggested that an alternative venue be found to the Anacortes Community Forest Lands for electric motorcycle use.

The Council discussed the ordinance further.

Discussion topics included:

- Middle school program to educate students.
- Accommodating different users on shared use trails.
- Giving police and schools the tools to enforce rules and provide positive reinforcement to the

community on how to use devices safely.

- Focusing on behavior.
- Provides a process and framework for adults and children to recreate safely.
- The benefits of wearing a helmet at any age.

TJ Fantini moved, seconded by Luke Currier, to adopt Ordinance 5032 repealing AMC 10.38 "Motorized Scooters" and replacing it with AMC Chapter 10.38 "Personal Transportation Devices."

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

Contract Modification: Master Services Agreement with Anchor QEA for the A Avenue Landfill Project #21-024-LEG-001

Parks and Recreation Director Jonn Lunsford introduced the proposed modification to contract #21-024-LEG-001 with Anchor QEA for the A Avenue Landfill project, referring to a slide presentation that was added to the packet materials for the meeting. Mr. Lunsford and City Attorney Darcy Swetnam answered questions from the Council.

Discussion topics included:

- A sonic rig uses sound technology to cut through rock or concrete to get to the needed depth for the sampling.
- A review of the project history and the remaining steps after the remedial investigation are dependent on the investigation results.
- An outline of the project is available on the [project page](#).

Anthony Young moved, seconded by Bruce McDougall, to authorize the mayor to sign the modification to contract #21-024-LEG-001 with Anchor QEA LLC in the amount of \$25,100.00, increasing the total contract price to \$2,917,376.00. The motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

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

Fire Chief Mannix McDonnell introduced the proposed modification to contract #25-035-AFD-002 with Lazer Construction LLC in accordance with Change Order #1, which includes several changes during the project, including unforeseen issues with the fire sprinkler system, relocation of gas, electrical and data lines, additional framing, and subflooring.

Discussion topics included:

- Signature authority for work orders and project management.
 - Future projects for non-utility facilities will be managed by the Public Works Engineering or Facilities divisions.

Luke Currier moved, seconded by Anthony Young, to authorize the mayor to sign the modification to contract #25-035-AFD-002 with Lazer LLC in the amount of \$29,771.37, increasing the total contract price to \$290,715.81. The motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

Wastewater Treatment Plant Alternatives Analysis

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

Discussion topics included:

Alternatives Summary and Short-list

- Staff familiarity with associated equipment and recent adoption in California helped option 9 make the list.
 - Options 8 and 9 can be seen together.
- Definition of acronyms.
 - LLLL = subsection label under the Code of Federal Regulations
- Handling of PFAS or ability to change design based on the regulatory environment.
- Hurdles with the Puget Sound Clean Air Agency over alternatives.
- Avoiding appeals from environmental groups.
- Costs will be life cycle costs in present dollars.
- Phasing and construction timelines will come after the fall work sessions.
- Revenue potential for some of the alternatives.

Alternative 6: Autothermal Thermophilic Aerobic Digestion

- Use of the space where the incinerator now sits.
- Costs associated with odor control.
- Operational pitfalls that other facilities using this technology have experienced.

Alternative 8: BioDrying

- Population threshold to make this feasible.
- Out to 2045 assuming growth + 50% peaking factor.
- How to mitigate undesirable odors while being cognizant of fiscal constraints.
- An assessment or defined scale of odor strength for each alternative.
- Could there be a phased approach?

Alternative 9: BioDrying with Pyrolysis

- Use of biochar as soil for agriculture or material for construction.
- Odor and proximity of the plant to the downtown core.

Quarter 2 Finance Update

Finance Manager Rhonda Peck provided the Quarter 2 Finance update, referring to a slide presentation that was included in the packet materials for the meeting. Finance Director Steve Hoglund attended the meeting remotely via Zoom.

Discussion topics included:

Real Estate Excise Tax

- Reasons for the reduced real estate excise tax collection rate.

Building Revenues

- 2015–2019 figures for Building Revenues and Real Estate Excise Tax.
- Impact of the changes made by software and process updates for building permits.
- An awareness of other revenue opportunities.
- A long-term reliance on building revenues to sustain the city budget must be re-evaluated.

- Grants and investment strategies.
- Limitations on new development.
- Shrinking permit revenues.
- A need to have infill, town homes, multifamily and cottage homes built to maintain building and real estate excise tax revenues.
- Responsive customer service.
- Formation of the Economic Development Committee to address the need for increased revenues.
 - Targeted business development over the long term.

Lodging Tax

- Hotel revenues are slow.
 - Early tulip bloom.
 - Reduction in Canadian visitors.

Major Funds Summary

- The use of quarterly budgeting to show more transparent accounting.
- Moving capital projects to a separate fund to show lack of spending or revenue related to those specific items.

Utility Funds Summary

- Fiber is part of the General Fund and not a standalone utility.

2027 Budget Outlook | non-utilities

- Basis of sales tax revenue forecasts.
- 3–5-year projection or plan for revenues and expenditures.
- Historical perspectives to inform budget planning.
- Maintaining levels of service.
- What services are we willing to reduce to balance the budget?
- Working with the port to grow living wage jobs.
- Working with builders to develop housing for workers.
- Using Lodging Tax Advisory Committee funds to attract visitors and businesses.
- A revenue generation brainstorm session.
- Team effort with the community to find solutions to the problem.
- What is important to the community to fund for the 2027 budget?
- Identifying statutorily compulsory expenses for planning purposes.

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

Adjournment

There being no further business, at approximately 8:37 pm, the Anacortes City Council meeting of July 27, 2026, was adjourned.