
CITY OF SEDRO-WOOLLEY

Regular Meeting of the City Council
October 23, 2019– 7:00 P.M. – Council Chambers

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Julia Johnson at 7:00 P.M.

Pledge of Allegiance

ROLL CALL: Present: Mayor Julia Johnson, Councilmembers: Brenda Kinzer, Germaine Kornegay, Chuck Owen, Judith Dunn, Karl de Jong, Jared Couch and Pola Kelley. Staff: Recorder Brue, Finance Director Merriman, City Supervisor/Attorney Berg, Planning Director Coleman, Fire Chief Klinger and Police Chief Tucker

Approval of Agenda

Councilmember Dunn moved to approve the agenda. Seconded by Councilmember Kinzer. Motion carried (7-0).

Consent Calendar

- Minutes from Previous Meeting
- Finance
 - Claim Checks #191747 to #191847 plus EFT's in the amount of \$569,881.84
 - Payroll Checks #59908 to #59917 plus EFT's the amount of \$333,484.21
- Firehouse Subs Public Safety Grant 1st Qtr 2020
- Approval of Lodging Tax Advisory Committee Recommendations
- Proposed Resolution (1037-19) declaring certain items surplus

Councilmember Kinzer moved to approve the consent calendar items 1 thru 5. Seconded by Councilmember Kornegay.

Councilmember de Jong referenced the lodging tax advisory committee recommendations and asked what was missing.

Motion carried (7-0).

Introduction of Special Guests and Presentations

Staff Reports

SWPD State of the Department (Chief Tucker and Lt. McIlraith)

Lt. McIlraith presented a power point presentation regarding the hiring process of a police officer showing what they go through to get a new candidate to include the civil service process, background checks, physical, psychological and polygraph testing. McIlraith showed the current organizational chart including vacant positions and discussed the length of time before a conditional offer can be extended, competitiveness with other agencies and available academy dates which are in high demand because most agencies are hiring. He stated even with the shortage they try to stay true to their vision statement of a “safe and enjoyable community living”. Lt. McIlraith entertained council questions and spoke of having partnerships with other agencies.

Police Chief Tucker – reported on an incident at the middle school that took several officers the majority of the day to investigate.

Fire Chief Klinger – announced the Burn the Boot dinner and auction to benefit the Phoenix Foundation and burn children recovery. He also noted an IV class was being held (volunteers needed).

Planning Director Coleman – spoke on the upcoming census noting that the city is mostly done with updates. The Census will take place in 6 months, with notifications by mail, email and personal visits. He also reported he attended the joint legislative task force on water supply, noting that it does not affect the City of Sedro-Woolley due to having PUD water but is a regional issue. Coleman reported receiving an application for a 200 lot sub division in the vicinity of SR9/Fruitdale and Portabello. He noted it would take several months to review. Also received is a request for a conditional use permit from Skagit County for a secured transitional center.

City Supervisor/Attorney Berg – reviewed the progress on the Library building noting it was still on time and on budget. He then polled Council to see if the report being included in their packets is sufficient for them to know where the project stands.

Finance Director Merriman – reported the State Audit team has completed their fieldwork and everything is looking well. He stated they would be calling Councilmembers to schedule the exit conference. He also noted on the consent agenda Council passed the lodging tax recommendations. The amount of funding for lodging tax is driven by the number of hotels, with the purpose of it to expand programs to increase tourism.

Councilmember and Mayor’s Reports

Councilmember Kornegay – reported on her visit to the Didgwalic Treatment Center in Anacortes.

Councilmember de Jong – commented on the amount of rainfall and reminded everyone it is storm drains season. He also spoke about the US census meetings he has been attending and the importance of the census. de Jong pass on a constituent comment for the need of a traffic calming devises on Wicker, State, Jameson and Railroad. He reminded people to vote Nov 5th with a ballot box at the Post Office alley. He also thanked the Planning Commission for their work on ADU’s and reported on the upcoming Family Promise open house.

Councilmember Dunn – reported that the City of Anacortes is setting rates for municipal fiber. Some discussion followed.

Councilmember Kelley – announced the upcoming Halloween parade next Thursday with trick or treating downtown, immediately following. She also reported that voter registration could now take place up to the day of the election at the county Auditor office.

Mayor Johnson – reported on the housing summit and her participation as part of a forum on the housing needs in Skagit Valley. She noted that Skagit Valley is short 3000 homes. Johnson also reviewed a list of construction permits and developments as well as ADU regulations being worked on and the city joining the home consortium, all in efforts to curb the housing shortage. She reported on the groundbreaking event for Habitat for Humanity houses on Batey Street for two new houses and Congressman Larsen interest in Sedro-Woolley.

Proclamations

Public Comments

Mayor Johnson opened the public comment period up at 7:53 P.M.

Kelsey Taylor from Skagit Fisheries Enhancement group addressed the Council regarding their “Make a difference day” at Riverfront Park on Saturday, October 26th. She said they would be planting trees and shrubs and doing some trail building. Other events will be held every Saturday in November.

Councilmember de Jong announced national take back day throughout the county on October 26th. Unused medication can be dropped off at United General Hospital. He also noted Sedro Woolley RISE would be participating.

Mayor Johnson closed the public comment period at 7:56 P.M.

Public Hearings

2020 Property Tax Levy

Mayor Johnson opened the public hearing on the 2020 property tax levy at 7:57 P.M.

With no comments received, she closed it at 7:57 P.M.

Finance Director Merriman spoke of two processes running at the same time due to Proposition 1. Should it pass, there would be no further discussion on property taxes. Should it fail there would be discussion as in past years. He showed several slides showing the implicit price deflator and inflation measured by IPD noting the average is 1.75% per year, the impact to the budget, narrowing of the growth gap, and keeping pace with the long-term effect of inflation. Merriman also showed the effect of a 1% increase noting this is a first read with no action requested.

Utility Taxes and Utility Rates Options

- a. Utility Taxes proposed for January 1, 2020
- b. Utility Rates proposed for January 1, 2020
 - Sewer
 - Stormwater
 - Solid Waste/Recycling

Mayor Johnson opened the public hearing on Utility taxes and utility rates at 8:11 P.M.

With no comments received, she closed the public hearing at 8:12 P.M.

City Supervisor/Attorney Berg reviewed the 2018 Council work plan with the specific goal of building a public works facility that is the basis of the recommendation on a utility tax increase of 1%. He noted the utility tax would only apply to the city utility's (solid waste, sewer and stormwater), bringing it to 10 ½%.

Berg reviewed the utility rate recommendation of a 2.3% COLA, adjusting the rates to keep up with inflation year by year. He then reviewed rates for specific utilities (sewer, stormwater and solid waste).

Also addressed was the ERR fund for the stormwater and solid waste equipment. Noted was the need to change the from a 10 year replacement schedule to an 8 year replacement schedule for the front line trucks in the solid waste department. Berg stated this is a first read with no action necessary.

Council questioned how rates are in comparison to other cities and the life span of vehicles.

Unfinished Business

Preliminary Approval of the Plat of Samish Estates

Planning Director Coleman reviewed the Plat of Samish Estates, a 7 lot long plat. The request is to divide two acres into seven single-family residential lots. Coleman stated it is an allowed use within the zone and the size of the lots meets city standards. He also reviewed the wetland mitigation. The long plat has been recommended for approval by the hearing examiner.

Councilmember Dunn moved to approve Resolution No. 1038-19. Seconded by Councilmember Kornegay seconded. Motion carried (7-0).

New Business

Initiative Measure No. 976 concerns motor vehicle taxes and fees

City Supervisor/Attorney Berg – reviewed the legal process under RCW 42.17A.555 which prohibits the use of public facilities for political campaigns. Exceptions include one that allows city councils to support or oppose ballot propositions, provided the topic is on a published agenda and equal opportunity is given for public comments for and against.

Berg noted there will be impacts across the state but specifically addressed the impacts to the City in regarding to the transportation impact fees. He addressed the amount generated from the car tab fee and reviewed projects accomplished with the funds. Also pointed out was the effect the passage might have on WSDOT and the Washington State Patrol.

Councilmember Kelley spoke of the history when the previous initiative was passed and was devastating to our state. She also addressed the overall effect of such an initiative.

Councilmember Kornegay brought up the Skagit Bridge

Mayor Johnson opened the public hearing at 8:40 P.M.

Trevor Smith presented a hand out to the Mayor to be passed to Councilmembers. He stated he is a business agent with Labors Local 292 and a resident of Whatcom County. He agreed with the staff report and reviewed the hand out which lists the impacts to Whatcom/Skagit/Island and San Juan counties. He voiced opposition and encouraged all to do the same.

With no other comments, Mayor Johnson closed the public hearing at 8:42 P.M.

Councilmember de Jong moved to adopt Resolution 1039-19 opposing Initiative Measure No. 976 concerns motor vehicle taxes and fees. Councilmember Kelley seconded. Motion carried (7-0).

Information Only Items

- Public Works/Engineering Department Report
- Building Permit and Planning Permit Review Status
- Library Project Update
- Misc.
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Good of the Order

Executive Session

The meeting adjourned to closed session for the purpose of collective bargaining for approximately 30 minutes at 8:44 P.M.

The meeting reconvened at 9:22 P.M.

Councilmember Couch moved to ratify the memorandum of understanding with the Sedro Woolley Police Guild regarding take home vehicles. Seconded by Councilmember de Jong. Motion carried (7-0).

Councilmember Couch moved to ratify the Sedro Woolley Police Guild contract representing support employees. Councilmember Kornegay seconded. Motion carried (7-0).

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 9:23 P.M.