

March 12, 2020

CALL TO ORDER:

Mayor Steve Sexton called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance. Council members present: Bill Aslett, Keith Chaplin, Chris Loving, and Scott Green. Staff present: Jennifer Berner, Janice Burwash, Leif Johnson, Kristen Morrison, Marv Pulst, and Joe Stewart.

A motion was made to excuse **Councilors J. DeGloria, R. DeGloria, and Stavig** by **Councilors Aslett/Loving**. All in favor; motion carried.

Mayor Sexton requested the addition of an agenda item: Accounts Payable Resolution upon Council Cancellation, as agenda item number four (4).

Councilor Aslett discussed the need for Council to have received the information for this agenda item sooner than a few hours prior to the meeting. **City Attorney Leif Johnson** explained that the proposed resolution within the agenda item had only just been drafted the same day, as information regarding the global COVID-19 health crisis has evolved, and that more could be discussed, should Council decide to add the item to the agenda.

A motion was made by **Councilors Aslett/Green** to add the additional item as a discussion item: Accounts Payable Resolution upon Council. All in favor; motion carried.

MINUTES:

A motion was made to approve the minutes of the February 27, 2020 Council meeting by **Councilors Aslett/Chaplin**. All in favor; motion carried.

AUDIT OF BILLS:

A motion was made by **Councilors Aslett/Green** to approve Accounts Payable invoices to be paid as of March 12th, 2020 in the amount of \$456,785.34, and Payroll Expenses for Pay Period Ending March 10th, 2020 in the amount of \$493,831.01. All in favor; motion carried.

Councilor Aslett discussed a new procedure for invoice review, wherein Committee members receive invoice information for review via email prior to meetings, and that this seems to be an effective way to better utilize Committee and staff time and resources.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Tana Wood discussed the success of the Historical Society's "Remember When" event, whereat the history of Burlington was very well presented.

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Edie Edmundson, 855 Northview Dr. – discussed the success in acquiring multiple new members for the Historical Society.

Steve Chambers, 1600 E Fairhaven Ave. – spoke in opposition of the proposed 6% Cable TV Utility tax. Chambers also spoke about the methods to get Council meetings broadcast on local television utilizing cable and using the City of Mount Vernon’s existing equipment.

COUNCIL COMMENTS:

Councilor Loving discussed Council meetings, wherein he would like for the City’s computer equipment to allow the public to watch or refer back to the meetings as they’re recorded in the Council Chambers.

Councilor Aslett discussed some of the ramifications of the Coronavirus, and the possibility of telephonic meetings in the future as a means of social distancing while continuing to carry on with City business.

Councilor Aslett thanked **Parks & Recreation Director Jennifer Berner** for her exemplary service to the City during her time in the position.

MAYOR’S UPDATE:

Mayor Sexton thanked **Parks & Recreation Director Jennifer Berner** for all of her great efforts in bettering the Parks & Recreation department.

Mayor Sexton discussed his recent meeting with **Fire Marshal Kelly Blaine**, wherein discussions were held to establish Incident Command and procedures for the COVID-19 pandemic.

SPECIAL PRESENTATION:

A special presentation was given by **Cindy Verge—Executive Director, Skagit Valley Tulip Festival**; **Verge** discussed the artwork of, and presented the City with the 2020 Festival poster. Verge also discussed the potential challenges due to the COVID-19 situation, but that the Festival is held outside where it is possible to practice social distancing.

A special presentation was given by **George Sidhu—General Manager, Skagit PUD** regarding Skagit PUD’s current expansion projects, information on the Judy reservoir, droughts, bulk filling stations, and agricultural water rights.

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PROCLAMATION:

No Proclamation.

COMMITTEE & BOARD REPORTS:

Councilor Aslett discussed the Audit and Finance Committee meeting wherein the City's phone bill and power bill were discussed, as both are large amounts. **Aslett** asked that the phone contracts be reviewed to ensure the City is getting the best possible deal.

OFFICER REPORTS:

Parks & Recreation Director Jennifer Berner discussed the newly published Recreation guide.

Public Works Director Marv Pulst discussed the repair of the sinkhole on Section St. which was caused by a collapsed sewer line, stating that he is satisfied with the expedient repair and relatively minor invoice for services by ICI, which came to approximately \$9,500. **Pulst** discussed how the City will address COVID-19. **Pulst** discussed a grant process for \$6.6 million for the George Hopper intersection, stating that the grant application has been acknowledged by the Federal government.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Tourism Promotion (TPA) Interlocal Agreement

City Attorney Leif Johnson discussed the TPA and that there were no changes made since the last meeting's discussion.

A motion was made by **Councilors Aslett/Scott** to approve the Interlocal Cooperative Agreement for the Joint Establishment of the Skagit County Tourism Promotion Area and authorize the Mayor's signature. All in favor; motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS:

Ordinance Increasing Natural Gas and Electric Utility Tax and Establishing a Cable TV Utility Tax

Mayor Sexton stated that as Interim City Administrator Greg Young could not be present to present this agenda item, and that there are a number of Councilmembers not present, that this is an item that Council might consider to continue to a future meeting.

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A motion was made by **Councilors Chaplin/Aslett** to continue the Ordinance Increasing Natural Gas and Electric Utility Tax and Establishing a Cable TV Utility tax to the next regular Council meeting. All in favor; motion carried.

Burlington-Edison Youth Soccer Program

Parks & Recreation Director Jennifer Berner discussed the Parks and Recreation Departments taking over of the execution of the Burlington-Edison Youth Soccer club, and explained the reasons for the dissolution of the former organizations. **Berner** explained that staff is well-trained and able to implement this change, and that the club, having been monetarily self-sustaining, will also be transferring the balance of their bank account to the City, which would help offset any potential cost overruns. **Councilor Aslett** thanked **Berner** for considering and discussing the financial aspect of the change.

Confirmation of Appointment to Parks & Recreation Advisory Board

Parks & Recreation Director Jennifer Berner discussed the need for additional Board members, as a number of members have recently resigned or become ineligible to serve, after having served too many consecutive terms. **Berner** discussed the interest of Craig Bloodgood, retired Parks Supervisor in becoming a member of the Board.

A motion was made by **Councilors Chaplin/Aslett** to confirm the Mayor's appointment of Craig Bloodgood to the Burlington Parks and Recreation Advisory Board. All in favor; motion carried.

Accounts Payable Resolution upon Council Cancellation

City Attorney Leif Johnson discussed the proposed resolution wherein RCW 42.24.180 makes it possible to establish a procedure for payment of claims prior to approval of Council, as long as certain steps, such as furnishing bonds and internal controls, are met. Councilor Aslett discussed prior the procedures for paying invoices during the event of Council meeting cancellations, and that Council should have additional time to consider and review the proposed resolution. Discussion was held on possible scenarios which would lead to unfavorable results in terms of Council not having the opportunity to review and approve accounts payable invoices. **Johnson** discussed scenarios where the proposed procedures in the resolution might take place, such as a national disaster,

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force majeure, or a Council vote to do so, especially with consideration of the current global health crisis, COVID-19, where it may not be possible for a meeting, or multiple consecutive meetings to take place. The use of telephonic equipment and other technologies was discussed. **Johnson** also stated that Council could choose to pass the proposed resolution and amend or revoke it at any future meeting.

A motion was made by **Councilors Aslett/Green** to add the Accounts Payable Resolution upon Council Cancellation to the agenda. All in favor; motion carried.

Discussion was held on the tiers of authority described in the proposed resolution, as well as possible ways for Council to continue to review invoices to be paid in the event of a meeting cancellation.

A motion was made by **Councilors Aslett/Chaplin** to approve the resolution to authorize procedures for accounts payable in the event of a regular Council meeting cancellation. All in favor; motion carried.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

No Executive Session.

ADJOURNMENT:

Mayor Sexton adjourned the meeting at 8:48 p.m.

Joe Stewart
Finance Director

Steve Sexton
Mayor