

City Council Minutes – January 6, 2020

Mayor Laurie Gere called to order the Anacortes City Council meeting of January 6, 2020 at 6:00 p.m. Councilmembers Jeremy Carter, Ryan Walters, Christine Cleland-McGrath, Carolyn Moulton, Bruce McDougall and Matt Miller were present. Councilmember Anthony Young participated in the meeting via telephone.

The assembly joined in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Announcements and Committee Reports

Election of Mayor Pro Tem: Mayor Gere explained the role of the Mayor Pro Tem. Mr. Miller, who served as Mayor Pro Tem during 2018 and 2019, noted that the Mayor Pro Tem is traditionally the senior member of the Council who has not yet served in that position. Mr. Miller moved, seconded by Mr. Young, to elect Bruce McDougall as Mayor Pro Tem. Mr. McDougall said he would be delighted and honored to serve in that capacity. Vote: Ayes – Carter, Walters, Cleland-McGrath, Moulton, McDougall, Miller and Young. Motion carried.

Public Works Committee: Ms. Moulton reported from the committee meeting earlier in the evening. She advised the Eric Shjarback had been appointed Assistant Public Works Director. Ms. Moulton said the committee discussed the new roundabout at Oakes Avenue and Glasgow Way which was scheduled to be completed by May 2020, paid for mostly by federal grant and impact fees, and the settlement agreement with Puget Soundkeeper. Mr. Walters added that the committee had also discussed articulating the problem to be solved at 12th Street and Commercial Avenue

Public Comment

Ed Gegen presented seven questions to ponder regarding the Madrona project, not necessarily to answer immediately.

Jeanne Olmstead read from her prepared remarks advocating for a reduction in the maximum building height in the R4 zone west of Commercial Avenue to M Avenue. Ms. Olmsted's comments were added to the packet materials for the meeting.

Bill Perkins, S Avenue, said the city has had a 10% surplus in the budget but was still raising taxes. He urged spending half of the budget surplus on streets that are in poor shape rather than on Commercial Avenue between 11th and 13th Streets which was in better shape.

Doug Thurber first urged Mayor Gere to meet with the Madrona project developer and negotiate the building height down. Mr. Thurber said no one in town wants the building. Mr. Thurber also addressed climate change, reading into the record his recent letter to councilmembers urging them to read *The Politically Incorrect Guide to Climate Change* before voting to proclaim a climate emergency. Mr. Thurber's letter was added to the packet materials for the meeting.

Kim Hamilton addressed Council regarding road conditions on Cove Place. Mr. Hamilton reported on his recent meetings with Bill Larson in the Street Department and Assistant Public Works Director Eric Shjarback regarding aging waterlines under the street. Mr. Hamilton requested that Cove Place get on the city's radar for future repair. Mr. Hamilton provided photographs of the poor condition of the street; the photos were added to the packet materials for the meeting.

Warren Carr, H Avenue, spoke about the importance and value of neighborhoods in Anacortes and how communication, connection and problem resolution occur there. Mr. Carr acknowledged that high rise development will undoubtedly be part of the future but urged Council to consider neighborhoods when deciding where high rise development will be allowed.

Tom Banks spoke against the Madrona project and expressed dismay about the exponential growth in Anacortes since 2005 and especially in the past five years. Mr. Banks disputed the growth projections assigned to Fidalgo Island by the state.

Mike Pearl read from his prepared remarks regarding the emotional toll on the residents impacted by the Madrona project. Mr. Pearl's remarks were added to the packet materials for the meeting.

Marianne Banks addressed the changes to the small town feel of Anacortes since she moved to town in 2004. Ms. Banks expressed concern about the impact of a high rise building at 18th Street and O Avenue in a single story working class neighborhood. She said allowing one tall building sets a precedent and asked if there would be a corridor of 5-story buildings down Commercial Avenue.

Benjamin Wilson reported that he had watched fiber optic cable being installed near Clear Ridge and asked when it would be available. Mayor Gere estimated it would take a couple of years to reach that part of town.

Mr. Walters acknowledged public comment regarding street conditions and suggested establishing a formal process that would allow citizens to see which streets were being considered for upgrades and to request prioritization of some streets over others.

Mr. Walters acknowledged public comment regarding the 5-story building proposed for 18th Street and O Avenue and clarified that Council can take legislative action to establish development regulations but cannot and will not intervene in active permit applications being processed according to current code.

Consent Agenda

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

- a. Minutes of December 23, 2019
- b. Approval of Claims in the amount of: \$924,864.13

The following vouchers/checks were approved for payment:
EFT numbers: 95761 through 95810, total \$290,115.28
Check numbers: 95760 and 95811 through 95848, total \$611,263.52
Wire transfer numbers: 260717 through 261482, total \$6,916.91

OTHER BUSINESS

Presentation: Anacortes Robotics Booster Club

Student members of the Anacortes Robotics Booster Club Uptown Lego Legends 21674 reported to Council about their activities and recent awards including their project, their robot and their core values. The club first presented its project to address solving CO2 levels in the atmosphere and climate change: an all in one parking garage and greenhouse. The group then demonstrated its robot, Parker, and reported on the basis for the team's design decisions. The club then reported on its core values including discovery, impact, effectiveness, team identify, efficiency, inclusion, respect, cooperation, and fun. In conclusion, the team invited Council and the audience to view a demonstration of the robot in action.

Ordinance 3052: Updating AMC Chapter 12.50, Street and Alley Vacation

City Attorney Darcy Swetnam invited Council input on this item following previous consideration at regular City Council meetings on September 23, 2019, November 12, 2019, November 25, 2019 and December 9, 2019. Ms. Swetnam’s slide presentation was added to the packet materials for the meeting. She summarized the revisions in the current draft compared to the most recent prior draft.

Mr. Walters noted Council’s desire to be able to approve vacations even if stated criteria are not met but said that 12.50.060 as drafted did not achieve that. After additional discussion, Ms. Swetnam suggested referring to “factors” rather than “criteria”. Mr. Miller concurred. Ms. Swetnam suggested that she would make that change and bring Ordinance 3052 back to Council on the Consent Agenda. Councilmembers concurred.

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

Brian Wetcher, 814 26th Street, addressed partial vacations adjacent to the ACFL. Mr. Wetcher suggested codifying that any adjacent, unvacated and unused right of way should be put into a conservancy status if it is adjacent to a critical area, or a riparian or a fish and wildlife habitat designated area. He elaborated on this suggestion.

Mr. Walters observed that Mr. Wetcher’s comment was not without merit but said the topic was complicated and would conflate street vacations and critical areas so would be better considered in a future draft. Ms. Swetnam recommended completing the current Critical Areas Ordinance update, then revisiting this topic.

Contract Award or Rejection of All Bids: Municipal Broadband Installation – CBD, Old Town Pilot, M Avenue Pilot #19-181-FBR-001

Administrative Services Director Emily Schuh requested a City Council decision to either award a contract in the amount of \$580,000.00 to OFS Fitel Services International LLC (OFS) for installation of fiber optic network infrastructure in the Central Business District, Old Town and M Avenue pilot areas, or reject all bids for said project. Ms. Schuh said that staff did not have a recommendation on the action because the one bid received in response to the RFP was more than the budget for the project. Councilmembers discussed factors that may have influenced the size of the bidding pool and suggested that the fiber committee revise the RFP to encourage a wider pool and lower bids.

Mr. Walters moved, seconded by Mr. Miller, to adopt Resolution 2070 rejecting all bids for bid number 19-181-FBR-001: Municipal Broadband Installation – CBD, Old Town Pilot, M Avenue Pilot. Vote: Ayes – Walters, Cleland-McGrath, Moulton, McDougall, Miller, Young and Carter. Motion carried.

Mayor Gere asked councilmembers to convey their requests for committee assignments to Mr. McDougall so he could prepare those assignments for adoption at the next regular meeting.

There being no further business, at approximately 7:30 p.m. the Anacortes City Council meeting of January 6, 2020 was adjourned.