

June 10, 2021

**MEETING HELD TELEPHONICALLY DUE TO THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC**

**Mayor Steve Sexton** called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance. Council members present: Bill Aslett, Keith Chaplin, Scott Green and James Stavig. Staff present: Janice Burwash, Geoff Hawes, Leif Johnson, Mike Luvera, Kristen Morrison, Katie Olafson, Steve Riggs, Sarah Ward and Greg Young.

A motion was made by **Councilors Chaplin/Loving** to excuse **Councilor Joe DeGloria** and **Councilor Rick DeGloria** from the meeting. All in favor; motion carried.

**MINUTES:**

A motion was made by **Councilors Green/Aslett** to approve the minutes of the March 13, 2021 City Council meeting. All in favor; motion carried.

**AUDIT OF BILLS:**

A motion was made by **Councilors Loving/Chaplin** to approve Accounts Payable invoices to be paid as of May 27, 2021 in the amount of \$220,419.80, and June 10, 2021 in the amount of \$173,637.23 and Payroll Expenses for Pay Period ending May 15, 2021 in the amount of \$77,248.70 and May 31, 2021 in the amount of \$533,522.69. All in favor; motion carried.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

**City Attorney Leif Johnson** stated 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 [badministration@burlingtonwa.gov](mailto:badministration@burlingtonwa.gov).

**COUNCIL COMMENTS:**

**Councilor Keith Chaplin** expressed congratulations to the graduating class of 2021 and shared a parade was being held in their honor.

**Councilor Bill Aslett** commented on the new flags that were put up on Fairhaven Ave. over Memorial Day. **Mayor Sexton** added the Streets Department has done an outstanding job.

June 10, 2021

**MAYOR'S UPDATE:**

**Mayor Sexton** attended a Department of Health meeting with other elected officials and shared COVID numbers are down in Skagit County. As of the end of May, 30,000 vaccines had been administered with 62% of the County having received their first shot and 54% having received both. **Mayor Sexton** also shared the Skagit First Steps Center will be opening Monday June 14<sup>th</sup>.

**SPECIAL PRESENTATION:**

April 2021 Financial Results for the City were provided to Council and will be discussed at a later meeting.

**PROCLAMATION:**

No Proclamation.

**COMMITTEE & BOARD REPORTS:**

**Councilor Keith Chaplin** shared updates from several Committee and Board meetings. Public Works Committee discussed several capital projects as well as Grant Funding opportunities. Burlington Northern is in talks to possibly replace the I5 bridge within the next couple of years. **Councilor Bill Aslett** asked what the City's involvement with this project would look like. **Mayor Sexton** shared the City will have some say in the project and will have **Public Works Director Marv Pulst** present information to Council at the next meeting.

The Parks and Recreation Board meeting also took place where they discussed the return of the Fall Harvest Festival as well as adding security measures to the boat launch. PUD has asked the City to install a permanent water meter. **Councilors Keith Chaplin** and **James Stavig** expressed frustrations and urged the City to explore better watering options. **City Administrator Greg Young** shared engineers have been exploring every possible option. A rainwater reservoir as well as the installation of a pipe through the dike are all areas being considered as possible solutions. **Councilor Scott Green** asked about the possibility of using treated wastewater. **Young** explained this option is a rather costly endeavor. **Councilor Loving** stated this is problem the City has been dealing with since purchasing the fields and encouraged staff and Council to continue moving forward and keep making progress. **Mayor Sexton** explained a great deal of work has been put into finding a better watering solution and that Council will be

June 10, 2021

presented with more information to discuss this topic in greater detail at a future meeting.

**OFFICERS REPORTS:**

No Officer Reports.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

No Unfinished Business.

**CONSENT AGENDA**

No Consent Agenda

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**Fourth Amendment to County Jail Use Agreement**

**City Administrator Greg Young** explained to pay for the cost of the new County Jail, the County and the Cities in Skagit County entered into a Jail Use Agreement. Part of this Agreement included a Revenue Stabilization Fund intended to act as a financial buffer for fluctuating sales tax revenue used to pay the annual debt service. The amount of the reserve fund was roughly set at one year of debt service. This Agreement had a clause that should the reserve fund's balance be projected to fall below the set amount, the parties to the Agreement would be obligated to budget for and eventually pay additional monies into the fund to make up the shortfall. This additional payment was set to be paid 3 years after the reserve fund shortage was projected. This timing was determined to be excessive, and the parties worked to change the language in the Agreement to reduce the time to 2 years vs. 3 years. **Councilor Bill Aslett** spoke against reducing the time frame in which the City must react. **Councilor James Stavig** shared **Aslett's** concern and asked if every City is responsible for payment. **Mayor Sexton** shared the largest portion of payment comes from the Skagit County Sheriff's Office and explained that Cities with their own Police Departments contribute. **Councilor Scott Green** asked when the jail would be paid off and if refinancing was an option. **Mayor Sexton** explained the jail had a 30 year note and would be paid off around 2045. **Sexton** also shared now would be a great time to look at refinancing option.

June 10, 2021

A motion was made by **Councilors Green/Stavig** to approve the Fourth Amendment to the Jail Facility Agreement and Authorize the Mayor to sign. **Councilors Chaplin and Loving** in favor; **Councilor Aslett** opposed. Motion carried.

**Skagit County Fiber Telecommunications Franchise Agreement**

**IT & Fiber Director Geoff Hawes** shared the City owns fiber optic cable in Skagit County along Peterson Road to Avon Allen. This was installed in 2008 as part of the Skagit County Economic Development Grant, which at the time shared fiber connections from the City of Mount Vernon to the Port of Skagit via a 3 way Agreement. The City now wants to expand the use of City owned fiber within Skagit County to include businesses that have Burlington mailing addresses along that same path as the current fiber as well as including the Port of Skagit owned property, the Bayridge Business Park. This Franchise Agreement formalizes and authorizes the City to make full use of the fiber currently in place outside the City limits. **Councilor James Stavig** asked how the City differentiates which lines belong to Burlington. **Mayor Sexton** shared there will be a workshop scheduled for Council to discuss fiber in greater detail. **City Administrator Greg Young** stated the City is also looking to expanded fiber to homes.

A motion was made by **Councilors Aslett/Chaplin** to authorize moving forward with the Skagit County Fiber Telecommunications Franchise Agreement and approve the Mayor's signing authorization along with staff signatures. All in favor; motion carried.

**Appointment to the Burlington Public Library Board of Trustees**

**Library Director Sarah Ward** shared the Library Board of Trustees has an opening and the City has received a letter from Lettie Bridgman Lance interested in being appointed to fill the vacant position.

A motion was made by **Councilors Chaplin/Aslett** to appoint Lettie Bridgman Lance to the Burlington Public Library Board of Trustees. All in favor; motion carried.

**Revision to Chapter 2.96.020, "Historic Preservation Commission", of the Historical Preservation Ordinance**

**Parks and Recreation Director Sarah Ward** explained the mission of the City's Historical Preservation Commission would be better served if commission representatives could be sought from boarder boundaries, City staff and current Representatives have

June 10, 2021

prepared changes to Chapter 2.96.020 of the Burlington Municipal Code for Council's consideration. The proposed changes reflect the commission's opinion that persons with a passion for preserving Burlington's history may not necessarily reside within the Burlington-Edison recreation service area. While the proposed changes remove some of the requirements concerning residency, they still ensure the majority of the Commission's composition will remain from the Burlington-Edison service area. The proposed changes will also improve the commission's recruitment capabilities. **Councilor James Stavig** asked if this was common practice in other cities. **Ward** could not speak to other cities procedures but shared there has been interest from people who have shown a strong sense of pride for Burlington but live out of the service area. **Councilor Chris Loving** spoke in favor of creating an opportunity to allow more people to get involved.

A motion was made by **Councilors Stavig/Loving** to adopt the proposed changes to Chapter 2.96.020 of the Burlington Municipal Code and authorize the Mayor to sign the ordinance. All in favor; motion carried.

## **DISCUSSION**

### **Return to In-Person Council Meetings**

**City Administrator Greg Young** led a discussion about conditions under which the City and Council might consider returning to in-person Council meetings. Key topics of the discussion included seating arrangements, Council Committees, call in options for Councilmembers as well as staff and the public, start time preferences, and possible code revisions. All Councilmembers spoke in favor of continuing the call-in option for Council, staff and the public. A call-in limit of three times a year for Councilmembers was a favorable option. Creating more ways for public involvement was a high priority to Council. The earliest possible start date for in person meetings to return could be as soon as July 2021.

### **Waiving Sewer and Storm Fees for Homeless Shelters**

**City Administrator Greg Young** shared with the pending opening of the Skagit First Step Center, administration would like to discuss the possibility of passing an ordinance that would waive sewer and storm fees for homeless shelters. The ordinance would be written so that any qualifying homeless shelter in Burlington could qualify. A brief

June 10, 2021

discussion was held amongst Council and staff. All participating Councilmembers spoke in favor of waiving sewer and storm fees for homeless shelters.

**PRESENTATION**

**Assistant Fire Chief Steve Riggs** shared with Council the 2020 Burlington Fire Department annual report. **Riggs** explained despite some challenges presented by the pandemic, 2020 was an extremely productive year for the Fire Department. Community outreach was made possible by multimedia platforms and resourceful and creative thinking. Several new positions were added including one full time firefighter paramedic and four new part-time firefighters. **Riggs** also shared with Council the large service area the department responds to as well as a breakdown of call volumes over the past few years. The Burlington Fire Department was able to adapt to the changes made necessary by the pandemic, while continuing to provide excellent service to the community with a commitment to compassion and professionalism.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION:**

No Executive Session.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

**Mayor Sexton** adjourned the meeting at 9:28p.m.

---

Joe Stewart  
Finance Director

---

Steve Sexton  
Mayor