

August 24, 2023

Mayor Steve Sexton called the City Council Meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance. **Councilmembers present:** Bill Aslett, Keith Chaplin, Anna Chotzen, Joe DeGloria, Scott Green, James Stavig, and Jamie Weiss. **Staff present:** Leif Johnson, Kristen Morrison, Travis Schwetz, Joe Stewart, Rob Toth, Sarah Ward, and Greg Young.

MINUTES:

A motion was made by **Councilors Green/Weiss** to approve the August 10, 2023 minutes. All in favor; motion carried.

AUDIT OF BILLS:

Councilor Scott Green updated Council on the Audit & Finance meeting wherein **Finance Director Joe Stewart** and the Committee discussed the City's investment portfolio. The City has approximately \$24 million in TBI Investments and \$7 million in a State investment pool. There were not any significant large expenses of note presented.

A motion was made by **Councilors Green/Aslett** to approve Accounts Payable invoices to be paid as of August 24, 2023, in the amount of \$231,507.27; and Payroll Expenses for Pay Period ending August 15, 2023 in the amount of \$807,779.37. All in favor; motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

There were two main topics discussed during the Public Comments period. Burlington residents: Sarah Trattner, Kiera Wright, and Mark Weltz expressed reservations about a Notice of Permit Application for a development of 89 townhomes proposed for South Pine Street wherein concerns voiced included proximity to the railroad & chicken farm, flood insurance responsibility, the impact of increased residents and traffic in the neighborhood, overall growth of Burlington and strain on City resources, and impact on current resident home values. The group of constituents requested for there to be a pause on the approval of the proposed townhome development.

Jackie Cress, Burlington Senior Center Coordinator, thanked City Council on behalf of the seniors for the new tables at the Center and ongoing support from the City of Burlington Facilities Maintenance department. Cress read two poems to express the gratitude of the Senior Center staff and guests.

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. Contact information for all the City Departments is available at www.burlingtonwa.gov.

MAYOR'S UPDATE:

Mayor Sexton thanked the speakers for their comments and shared a recap of a Jail Finance meeting with a comparison of the previous contract compared to the current contract and a projected year that might see a new contract negotiated. Some questions and discussion from Councilmembers followed including inquiries about jail capacity versus average daily residents, how the funding for the jail was designated, the average annual budget for the jail, and other concerns like staffing shortages.

COUNCIL COMMENTS:

Councilor Jamie Weiss thanked the citizens who spoke with Council during the Public Comment period. **Weiss** voiced concerns over possible environmental impacts of the development especially on the slough.

COMMITTEE & BOARD REPORTS:

August 24, 2023

Councilor James Stavig gave a brief Public Works update sharing some topics on the agenda such as current building projects, an update on the bike shop rebuild, and possibilities of changes in water rights that could allow for irrigation from the Skagit River in the future.

OFFICER'S REPORTS:

City Administrator Greg Young noted the absence of the Workshop formerly scheduled, adding that it would likely return to the agenda for discussion in mid-September.

PROCLAMATION:

No Proclamation.

PRESENTATION:

Finance Director Joe Stewart presented two topics to Council *July Financial Results* and *Approach to the 2024 City Budget Development* with the Council Packets including physical copies of the reports. **Stewart** reported on finances through the end of July reviewing revenue and expenses, ending cash, and metric comparisons to last year. **Councilor Chaplin** inquired about increases seen in the Lodging Tax fund and budget to actual differences for the First Steps Center operating expenses. **Councilor Weiss** asked for the Finance Director's opinion on the potential economic recession. In the second presentation, **Joe Stewart**, shared a budget calendar for 2024 with a similar timeline and structure as the previous budgeting document. Entering budget approval season, the Finance Director will be making regular presentations to Council and is currently focusing on the personnel budget and updating ER&R funds per department director's input.

City Administrator Greg Young updated Council on the ongoing IAFF renegotiation that has been underway for upwards of a year. A draft of the agreement had been presented to the Finance Department for review and will soon be presented to Council for review and approval. **Young** shared that negotiations with the Teamsters Union will be starting soon and that the City will be more likely be seeing Union negotiations one per year, instead of multiple per year. **Councilor Weiss** inquired about the portion of represented versus non-represented staff at the City of Burlington. **Young** shared that the largest portion of employees with the City were in the non-represented category and that it was a bigger portion than at many cities.

CONSENT AGENDA:

Councilors DeGloria/Aslett made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda Item #1 and authorize the Mayor's signature on appropriate documents.

INTRODUCTION/DISCUSSION:

Art Commission Formation Procedures

Human Resources & Admin Manager Kristen Morrison requested some feedback from Council on the Arts Commission model and processes. The City of Burlington received 5 applications total whereas the original Commission design consisted of 4 community member openings and 2 school representatives. **Morrison** asked Council how they would like to proceed with the process of appointing representatives to the Arts Commission wherein suggestions ranged from a Council review of applications, changing the Commission structure to have 5 community spots instead of the drafted 4, possible reevaluation of two High School representatives on the Commission. **City Administrator Greg Young** stated that the code could be changed to include more members and possibly a "spare" seat to be filled as desired but not a requirement for the Commission to operate. The next topic needing input from Council was to determine the process for selecting the Council appointed seat, and the process to formalize that selection into

August 24, 2023

the City Code. There was some accord that the Council appointed seat be added to the same process as other Council appointments that is done annually. The revised Code will return on a Council Agenda for further review.

Grant Program for the 1590 Monies

Mayor Steve Sexton opened the discussion with Council to help decide on how the City of Burlington could best distribute the 1590 fund. With the help of the Legal Department, research was done to determine other city entity models in Washington State. The information presented in the Council Agenda packets was devised from that survey. The proposal suggested by the **Mayor** and **City Attorney Leif Johnson** was to create a grant program and advisory committee much like the current Lodging Tax Committee. **Councilor Aslett** asked what municipality had the most robust experience or program. **Johnson** shared that the City of Bellevue had the longest standing program but with little long-term data found and explained that any process designed by Council could be revised and re-designed at any point. **Councilor Stavig** wanted to include the North Star Advisory Group into the process and wanted to expand the Grant Program to not only be a City of Burlington program. There was a lot of discussion on how to broaden the program to include the North Star Advisory Group expertise and take a larger county wide approach to the program and distribution of funds. **Councilor Aslett** noted the responsibility of Burlington City Council to manage the 1590 funds per a previous vote. **City Administrator Greg Young** shared the account had around \$1.1 million dollars and listed funds distributed to Martha's Place as an example of reactionary versus a proactive process of grant funding. **Mayor Sexton, Councilor Stavig** and **Councilor Chotzen** all agreed on the idea of a countywide funding with a democratic voting process to avoid city silos and open the opportunity to larger scale projects that would exceed the individual city limited budgets with a possible advisory role provided by the North Star Group. **Councilor Chaplin** requested there to be Burlington City Council voice or oversight in the funding distribution. **Administrator Greg Young** proposed reaching out to other cities in the County to inquire on their processes and for the **Mayor** to seek input from the North Star Advisory Group on their interest in participating a Grant Program. **Mayor Sexton** added that there would be value in having City Council representatives on the North Star Advisory Group as well. This agenda item will be returned for further discussion or action.

ACTION ITEMS:

No Action Items.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

No Executive Session.

ADJOURNMENT:

Mayor Sexton adjourned the meeting at 8:49 p.m.

Joseph Stewart
Finance Director

Steve Sexton
Mayor