

## **City Council Minutes – August 5, 2019**

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Mayor Laurie Gere called to order the Anacortes City Council meeting of August 5, 2019 at 6:00 p.m. Councilmembers Eric Johnson, Anthony Young, Ryan Walters, Brad Adams, Carolyn Moulton, Bruce McDougall and Matt Miller were present. The assembly joined in the Pledge of Allegiance.

### **Announcements and Committee Reports**

Finance Committee: Mr. McDougall reported from the committee meeting on July 24, 2019 at which the group discussed the upcoming budget amendment for the Oakes Avenue roundabout, rebidding the library roof project, fiber cash flow projections and Equipment Rental replacement funding for emergency vehicles. Mr. Walters added that the committee had recommended against using overlay funding for the roundabout.

Public Works Committee: Ms. Moulton reported from the committee meeting earlier in the evening at which the group previewed the CSO reduction presentation that would occur later on the agenda. Mr. Walters added that staff had reported likely WSDOT approval of a flashing beacon crosswalk at 29<sup>th</sup> Street and Commercial Avenue.

Housing Affordability and Community Services: Mr. Johnson reported from the committee meeting on August 1, 2019 at which the group discussed Human Services Commission Job Descriptions, ongoing work on the Human Services Strategic Plan, SHB 1406 and the proposed multi-family tax exemption program. Mr. Johnson's meeting summary was added to the packet materials for the meeting.

Ms. Moulton commented on the exceptionally successful Anacortes Arts Festival over the weekend and noted the powerful exhibit in the fine art show dedicated to victims of gun violence. Ms. Moulton urged citizens not to accept gun violence as normal. Mr. Young commended community members for speaking out against violence and hate crimes.

City Attorney Darcy Swetnam presented the Mayor's Award of Appreciation to Gonzaga Law School student David Newsome who had served as an unpaid legal intern in the City Attorney's office for the summer. Ms. Swetnam listed the extensive range of Mr. Newsome's contributions during his term. Mayor Gere and Ms. Swetnam presented Mr. Newsome with a certificate of appreciation and gift from city staff.

Mayor Gere introduced her new executive assistant, Alexandra Holden, who joined the staff following graduation from Evergreen State College and employment in Governor Inslee's office.

### **Public Comment**

Alice Miller commented on rising rents in Anacortes and said the price of rentals is appalling. Ms. Miller described the difficulty for the elderly and disabled of finding an affordable one-level residence anywhere between Bellingham and Arlington. She urged Council to keep that in mind when working on housing programs. Ms. Miller also agreed with Ms. Moulton's comments that gun violence is not normal and not right.

Arlene Cook spoke against a proposed mountain bike skills park on the site of the old city dump at the top of A Avenue. Ms. Cook said she did not object to such a park but did object to the proposed location. She spoke of the wildlife habitat value of the site in its present state and expressed concern about potential negative impacts of a skills park. Ms. Cook urged a broader public discussion of the proposal and suggested that an alternative location could be found.

Stacey Curtis also expressed her concerns about building a bike skills park on the site of the old city dump. Ms. Curtis addressed potential public health risks from landfill toxins and asked that staff confirm that Department of Ecology water retesting and health review recommendations had been followed or else schedule those tests and reviews if not. Ms. Curtis's written comments were submitted and added to the packet materials for the meeting.

Annette Macartney also spoke against building a bike skills park on the site of the old city dump. Ms. Macartney described the different viewpoints of bike riders and preservationists. She requested more public comment on the proposal and urged finding a different location for a bike skills park.

Wim Houppermans, 3412 K Avenue, agreed that the Arts Festival installation protesting gun violence was very moving and asked Council and the mayor to make sure that exhibit had a proper long term location in the city. Mr. Houppermans also expressed concern about transparency, noting the dissenting voices about the bike skills park raised quite late in the process. He said if things were out in the open earlier, opposition could be voiced earlier. Mr. Houppermans alleged that a letter of opposition had not been published in the *Anacortes American* because city staff had said the park was still only a proposal, which he felt that was inappropriate. Finally, Mr. Houppermans reminded everyone to turn in their primary ballots by August 6.

### **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 July 22, 2019
- b. Approval of Claims in the amount of: \$845,595.29
- c. Resolution 2053: A Resolution fixing a time and place for a public hearing on Ordinance 3047 establishing a residential targeted area for the proposed Anacortes Municipal Code Chapter 3.69 Multifamily Tax Exemption Program
- d. Street Fair Application: Anacortes Community Energy Fair
- e. Contract Modification: Slurry Seal 2018 #18-033-TRN-001
- f. Interlocal 284 with Skagit County: Assistance of Law Enforcement Services Agreement

The following vouchers/checks were approved for payment:  
EFT numbers: 94025 through 94100, total \$664,683.15  
Check numbers: 94101 through 94155, total \$104,215.75  
Wire transfer numbers: 253324 through 253963, total \$89,030.35

### **OTHER BUSINESS**

#### **Update on Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO) Reduction Study**

Public Works Director Fred Buckenmeyer introduced HDR's Eric Bergstrom to continue the discussion of the SSO/CSO issue from the July 8, 2019 City Council meeting. Mr. Bergstrom addressed questions raised by Council at that meeting. His slides were added to the packet materials for the meeting. Mr. Bergstrom recapped his prior presentation elucidating the problem resulting when storm events cause discharge of untreated wastewater and the potential options to address that problem. He then responded at length to Council's request for more information about three alternative responses: reducing the amount of stormwater in the sewer system ("I&I reduction"), expanding storage, or providing advanced levels of wastewater treatment. Mr. Bergstrom provided more information about each of those options and explained why they were not recommended as means of adequately addressing the problem. Mr. Bergstrom then discussed staff's recommended solution, a phased series of wastewater treatment system upgrades to address flow increases, aging equipment, changing

water quality standards, and climate change impacts, beginning with a new treatment plant outfall estimated to cost approximately \$20M over the next 3 to 5 years. Mayor Gere and councilmembers questioned Mr. Bergstrom about projected effects of climate change, potential changes in water quality standards, space constraints on the site of the existing wastewater treatment plant, and optimal sequencing of plant and outfall upgrades.

Mr. Buckenmeyer requested direction from Council on a preferred option so HDR could complete its Engineering Report on that selected option. Mr. Bergstrom confirmed that the report was part of HDR's current contract for the project. Councilmembers requested more information before endorsing staff's recommended option, including a concise summary comparing the costs and benefits of each option. Mayor Gere asked Mr. Buckenmeyer to bring the topic back before Council with a summary of the financial, environmental and political impacts of the project.

### **Waste Management Recycling Update**

Mr. Buckenmeyer introduced Michelle Metzler, Waste Management Public Sector Manager, to present the firm's request for contract modification increasing rates and reducing the list of acceptable materials in their curbside recycling contract. Ms. Metzler revisited the recycling rate request from her December 3, 2018 presentation to Council and said Waste Management now expected the 2018 changes in international recycling markets to be the new normal. She recapped the changes in the solid waste market following China's ban on the import of mixed paper and plastics and the impact on what Waste Management can now actually recycle and at what cost.

Councilmembers were generally amenable to the proposed modifications in the materials that would be accepted in curbside recycling bins but stressed the need to educate customers about the changes to prevent contamination that renders collected materials unmarketable. Councilmembers were not inclined to accept the proposed rate increase. Mr. Adams suggested considering an increase lower than what was proposed and Mr. Walters reiterated his December suggestion of exploring bi-weekly collection as a means of reducing overall cost. Ms. Metzler indicated that Waste Management would be open to considering different proposals. The mayor and Council agreed on the need to find a viable solution in order to continue to offer curbside recycling to city residents. Several councilmembers supported seeking public input on the question.

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

Wim Houppermans agreed with the need for more education on what is recyclable and suggested video training for customers.

Alice Miller offered the tip that shaking baking soda and water in jars cleans them easily for recycling. She urged against accepting the proposed contract changes and expressed concern that if some materials such as milk cartons were no longer accepted for recycling they would end up in landfills. Ms. Miller indicated her household could easily go two weeks between trash pickup with its existing bin.

Kathleen Lorence-Flanagan also agreed on the need for more education, expressing frustration at trying to determine what can and can't be recycled. Ms. Lorence-Flanagan also indicated that her household did not fill its trash bin each week but noted that other residents have overflowing bins on trash day.

Most councilmembers were interested in exploring options for changing collection frequency and on seeking public input to arrive at creative solutions that would be acceptable to customers. Mayor Gere asked staff to bring the topic back for additional discussion.

There being no further business, at approximately 8:25 p.m. the Anacortes City Council meeting of August 5, 2019 was adjourned.