

Snohomish City Council Minutes
July 5, 2023

1. **CALL TO ORDER:** Mayor Redmon called the Snohomish City Council Meeting to order at 6:00 p.m., Wednesday, July 5, 2023. The meeting was held in hybrid format with in-person attendance at the Snohomish Carnegie, 105 Cedar Avenue, Snohomish, and remote online access via Zoom. *Per SMC 2.04.010, "If, at any time, any regular meeting falls on a holiday such regular meeting shall be held the next business day."*

- a. Roll Call

Present: Councilmembers Lea Anne Burke, David Flynn, Karen Guzak, Judith Kuleta, Felix Neals, Tom Merrill, and Donna Ray; Mayor Linda Redmon

- b. Pledge of Allegiance

2. **PROCLAMATIONS, PRESENTATIONS AND RECOGNITIONS:**

- a. Legislative Update - Representative April Berg

Representative Berg shared an update from the last legislative session, highlighting the Blake decision fixes (SB5536), housing issues (HB1110, HB1425), facilitating municipal annexations (HB1425), and education (special education, free school meals, and access to recess). Council asked questions and discussed these topics, as well as funding options and behavioral health.

- b. Fire Prevention - Snohomish County PUD

Mark Flury, PUD Senior Manager of Transmission and Distribution Operations & Engineering, presented a short slideshow of PUD's Wildfire Mitigation 2023 Plan, covering the project's background, initial steps, operational changes and next steps.

3. **PUBLIC COMMENT** - Mayor Redmon indicated public comment would be allowed on Discussion Item 6a.

Morgan Davis did not favor a Coalition of Neighborhoods and suggested using wards. Brian Mills remarked on traffic issues along Pine Avenue. Alex Young supported allowing fireworks.

4. **APPROVE AGENDA** contents and order

MOTION by Merrill, second by Guzak to approve the agenda as presented. Motion passed unanimously (7-0).

5. **CONSENT ITEMS**

- a. ACCEPT Bid Award and AUTHORIZE Mayor to Execute Contract for the Avenue D Overlay Project

- b. AUTHORIZE Mayor to Execute the 2023 Klā Ha Days Special Event Contract

- c. APPROVE minutes of the June 20, 2023 regular meeting
- d. AUTHORIZE payment of claim warrants #79030 through #79087 in the amount of \$838,085.07, issued since the last regular meeting.

MOTION by Neals, second by Burke to PASS the Consent Items. Motion passed unanimously (7-0).

6. DISCUSSION ITEMS

a. Fireworks within City Limits

City Administrator Heather Thomas provided an overview of the current practice of sale and use of fireworks inside the City limits, and options the Council might consider. Fire District #4 Chief Don Waller and Snohomish Police Chief Mike Martin also provided their perspectives.

An informal, two-question survey was circulated through the community, receiving over 320 responses. Results were 49% in favor of banning fireworks, 51% against. Ranking options showed about half of the responders preferred leaving the existing use policy in place, with banning the sale of fireworks inside City limits also receiving strong support.

Council's questions were addressed:

- Complete bans provided mixed results; phased approaches and outreach and education seemed to help.
- Enforcement was difficult to address at times due to staffing levels and coverage of a large response area.
- Emergency response calls were prioritized based on need, resources, and availability.
- Banning sale of fireworks inside City limits would not deter people from purchasing them elsewhere.
- Sale of fireworks inside the City limits did not generate much revenue for the City; typically only three applications were received each year.
- Many agencies passed legislation allowing bans on the sale and use of fireworks when high fire danger existed.

Public comment:

Lorinda Mills, in writing, commented on fireworks enforcement.

Morgan Davis did not support consideration of the issue.

Susanne Davis and Karen Crowley remarked on noise, air quality, and environmental impacts of fireworks.

Brian Mills felt a ban was not practical, but supported education.

Public comment closed.

After lengthy discussion, the Council generally concurred placing an advisory vote on the ballot was not necessary, and that staff should draft a resolution to the Snohomish County Council and Tulalip Tribes supporting a county-wide ban on fireworks.

The Council was split on completely banning the sale and use of fireworks in the City, while others supported banning only the sale and continuing to limit use to certain days. Education and outreach on noise and environmental impacts, like pollution of heavy metals washing into Blackmans Lake and the Snohomish and Pilchuck Rivers, was generally supported. Council agreed there was no immediate solution, it would take time, but the process needed to start somewhere. Staff was asked to consider language allowing a temporary ban on the sale and use of fireworks in the City limits when a high risk of fire danger was present, including who could call for the ban and when, such as prior to fireworks going on sale in the County.

RECESS at 8:23 p.m. for five minutes, reconvening at 8:28 p.m.

b. Coalition of Neighborhoods Assessment and Recommendations

Shari Ireton, Director of Community Engagement and Strategic Initiatives, provided an overview of a proposed Coalition of Neighborhoods, as presented before the Public Safety Commission recently. Examples from other cities were discussed, together with proposals from staff on what a Coalition could look like for Snohomish.

At 8:48 p.m., **MOTION** by Neals, second by Merrill to extend the meeting to 9:30 p.m. Motion passed unanimously (7-0).

Staff and Council discussed the different options and proposals:

- Layers complicating ease of meeting, e.g. OPMA requirements.
- How to encourage participation.
- Clear structure and direction would be needed; setting expectations.
- City could draft templates the neighborhood groups could utilize.
- The Coalition could be a valuable avenue of communication with the Council.
- Benefits of mapping and other tools to help during an emergency.
- Impacts on staff's time needed to support; utilizing the Public Safety Commission.

After discussing the topic, Council generally supported the idea as an avenue of communication, but questioned if a small city like Snohomish needed such a group. Director Ireton explained the initial work would be heavy and time-consuming and could be done in phases, but the end result would be worth the investment. The timing was appropriate, as well, given the Council's review of its boards and commission. Council agreed staff should discuss the topic with the Public Safety Commission as part of their workplan for the year, and help determine next steps.

7. OTHER BUSINESS/INFORMATION ITEMS

Councilmember Burke observed playground equipment at Morgantown Park was showing wear.

Councilmember Flynn inquired about traffic calming options to address issues such as those raised during Public Comment. Mayor Redmon replied staff was working with the Police Department on solutions, such as additional radar signs and lighted crosswalks.

8. COUNCILMEMBER COMMENTS/LIAISON REPORTS

Councilmember Neals acknowledged the passage of the Civil Rights Act on July 2, 1964,

and was saddened that community members still felt they could not be themselves.

Councilmember Flynn attended the AWC Conference in Spokane, and felt the City was already actively engaging in many of the meeting and training topics covered.

Councilmember Guzak reported Green Snohomish was helping with watering the plants at Pilchuck Julia Landing.

9. COUNCIL PRESIDENT’S ITEMS/REPORTS

Council President Merrill, and several Councilmembers, thanked Councilmember Neals for his comments.

10. STAFF BRIEFINGS - None

11. CITY ADMINISTRATOR’S COMMENTS

Administrator Thomas clarified the intent of the "Staff Briefings" section of the agenda to be an opportunity for staff to share information or reports with Council--and the public--without needing direction or other input. If Council had questions regarding the material, they were welcome to reach out directly to staff.

12. MAYOR’S COMMENTS - None

13. ADJOURN. There being no objection, the meeting adjourned at 9:26 p.m.

APPROVED this 18th day of July, 2023.

CITY OF SNOHOMISH

ATTEST:

Linda Redmon, Mayor

Brandi Whitson, City Clerk