

**Snohomish City Council Minutes
October 18, 2022**

1. **CALL TO ORDER:** Mayor Redmon called the Snohomish City Council Meeting to order at 6:00 p.m., Tuesday, October 18, 2022. 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.

COUNCILMEMBERS/MAYOR PRESENT

Lea Anne Burke
David Flynn
Karen Guzak
Judith Kuleta
Tom Merrill
Felix Neals
Donna Ray
Linda Redmon, Mayor

STAFF PRESENT

Brooke Eidem, Planner
Emily Guildner, City Attorney
Shari Ireton, Director of Community
Engagement & Strategic Initiatives
Scott James, Finance Director
Dock Leong, IS Manager
Rob Palmer, Police Chief
Rebekah Park, HR Manager
Glen Pickus, Planning Director
Heather Thomas, City Administrator
Brandi Whitson, City Clerk

2. **APPROVE AGENDA** contents and order.

MOTION by Merrill second by Burke to approve the agenda. Motion passed unanimously (7-0).

3. **CONSENT ITEMS:**

- a. AUTHORIZE Mayor to Execute PSA with Snohomish County for ARPA Coronavirus Local Fiscal Recovery Fund Behavioral Health Partnership Program
- b. APPROVE minutes of the October 4, 2022 regular meeting
- c. AUTHORIZE payment of claim warrants #77581 – 77643 in the amount of \$134,560.75, issued since the last regular meeting.

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

4. **PRESENTATION:** District 44 Update - Senator John Lovick

Senator Lovick briefly remarked on priorities for the 2023 Legislative session, with community safety a top priority. Regional training academies are planned for around the state to encourage recruitment and staffing. Homelessness was also a key topic.

Councilmember Kuleta inquired about police reform updates, such as regarding pursuits. Senator Lovick responded that recommendations have been made to have the state Criminal Justice Training Commission review policies and provide suggestions.

Councilmember Neals asked about infrastructure funding for older communities. Senator Lovick urged Council reach out to the Legislature with their project needs.

Council President Merrill commented on the Public Works Trust Fund, and questioned providing resources for neighborhoods to address issues. Senator Lovick stated contacting law enforcement was the best approach.

Councilmember Burke asked if the process for funding infrastructure projects would be streamlined for easier and quicker access to funds. Again, Senator Lovick suggested contacting Legislators and having these conversations with them.

5. **PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

Ival Salyer remarked on written public comments.

Morgan Davis commented on lack of bids for the County site and encouraged City/County collaboration.

Jim Lewis talked about public comments and revisiting the Midtown District designations.

Terri McDonald commented on frustrations in dealing with a nuisance property in her neighborhood.

6. **PUBLIC HEARING:** Mayor's Preliminary 2023-2024 Budget -- Departmental Review, Part 1

- a. Announce purpose and open public hearing. Mayor Redmon opened the public hearing. She thanked Mr. James and staff for working through the new budget process, and to Ms. Thomas for helping carry out her vision. She provided a brief overview of the proposed 2023-2024 budget and the process undertaken around the theme "Preserving and Strengthening our Community." Some highlighted themes in the budget of addressing staffing levels, infrastructure, community maintenance, environmental concerns, ARPA funding and partnerships, public safety concerns, anticipated law enforcement cost increases, and government keeping up with community changes (population growth).
- b. Staff presentation #1 -- City Council, Administration, Finance, Legal Services, Public Safety, Non-Departmental. Mr. James described the budget as a financial roadmap for the City, not just numbers, as it showed where the City wanted to go and how to get there financially. He provided an overview of the budget book itself, what was included, and how to navigate. Decision packages (DPs) were previously shared with Council, but revised to include additional information. Some general changes included moving costs from specific departments to non-departmental, such as public safety, legal, and City insurance. Equipment costs over its lifecycle was also addressed, together with funding for future replacements. A budget calculator would be made available by the end of the week so Council could see different effects to the General Fund.

Mr. James started the departmental review with the Council's budget, which remained unchanged.

At 6:52 p.m., Mayor Redmon called for a five-minute **RECESS**.

Questions by Council and answers by staff included:

- Tools to increase revenues, such as cable franchise tax, garbage franchise fees, stormwater utility tax, property tax banked capacity.

- Mix of increase revenues and cutting expenses; consider areas where spending could be reduced.
- Renegotiate contract with Republic Services.
- Leveraging 1% additional property tax could generate an additional \$13,000, adding \$3.08 per year to the average home's annual property tax. This was separate from utilizing banked capacity, which was not being recommended.

Department budget for Mayor and City Administrator had no DPs, and budget was \$45,000 less than current.

Questions clarified the department was measured in FTEs, and not hours, and did not include a pay increase for the Mayor.

Mr. James presented the Finance Department's budget, providing highlights, priorities, staffing and DPs. One requested adjustment was for additional funding for supplies, communications, and training. One position was currently unfilled but in recruitment.

Legal Services was a new cost center, to cover the City's contract with the firm Thompson Guildner & Associates for City Attorney services, prosecution and court-appointed charges. This was previously covered in Non-Departmental and Public Safety.

Public Safety accounted for police services (19 FTEs), 911 dispatch, emergency management, animal control, and jail fees. Budget overview showed increase over previously due to anticipated cost increases in 2024.

Questions and answers identified underspending in current budget due to unfilled staff position, and lower than projected overtime expenses. Filling the Community Resource Officer position was discussed.

The Non-Departmental budget included public safety retirees, City membership dues, contributions to the Senior Center and Food Bank, operating transfers to other funds. Legal services were removed, and magazine publishing expenses moved to the CESI department. WCIA City insurance expenses moved here from the Human Resources budget. The budget included two DPs: baseline adjustment increase for membership fees, and increase in interfund transfers to Street Fund, which was normal practice per the City's Financial Management Policy.

- c. Council's questions of staff. Questions were asked and answered after each individual department presentation.
- d. Staff presentation #2 -- CESI, Carnegie, ARPA, LTAC, PBIA.

Ms. Ireton provided the mission of the newly-formed Community Engagement and Strategic Initiatives (CESI) Department. Highlights and goals include reviewing emergency preparedness plans, mapping workflows, business licensing, special events, ARPA allocations and Carnegie fees. Staffing of four FTE, with the Community Navigator yet to be filled.

Priorities and objectives included proactively helping the community plan for uncertainty, prioritize pandemic recovery support, update grant programs, working with business and non-profits, economic development, neighborhood preparedness, resiliency plans, and

improved internal and external processes and communications. Majority of the expenses were for personnel, supplies and equipment.

Budgets covered for this department included the Carnegie, Lodging Tax Advisory Committee (LTAC), and PBIA. City staff would work with community partners to allocate funds through reconvening of the LTAC for 2023-24, and with HDSA to re-examine funding and uses of PBIA funds.

- e. Council's questions of staff. Council questions and staff responses covered:
 - RCW dictated use of LTAC funds for visitor promotion and tourism. The LTAC itself would decide where the funds would be allocated.
 - PBIA funds were collected through the business license process.
 - HDSA use of PBIA funds.
 - PBIA payment compliance and educating merchants.

- f. Staff presentation #3 -- Planning, Building. Mr. Pickus provided Planning and Building highlights and priorities for 2023-2: provide smooth transition in leadership, Housing Assessment and Gap Analysis, Comprehensive Plan update (with significant public outreach), tree program, updating SMC Chapter 14.285 on Housing Affordability and Incentives, and helping Public Works to adopt a "Complete Streets" program. DPs included funding for professional services, training, dues, Planning Commission APA memberships, Building Official transition, baseline adjustments and abatements.

- g. Council's questions of staff. No questions.

- h. Staff presentation #4 -- IT. Mr. Leong provided the mission statement and responsibilities for the IT Department, and shared highlights and priorities: Network and firewall appliance upgraded, planning/permitting portal launched, audio/visual implementation at the Carnegie, Microsoft 365 migration, continued protection against cybersecurity threats, online phone solution for communication, infrastructure reassessment and reconfiguration, data backups, and improved GIS capabilities. DP included the addition of a GIS Coordinator position.

- i. Council's questions of staff. Questions and answers included:
 - Coordination with County on cybersecurity.
 - Affect to system performance from bot attacks.
 - Adequate firewall in place for the size of the City and number of facilities, but would need to re-evaluate with growth.
 - ARPA funding could be used on infrastructure upgrades.
 - Microsoft 365 would enable additional security on secure online storage.
 - GIS software was included with the GIS Coordinator position proposal.
 - Build and test a recovery plan for services.
 - Staff monitoring grant opportunities for cybersecurity.

- j. Staff presentation #5 -- City Clerk, Human Resources, Staffing Overview. Ms. Park provided highlights and priorities for the City Clerk and Human Resources, the positions having been separated leading to better understanding of roles and needs for each. Accomplishments and ongoing priorities included Covid pandemic response; hybrid workplace adaptations; Well City rewards; implementation of NeoGov recruitment software; updating the City's safety manual; development of diversity, equity and inclusion policies and principles; updating records management practices; and new

OPMA regulation compliance. Budget considerations covered software and services for records digitization and management.

For the Staffing Overview, Ms. Park provided an organization chart showing current and proposed, and explained increased wage and benefit changes affecting the budget, such as medical premiums, contributions to PERS and L&I rates. Staffing levels did not change as the City's population increased, affecting staff's ability to maintain core services. New positions proposed include Building Official advance hire, making the ARPA-funded Parks Maintenance term-limited position permanent, increase the number of seasonal workers, and add a facilities technician, a stormwater maintenance worker, a GIS Coordinator, and a Project Coordinator position to be covered during next meeting's Public Works Department overview.

- k. Council's questions of staff. Questions and answers included:
- Consideration of Code Enforcement potentially covered by NPDES Coordinator.
 - Digitization of City records would reduce time spent on the increasing number of public records requests.
 - Consideration of technology platforms for public access to records.

l. Public testimony.

Written comments received from **Victoria Harrington, Kirsten Carlson, and Lorrie Peterson.**

Jim Lewis thanked staff for the budget presentation, encouraged broadband upgrades, and requested measurements.

Morgan Davis commented on the number of employees and Administration costs.

- m. Close public testimony. Mayor Redmon closed public testimony.

- n. Council deliberation. Council generally concurred on the complete and thoroughness of the budget process and documents provided, thanking staff for their work in producing it.

Councilmember Neals commented on partnerships and resources, would like to see where spending could be reduced, and the importance of anticipating costs related to future maintenance of infrastructure investments. Mr. James remarked on pass-through fees implemented earlier in the year to recover credit card charges and to help cover software upgrades. Ms. Thomas mentioned the revised DP forms included year-to-year expenses related to a proposal to help cover long-range planning.

Councilmember Burke commented on bold actions of the budget to address backlogs in the community. She appreciated including maintenance and operations in the discussions, as a means to take care of what the City already had.

Councilmember Flynn inquired about quantifying investments, and any forms of measurement available, for instance, commercial growth from staff efforts. Ms. Thomas stated a work plan for 2023 to establish performance measurements and report back to Council and the community.

Councilmember Kuleta concurred with Councilmember Flynn on returns on investments, as well as outlining benefits of updated GIS systems.

At 8:48 p.m. **MOTION** by Neals to extend the meeting to 9:30 p.m. Ms. Guildner reminded Council of the Executive Session and suggested extending to 10 p.m. **AMENDED MOTION** by Neals, second by Merrill, to extend the meeting to 10 p.m. Motion passed unanimously (7-0).

Councilmember Ray suggested public outreach occur if banked capacity was to be considered.

o. Close public hearing. Mayor Redmon closed the public hearing.

7. **ACTION ITEMS:** UPDATE SMC Ch. 14.210 Dimension and Other Requirements - ADOPT Ordinance 2456.

Ms. Eidem presented the staff report and ordinance based on amendments recommended by the Planning Commission. She outlined the proposed changes, including moving information from one chapter into two new stand-alone chapters.

Council President Merrill clarified the height limit of accessory dwelling units. Ms. Eidem explained the intent was for a generous one-story height for garages or shops, with a pitched roof, of 16'. Dwelling units were typically on the second story of a two-story structure, allowing for a height of 30'.

Public Comment:

Morgan Davis commented on setbacks and garages along alleys.

Public Comment Closed.

MOTION by Guzak second by Merrill to ADOPT Ordinance 2456 amending Chapter 14.210 SMC and SMC 14.25.200, and adopting Chapters 14.175 and 14.180 to clarify, reorganize, and update dimensional standards, as recommended by the Planning Commission. Motion passed unanimously (7-0).

8. **DISCUSSION ITEM:** Uses for Sales and Use Tax for Housing and Related Services

Ms. Ireton provided background of the use tax and establishment of a focus group (TAC), who then made recommendations. A full report was presented in June, with staff asked to research programs and deployment. One result was the fall issue of the Snohomish Quarterly would include helpful resources.

Staff recognized that while several well-informed recommendations were made, more work was needed to develop services. Filling the Community Navigator position would help as a subject matter expert and help find, develop and connect people with resources. Current funds were not sufficient enough for accomplishing much. Staff would like to review a broader community engagement plan, with more outreach to the community.

Council President Merrill confirmed the specific fund for managing the dollars generated, specific to health and housing.

Councilmember Flynn clarified reserving the funds and waiting for the Community Navigator to help determine best use of the money. Ms. Ireton confirmed the Community Navigator would be connected with community partners, such as the food bank, and could make the

best informed decisions, more efficiently. They could also search for other funding sources. Ms. Thomas explained staff requested not utilizing any funds so they could accumulate, which explained why there were no planned expenses in the budget. Staff anticipated about \$1 million accrued by the end of 2024.

Public Comment:

Morgan Davis suggested the City collaborate with others to utilize the former County shop yard.

Public Comment Closed.

Council generally concurred with the direction in which staff was moving.

9. **OTHER BUSINESS/INFORMATION ITEMS:** Councilmember Guzak asked staff to address public comment related to reading of written comments submitted to Council. Mayor Redmon and Ms. Thomas explained the topic would be discussed in detail at the special meeting on October 25. Written comments are all shared with Council prior to the meeting, and staff has concerns with reading comments and words that are not their own. Questions arise as to when to censure, or whether the comments were meant for public consumption or just Council information. Comments were all public record that could be shared if requested. Councilmembers were advised they could read a comment in full during a meeting if they felt it was warranted. Mayor Redmon also shared technologies being considered to help expand public comment and engagement capabilities.

10. **COUNCILMEMBER COMMENTS/LIAISON REPORTS:**

Councilmember Ray voiced concern over nuisance properties and lack of available resources to address the issue, but was excited for the efforts the City was putting forth.

Councilmember Kuleta concurred, sharing a personal experience with a nuisance home.

Councilmember Neals referred to a note shared with Council regarding business owners concerns and use of First Street facilities during events.

Councilmember Burke agreed with Councilmembers Ray and Kuleta, and was looking forward to the Community Navigator position being filled and helping neighborhoods. She echoed Councilmember Neals's conversation with downtown business owners and their frustrations. She urged future events clearly communicate with businesses about expectations and impacts.

Councilmember Guzak attended the Chamber's lunch today. Historic Fall Tree Tour was hosted last weekend by Green Snohomish. Green Snohomish also met staff at Pilchuck Julia Landing to volunteer there and discuss with Conservation District's plantings plan.

11. **COUNCIL PRESIDENT'S ITEMS/REPORTS:** Council President Merrill attend the Housing Affordability Regional Taskforce (HART) meeting with County Executive Somers recently, reviewing the goals and priorities. He revisited his comments to Senator Lovick, stating that while more work was needed to address addiction, homelessness, and mental illness, helping neighbors work with these issues should be addressed as well.

12. **CITY ADMINISTRATOR'S COMMENTS:** Ms. Thomas shared the upcoming Chocolate and Churros with Council on November 2, the fall issue of the Snohomish Quarterly would be out soon, and the bid opening for the Rainier Street Improvement Project was held and will be presented to Council for acceptance. She reminded Council of the special meeting on October 25 on Council rules and 2023 Legislative Agenda.
13. **MAYOR'S COMMENTS:** Mayor Redmon shared the Zombie Walk happening on October 29, benefiting the Snohomish Community Food Bank; and Halloween events along First Street on October 31.
14. **RECESS to EXECUTIVE SESSION** to Discuss Pending Litigation, pursuant to RCW 42.30.110(1)(i)(i), with no action to follow. Recess at 9:38 p.m. with Executive Session to begin at 9:45 p.m., allowing time to travel to alternate meeting location. Executive Session to last for ten minutes, until 9:55 p.m.

MOTION by Ray, second by Merrill, to adjourn the meeting at the end of the Executive Session. Motion passed unanimously (7-0).

13 **ADJOURN.** There being no objection, the meeting adjourned at 9:55 p.m.

APPROVED this 1st day of November, 2022.

CITY OF SNOHOMISH

ATTEST:

Linda Redmon, Mayor

Brandi Whitson, City Clerk