

April 23, 2020

MEETING HELD TELEPHONICALLY DUE TO THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

CALL TO ORDER:

Mayor Steve Sexton called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance. Council members present: Bill Aslett, Keith Chaplin, J. DeGloria, R. DeGloria, Scott Green, Chris Loving, and James Stavig. Staff present: Kelly Blaine, Janice Burwash, Geoff Hawes, Leif Johnson, Mike Luvera, Kristen Morrison, Marv Pulst, Joe Stewart, Rob Toth, Greg Young, and Sarah Ward.

MINUTES:

A motion was made to approve the minutes of the April 09, 2020 Council meeting by **Councilors Aslett/ J. DeGloria**. 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 April 23, 2020 in the amount of \$234,069.43, and Payroll Expenses for Pay Period Ending April 15, 2020 in the amount of \$658,053.75. All in favor; motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

City Attorney Leif Johnson explained that members of the public may submit comments or questions by mail to City Hall at 833 S. Spruce Street, ATTN: Greg Young or by email to administration@burlingtonwa.gov.

COUNCIL COMMENTS:

Councilor Chaplin discussed the sales tax trends as were discussed in the Audit & Finance Committee meeting. **Interim City Administrator Greg Young** discussed the potential effects of COVID-19 on the City's revenues as the majority of the top sales tax-producing businesses are currently closed due to the pandemic.

Councilors Green, Loving, and **Stavig** discussed the recent change in traffic patterns and overall activity in the City, stating that there has been additional traffic recently in comparison with recent weeks, due to the effects of the pandemic.

MAYOR'S UPDATE:

No Mayor's Update.

SPECIAL PRESENTATION:

No Special Presentation.

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PROCLAMATION:

No Proclamation.

COMMITTEE & BOARD REPORTS:

No Committee & Board Reports.

OFFICERS REPORTS:

Recreation Coordinator Christi Kinney discussed the process of the transition of soccer equipment from Burlington Edison Youth Soccer District to the City, including goal sets, balls, cones, and corner flags. **Kinney** stated registration starts May 1st, and is hopeful for the season to start in September. **Kinney** discussed sponsorship and scholarship funds associated with soccer. **Councilor Chaplin** asked whether the State was still working through the current RCO Grants, and whether the City was pursuing them; **Kinney** stated that as staff has been furloughed, there has been no staff assigned to the project. **Interim City Administrator Greg Young** stated that the process with the State appears to be on hold currently, due to the pandemic, but that he will be in communication with the State and will pass any information regarding the process to Council once he knows more.

Recreation Coordinator Christi Kinney discussed the current operations of the Recreation department, wherein staff hours are limited, programs are cancelled through the end of May, but there has been diligent in communicating pertinent information to the public, including through the department's Facebook page. **Kinney** discussed staff working on the fall soccer season processes. **Councilor Green** praised Kinney for her efforts, and enquired on the location of the department's Facebook page: @burlingtonparksandrec.

Police Chief Mike Luvera updated Council on the Police department wherein social distancing efforts are still in place. **Councilor Stavig** praised **Chief Luvera** for the newsletter he published. Councilor Chaplin inquired about arrests and the legal process; **Chief Luvera** stated that arrests are still being made carefully, but that trials are not occurring. **City Attorney Leif Johnson** discussed the changes in the legal process in terms of charges, in timing aspects of the legal process for criminal prosecution, and the limits of because of lack of court availability. **L. Johnson** updated Council on the Legal department staffing, and the ongoing legal work that is being completed.

Public Works Director Marv Pulst updated Council on the Public Works Department, wherein many projects in terms of facilities maintenance are being delayed due to the pandemic. **Pulst** described the work being done by limited staff to maintain requirements by the Streets and Facilities Maintenance departments. **Pulst** stated that

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the Sewer Department is working effectively, and that the Engineering Department is also continuing to do limited work. **Pulst** discussed the communications with BNSF and Dike District 12 regarding the reconstruction of the bridge across the Skagit River.

Finance Director Joe Stewart discussed the current operations of the Finance Department, including social distancing measures, and methods of prioritizing the work in the Department.

Library Director Sarah Ward discussed the current operations of the Library, including the offering of virtual programs for teens and children; digital library resources, and work being completed to coordinate how the Library's services will change in the future. **Ward** described efforts to support teachers in order to help with engaging with students. **Assistant Library Director Janice Burwash** discussed communications with other libraries around the nation in order to determine the best methods to meter the number of patrons at the library to establish practices to maintain social distancing.

Fire Chief Rob Toth discussed the current operations of the Fire Department, and stated that no firefighters or paramedics have contracted COVID-19. **Toth** discussed the decline in call volume, and the rise in COVID-19 positive patients in Skagit County. **Toth** discussed the formation of a purchasing group within Skagit County that was made in order to secure and distribute Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for the City and neighboring Fire entities.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

No Unfinished Business

NEW BUSINESS:

Updated Library Interlocal Services Agreement

Library Director Sarah Ward discussed the interlocal agreement between the Burlington PublicLibrary, LaConner Regional Library, the Hospice of the Northwest, and the Upper Skagit Library. **Ward** stated the agreement is regarding the online catalog that the libraries listed on the agreement all use; the agreement includes updates, and allows for third party hosting

A motion was made by **Councilors Aslett/J. DeGloria** to approve the interlocal agreement for library services. All in favor; motion carried.

Mayor Sexton informed Council that in the future, there will likely be more added to the agenda. **Mayor Sexton** stated that the City's services will likely not look the same for the

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remainder of the year, and possibly not for the first part of next year, and that some heavy decisions will need to be made.

Interim City Administrator Greg Young discussed personnel and payroll issues, and the planning of ramping City operations back up once staff returns, which will be done in phases. **Young** discussed the communications with the Department of Ecology in regard to the Skagit River Park irrigation project, discussion of which may be presented at a future Council meeting. **Young** praised staff and Council for their cooperation and working together during these times. **Councilor Stavig** asked whether the City will be able to take advantage of some of the reimbursements on payroll. **Young** discussed the Federal Emergency sick leave, and the availability of the Federal Family Medical leave programs to staff.

Councilor Chaplin discussed beneficial resources including AWC, and Strong Towns, at strongtowns.org.

Public Works Director Marv Pulst spoke regarding a Federal grant opportunity for a railroad crossing in Burlington. Pulst stated that the submission due date of mid-May has not changed despite current circumstances, and thanked the library staff who has been working to give a narrative of what Burlington is all about, and why the overcrossing is need. **Pulst** stated the grant amount of \$16 million will be the biggest grant opportunity that the City has applied for, and that he has been working out particular details including cost benefit analysis and environmental issues related to the project.

Councilor Aslett discussed Strong Towns, and that any grants and construction projects that can be brought to the local economy should be sought after more so now than ever.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

No Executive Session.

ADJOURNMENT:

Mayor Sexton adjourned the meeting at 8:07 p.m.

CITY OF BURLINGTON, WA

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Joe Stewart
Finance Director

Steve Sexton
Mayor