

City Council Minutes – March 25, 2019

Mayor Laurie Gere called to order the regular Anacortes City Council meeting of March 25, 2019 at 6:00 p.m. Councilmembers Eric Johnson, Ryan Walters, Anthony Young, Brad Adams, Bruce McDougall and Matt Miller were present. The assembly joined in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Announcements and Committee Reports

Community Appreciation of Salvation Army Cold Weather Shelter Volunteers: Lt. Stephen Milner of the Salvation Army thanked the city for its support of the winter Cold Weather Shelter. Lt. Milner reported that the past winter the shelter opened nightly between December 20, 2018 and March 1, 2019, thanks to the help of 58 shift volunteers and support provided by Skagit County to hire two graveyard shift staff to cover the 11 PM to 5:30 AM shift. He said that 920 total bed nights were provided to an average of 15 guests per night. Lt. Milner thanked a long list of individuals and agencies for supporting the shelter with goods, services and time. He recognized Mr. Johnson's oversight of the shelter and offered special thanks to Nelle Jacobson, Chief of Scheduling and Volunteer Coordinator for the Shelter. Mayor Gere thanked Lt. Milner for his leadership and coordination to provide this vital community service.

Planning Committee: Mr. McDougall reported from the committee meeting earlier in the evening. He indicated that the Planning Commission hoped to conclude its review of the Development Regulations update on April 10, 2019 and said that committee members looked forward to full City Council consideration of the Development Regulations soon thereafter. Mr. Walters reported on the committee's discussion of proposed fire impact fees and the limited revisions to the commercial categories being prepared by consultant Berk Associates. Mr. Walters also reported on new technology that might help to identify available public parking spaces downtown and alleviate the perceived shortage of parking.

Public Comment

Jennifer Mann, owner of Tides of Anacortes, spoke representing the retail trades group and downtown businesses to bring Council attention to an ongoing problem with downtown parking. Ms. Mann submitted a written summary of her comments which was added to the packet materials for the meeting. She reported that a 2018 survey of downtown businesses identified parking as the top issue impacting their businesses in a negative way. Ms. Mann discussed the parking time limits downtown and the lack of enforcement of those limits; she said that enforcing the time limits would help address the problem of employees parking in spots that could serve customers. She acknowledged the constraints on the parking officer's time and said she had spoken with other cities in which the Auxiliary Patrol assists with chalking tires. She also suggested signage to make customers aware of public parking in lots at the cinema and City Hall. Ms. Mann asked if the city might be able to purchase or rent parking space owned by private businesses to provide more public parking. Ms. Mann also urged more effective sweeping of downtown streets, possibly posting signs prohibiting parking on some regular schedule to allow streets to be swept. Ms. Mann thanked Council for considering the parking issues and offered the assistance of the retail trades group to help develop solutions. Mayor Gere thanked the group for speaking and advised that the Planning Director was investigating the potential to make some private parking spaces available to the public.

Allen Rhoades, 4105 Mitchell Drive, suggested several ideas for alleviating the parking problem. His handouts were added to the packet materials for the meeting. Mr. Rhoades observed that the yellow painted no parking zones at corners seemed to grow a little longer each year, limiting available parking. Mr. Rhoades suggested lowering the speed limit on Commercial Avenue to 20 mph from 2nd Street to 12th Street if slower speeds would require smaller sight distances, hence shorter yellow zones at intersections. Mr. Rhoades also observed that the tick marks partitioning parking spaces were larger than required by most vehicles so had actually reduced the number of parking spaces. He said back in angle parking would also be a good option if streets were one-way;

he proposed making the east-west streets between 11th Street and 4th Street one way, alternating direction every block, to allow safe back in angle parking. He suggested changing the truck route to 3rd Street rather than 4th Street since there are fewer residences on 3rd Street. Mr. Rhoades also suggested increasing parking spaces on Commercial Avenue by replacing the bicycle lanes with pull in angle parking on both sides of Commercial Avenue. Mr. Rhoades expressed frustration that the Port of Anacortes did not provide sufficient parking for its tenants, and concern that the Port's expansion plans for the north and west basin would exacerbate the parking problem. He asked if a code change was needed to require the Port to provide sufficient parking for its tenants and urged a coordinated parking plan for Port properties.

Cheryl Gilman said her alteration business had been located in two different downtown locations and that it was difficult for her customers to find parking and that they would sometimes postpone visits to her business if parking was not readily available. Ms. Gilman endorsed Mr. Rhoades's suggestion of angle parking.

Janet Schlaifer, of Oak Harbor, spoke as a consumer. She said she would like to shop in Anacortes but had not done so for the past 30 days because there was no parking available. Ms. Schlaifer said she had also stopped shopping downtown in Oak Harbor and La Conner because she couldn't find parking, shopping on line instead. She cautioned that Anacortes was losing sales tax revenue due to lack of visible downtown parking.

Mr. Walters called attention to a recent *Skagit Valley Herald* article on Sedro-Woolley's downtown development. He observed that government, businesses and business associations all have a role to play in addressing parking and strengthening downtown retail.

Consent Agenda

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

- a. Minutes of March 18, 2019
- b. Approval of Claims in the amount of: \$221,137.69
- c. Contract Amendment: Anacortes Senior Activity Center Foundation 18-109-SEN-001
- d. Contract Award: 2019 Chevrolet Silverado Purchase 19-042-ERR-001
- e. Donation Acceptance: EMS Donation

The following vouchers/checks were approved for payment:
EFT numbers: 92626 through 92657, total \$72,867.58
Check numbers: 92658 through 92711, total \$148,484.67
Wire transfer numbers: 246880 through 247071, total \$975.79

PUBLIC HEARING

2019 CDBG Action Plan Review

Administrative Assistant and CDBG Administrator Joann Stewart summarized the city's participation in the federal Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program and presented the city's draft 2019 Action Plan. Ms. Stewart's slide presentation was added to the packet materials for the meeting. Ms. Stewart described the schedule for the congressional appropriations, the public comment period for the annual Action Plan, and the second hearing on the draft plan scheduled for April 22, 2019. She also briefly described the project applications received to date. Mr. Walters suggested prioritizing sidewalk curb cut projects over service counter retrofits at City Hall. Mr. Adams asked that staff provide more information on the counter retrofits to help Council determine the relative priority of the two items. Mr. Johnson asked if additional project applications would still be accepted. Ms. Stewart said that additional submissions could be considered and addressed at the April 22, 2019 hearing. Mr. Young thanked Ms. Stewart for her extensive efforts administering the CDBG program for

the city for many years. Mr. Miller asked if staff expected substantial changes in the award amount for 2019. Ms. Stewart said there was some indication that the 2019 allocation to Anacortes could be slightly larger than the prior year.

Mayor Gere invited members of the audience to comment on this agenda item. No one present wished to address the Council. Mayor Gere left the public hearing open until April 22, 2019.

OTHER BUSINESS

Guemes Channel Trail Update

Parks and Recreation Director Jonn Lunsford updated Council on the Guemes Channel Trail, specifically regarding Phase VII, the 4096 LF directly west of Lovric's. Mr. Lunsford's slide presentation was added to the packet materials for the meeting. Mr. Lunsford reported on a recent survey of shoreline plantings in Phase VII which found 8700 SF of actual planting pockets 3' wide or wider, compared to the 5250 SF called for in the Phase VII permit. He explained that plants that do not survive are replanted and cited over 200 trees planted along the trail by volunteers in 2018. Mr. Lunsford then reported on the storm damage caused to the trail by high winds and waves on February 3-4, 2019. He confirmed that staff had met with the Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW), the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) and the city's Planning Department to ascertain necessary requirements before staff could begin repairs to the damaged trail section. Mr. Walters inquired if the city could obtain an ongoing permit for trail maintenance. Mr. Lunsford said staff had obtained such a permit in 2014 and was in the process of renewing it. He responded to councilmember questions about situations that would and would not require COE permits, the process for ascertaining that all mitigation required for Phase VII had been completed, tracking expenditures for trail maintenance and repair each year, the potential to improve the quality of the wetland buffer in adjacent sections of the trail, and measures taken by staff to require reparation for plant damage inflicted by vandals along the trail.

City Council Candidate Presentations

Administrative Services Director Emily Schuh summarized the process for filling the City Council seat vacated when Councilmember Liz Lovelett announced her resignation from the Anacortes City Council effective February 25, 2019 following her appointment to the 40th District of the Washington State Senate. Ms. Schuh referred to her slide presentation which had been included in the packet materials for the meeting. Ms. Schuh clarified that the appointed councilmember would serve in the position only until the November 5, 2019 general election results were certified. Candidates who filed to run for the seat by the May 13, 2019 deadline would appear on the ballot in November and the winning candidate in that election would then hold the seat from the certification of the election results until the end of Ms. Lovelett's unexpired term in 2021. Ms. Schuh summarized the timeframe for considering appointments. She advised that staff had verified that all nine candidates present met the qualifications: Anacortes resident for at least one year and a registered voter. Ms. Schuh said each candidate would have 5 minutes to present their interest in the position, community involvement and the skill set they would bring to the position. She explained that neither councilmembers nor the public would question the candidates at the present meeting and that following the presentations Council would convene in executive session to review the qualifications of the candidates. Mr. Walters asked each candidate to indicate whether or not he or she planned to run for office in the November 2019 election. Ms. Schuh said that prior to the meeting the candidates had drawn lots to determine the order of presentation: Chuck Flagg, Jeremy Carter, Carolyn Moulton, Meredith McIlmoyle, Christine Cleland-McGrath, Gary Robinson, Nicole Mortimer, Tor Fleming, and Sara Holahan.

Each candidate then addressed the Council and audience from the podium. Candidate statements and any supplemental materials introduced during their presentations were included in the packet materials for the meeting. The candidate statements are included in their entirety in the permanent [video record](#) of the meeting.

At 8:03 p.m. Mayor Gere announced that Council would convene in executive session per RCW 42.30.110(h) to review the qualifications of City Council candidates and that no action would be taken before the April 1, 2019 City Council meeting. Ms. Schuh asked if the candidates should remain in chambers in the event that councilmembers wished to reconvene and take action. Mayor Gere called the candidates back to the dais. She advised that the executive session would conclude by 8:40 p.m., at which point the open session would reconvene and Council would advise on the next steps to be taken.

At 8:36 p.m. Mayor Gere reconvened the regular meeting, advising that Council had met in executive session and that no action had been taken. The mayor and several councilmembers commented on the high caliber of the candidates, thanked all the candidates for offering to share their talents in the service of the city, and reminded that participation on city boards and commissions was another means of participating in city government. Mr. Walters moved, seconded by Mr. Miller, to ask the following five candidates to appear before Council the next week for an interactive question and answer session: Christine Cleland-McGrath, Meredith McIlmoyle, Carolyn Moulton, Nicole Mortimer and Tor Fleming. Vote: Ayes – Young, Walters, Adams, McDougall, Miller and Johnson. Motion carried. Mr. Walters suggested that councilmembers email Ms. Schuh with questions for the candidates, which staff would compile and circulate to the candidates prior to the meeting.

There being no further business, at approximately 8:40 p.m. the Anacortes City Council meeting of March 25, 2019 was adjourned.