

Anacortes City Council Minutes – August 24, 2020

Mayor Laurie Gere called to order the Anacortes City Council meeting of August 24, 2020 at 6:00 p.m. Councilmembers Jeremy Carter, Anthony Young, Ryan Walters, Christine Cleland-McGrath, Bruce McDougall and Matt Miller all participated in the meeting in absentia via video conference. Councilmember Carolyn Moulton joined the meeting at approximately 6:02 p.m.

Announcements and Committee Reports

COVID-19 Update: Mayor Gere reported current case statistics for Anacortes, Skagit County, Washington State, the United States and the world. She compared the Skagit County statistics to the metrics required to move to Phase 3 of the Safe Start Washington plan. The mayor encouraged all residents to be sure to be counted by the 2020 Census. She also announced that Skagit County Health Officer Dr. Howard Liebrand would join the mayor for her weekly COVID-19 Community Briefing on September 2.

Parks & Recreation Committee: Ms. Moulton reported from the committee meeting the prior Thursday. She summarized topics discussed including the dam at Whistle Lake, behavioral health challenges in parks at all levels, collaboration between the Parks, Library, Museum and the school district to serve students, the sailing program contract, the Grand View Cemetery expansion project, the Depot Plaza restroom project, opening playgrounds, Washington Park campground use, and Parks impact fees. Mr. Young elaborated on the collaboration between the Parks Department and the school district.

Planning Committee: Ms. Cleland-McGrath reported from the committee meeting earlier in the evening. She summarized topics discussed including additional small business stabilization grant funding recently made available by the Skagit Community Foundation, rental assistance funds to be administered by the Anacortes Family Center, Habitat for Humanity's request to lease land for affordable housing, the Tommy Thompson train proposal, and the Port's northwest basin master plan and proposed event center.

Mr. Walters reported that he attended a meeting the prior week regarding the Snohomish, Whatcom, Island, San Juan, and Skagit (SWISS) Proposal for Greater Regional Cooperation. He suggested that cities be included in those discussions as well as counties, sooner rather than later. Mr. Walters urged his colleagues to contact the county commissioners in this regard.

Public Comment

Claudia Cimini, 2308 30th Street, Public Policy Director for the Anacortes branch of the American Association of University Women (AAUW), commented on Resolution 2099 which would be presented for action later on the agenda. Ms. Cimini briefly summarized the history of voting rights and the women's suffrage movement in the United States. She acknowledged the ongoing challenges to protect voting rights in the country. Ms. Cimini requested that City Council adopt Resolution 2099 recognizing August 26 as Women's Equality Day in recognition of the work that has been done and that must continue for voting rights for all Americans.

No other members of the public wished to address the Council.

Consent Agenda

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

- a. Minutes of August 17, 2020
- b. Approval of Claims in the amount of: \$131,062.99

The following vouchers/checks were approved for payment:
EFT numbers: 97958 through 97997, total \$116,691.61
Check numbers: 97998 through 98013, total \$5,778.92
Wire transfer numbers: 272565 through 272830, total \$8,592.46

OTHER BUSINESS

Access Anacortes Fiber Internet Update

Administrative Services Director Emily Schuh provided the regular monthly update on Access Anacortes Fiber Internet. Ms. Schuh's slides were added to the packet materials for the meeting. She reported on current installed customer counts, revenue, and pre-orders for new service by area. Ms. Schuh also shared the breakdown of subscribers by service plan. She then summarized the construction plans for the remainder of the year and reported on special project progress and funding options for 2021.

Ordinance 3074: Amending Section 1.30.080 of the Anacortes Municipal Code Regarding Executing Contracts for Dark Fiber Leases and Telecommunication Contracts

City Attorney Darcy Swetnam presented Ordinance 3074 to amend the municipal code to streamline the contracting process for dark fiber leases and telecommunication agreements by authorizing the Mayor to approve such agreements. She explained the provisions of the ordinance.

Councilmembers discussed the draft ordinance and requested changes including clarifying the language of 1.30.080(b), setting limits on the number of strands per lessee and the lease term for which the mayor would have authority to sign leases, and possibly setting an upper limit on the percentage of the fiber system or of particular fiber runs that could be leased. Mr. Miller requested that the ordinance ensure adequate capacity to provide all 7600 potential fiber customers with 1 gigabyte service. Ms. Swetnam said she would revise Ordinance 3074 per Council's requests and bring the ordinance back to Council for consideration and action at the next regular City Council meeting on September 8.

Mr. Walters asked that separate from the proposed ordinance, Council develop and adopt a policy addressing what total portion of the system should be available for lease. Mayor Gere suggested that the Fiber Committee take up that question at its next meeting.

Monthly Finance Update and COVID-19 Impacts

Finance Director Steve Hoglund presented the regular monthly update on the city's financial position, referring to the charts and graphs that had been included in the packet materials for the meeting. Mr. Hoglund called Council's attention to a steady decrease in water consumption compared to prior year. He noted that such a decrease affects water revenue, sewer revenue and utility tax revenue. Mr. Hoglund then reviewed each of the primary revenue streams and highlighted the variances from budget and from prior year. He concluded with a summary of revenues and expenditures in each fund compared to target figures.

Critical Area Regulations - Workshop: Draft 2 Critical Aquifers, Frequently Flooded, and Geologically Hazardous Areas

Associate Planner Tess Cooper facilitated Council review of the final sections of Draft 2 of the Critical Area Regulations, addressing Critical Aquifers, Frequently Flooded, and Geologically Hazardous Areas. Ms. Cooper responded to councilmember questions. Staff noted revisions and additional research requested by councilmembers. Ms. Cooper advised that staff would next begin compiling Draft 3 of the regulations, incorporating changes discussed during City Council review. Mr. Walters requested that Draft 3 come back to Council for review before it was released for public comment, to ensure that Draft 3 reflected Council's intent. Ms. Cooper agreed. She asked Council to send her any additional requests or suggestions for Draft 3 no later than September 7, 2020.

Resolution 2099: Designating August 26th as Women's Equality Day

Ms. Moulton introduced Resolution 2099 designating August 26th as Women's Equality Day, honoring the day in 1920 that American women won their right to vote and recognizing the opportunity to continue to work for equal rights for all citizens. Ms. Moulton thanked Claudia Cimini and the local chapter of the American Association of University Women for bringing the topic forward. Ms. Cleland-McGrath commented on key personalities and events in the women's suffrage movement. Mr. Young thanked Ms. Cleland-McGrath and Ms. Moulton for bringing Resolution 2099 forward, and thanked all those who worked for suffrage in the past and continue to work in support of equality for all.

Mr. Young moved, seconded by Ms. Cleland-McGrath, to adopt Resolution 2099. Vote: Ayes – Young, Walters, Cleland-McGrath, Moulton, McDougall, Miller and Carter. Motion carried. Mayor Gere read the resolution aloud.

There being no further business, at approximately 8:00 p.m. the Anacortes City Council meeting of August 24, 2020 was adjourned.