



Sumas City Council Meeting

Sumas City Hall, 433 Cherry Street, Sumas, WA 98295

Tuesday, November 12, 2024, at 7:00 PM

Minutes

PRESENT

Mayor Bruce Bosch

Council Member Jesse Clawson

Council Member Josh Clawson

Council Member Richard Postma

Council Member Todd Daniels

Council Member Jessica Koehler

1. Opening Meeting - Pledge of Allegiance

2. Review/Correct and/or Approve Minutes

a. October 28, 2024, Draft Minutes

Councilmember Daniels made a motion to approve October 28, 2024, Minutes, Councilmember Postma seconded; all were in favor the motion carried.

3. Public Hearings

a. Petition to Vacate Portion of An Unnamed Alley abutting Lots 3,5, and 16 of Block 7 of Perry's Central Addition

The Mayor opened the public hearing for the petition of an unnamed alley.

Councilmember Daniels made a motion to close the public hearing and bring back an ordinance, Councilmember Postma seconded; all were in favor the motion carried.

b. Petition to Vacate Portion of Hazel Street consisting of a Retained Easement Abutting the South Boundary of Lots 4-6 and 14-20 of Block 4, North Boundary Lots 1-3 and 5-10 Block 7, Perry's Central Addition

Mayor Bosch opened the public hearing for the petition to vacate portion of Hazel Street.

Jim Wright, City Attorney stated this is a petition for an easement for utility access to provide for more functional property. Carson Cortez, City Planner, would like to recommend that the sewer force main be relocated by the applicant and then approved by the public works director.

The council approved both petitions; the city staff will bring back ordinances granting each of the petitions for final review of the council.

Councilmember Daniels made a motion to close the public hearing, Councilmember Josh Clawson seconded; all were in favor the motion carried.

- c. Long Subdivision Application
- Subdivision Variance Application
- Conditional Use Permit Application
- SEPA Environmental Checklist
- Memo - Carson Cortez
- Written Comment

Mayor Bosch opened the public hearing for the listed applications from Jason Heutink.

Carson Cortez, City Planner explained that these applications are for the property located on Sumas Avenue. The long subdivision application is for the two parcels, which is about 2.58 acres. This application is to create eighteen new parcels with a large storm pond in the center and a minor access road.

The subdivision variance is for the proposed minor access road along the northern boundary of the site. Sumas code does not allow minor road access to be less than thirty-two feet, the proposed access road is for thirty feet, which is smaller than our current code allows.

The conditional use permit application is for twelve of the parcels to be developed as attached single-family dwellings, which are allowed in the residential high-density district.

Carson went over the topic of concerns the planning commissioners had after reviewing the proposed development. The commissioners would like consideration on the sidewalk and connecting it to the sidewalk on Cherry Street, streetlights, parking, and flood control measures. storm pond and landscaping requirements. One written comment was received from Darren Leyenhorst, Sumas Avenue, his concern was how this project would affect flood waters and if the storm pond will be able to accommodate the water runoff from the new development. Carson is not looking for any action on these applications, he would like to continue the public hearing to the next council meeting.

Jason Heutink, Vedder View Lane, Sumas, applicant, addressed the council about the concerns brought forward. Jason stated at this time there is no proposed HOA's in place for the attached dwellings. The storm pond will be owned and maintained by the city. The streetlights for the development will be about two hundred to two hundred and fifty feet apart from each other, with this design approximately four streetlights. There will be four driveway entrances off Sumas Avenue, the attached single-family dwellings will have one entrance per building. Jason addressed the flood control measures stating all codes will be met that are set by the City and FEMA. The pond is designed with the Department of Ecology manual and must meet all their calculations. They typically do not address landscaping, allowing for the new owner to plan their own landscaping. Jason explained extending the sidewalk to Cherry Street would have gone through private property and would not be an option.

Councilmember Daniels made a motion to continue the public hearing to November 25, 2024, at 7:00 pm, Councilmember Josh Clawson seconded; all were in favor the motion carried.

4. Public Hearings

- a. Ordinance No. 1819 - Setting the Real Property Tax Levy for 2025

Mayor Bosch opened the public hearing for Setting the Real Property Tax Levy

Mollie Bost, Finance Director, explained that the City is allowed to increase the property tax received by the Whatcom County Assessor by one percent every year. This will increase our levy amount for 2025 to \$7,686.70.

Councilmember Koehler made a motion to close the public hearing, Councilmember Daniels seconded all were in favor the motion carried.

Councilmember Koehler made a motion to adopt Ordinance No. 1819 Setting the Real Property Tax Levy for 2025 Councilmember Daniels seconded, all were in favor the motion carried.

- b. 2025 Preliminary Budget

Mayor Bosch opened the public hearing for the 2025 Preliminary Budget

Mollie Bost went over the budget highlights regarding the different funds, governmental funds, proprietary funds, and fiduciary funds and within those funds are numerous different accounts. The estimated funds for 2025 are at this time preliminary numbers as a best guess determined by how the 2024-year ends.

Councilmember Koehler asked if there was going to be any rate increases for utilities as part of this budget and if it would be better to see smaller utility rate increase each year and not a significant increase all at once. Mollie stated there are no rate increases proposed with the current budget figures. Councilmember Jesse Clawson also inquired about the COLA increase of 2.5 percent and how is this evaluated; and who reviews these documents comparing the numbers. The finance committee goes over the proposed cost of living increases and the benefit packages.

Councilmember Daniels made a motion to close the public hearing, Councilmember Postma seconded; all were in favor the motion carried.

5. Old Business

- a. Ordinance No. 1818 - Establishing the Salaries and Wages for 2025

Mollie Bost, Finance Director, opened the discussion on COLA and the increase of longevity, Councilmember Daniels from the finance committee thinks that the incentives will encourage employees to stay longer, and we will be competitive with other agencies. Mollie stated this would encourage our current employees to stay with the City if they have these incentives. Councilmember Jesse Clawson is concerned about the future when all the employees start collecting all this at once and would like to start having a discussion before the benefits or COLAs are not manageable in the future.

Councilmember Daniels made a motion to adopt Ordinance No. 1818 Establishing the Salaries and Wages for 2025, Councilmember Josh Clawson seconded; all were in favor the motion carried.

6. Staff Reports

Chief of Police

Daniel DeBruin stated he appreciated Loca Mocha and the fundraiser they did for a local family in need and donating all their proceeds from the day.

Public Works Director

Sunny Aulakh updated the council that we are still waiting on the health department's requirement for chlorinating or not. Also, the committee has met with Mr. Brock regarding the water meter, it will be forwarded to our city attorney for further review.

Finance Director

1. Request for a Public Hearing for the Final Budget 2025

Mollie Bost requested a public hearing for the Final Budget for 2025 on November 25, 2024, at 7:00 pm. Councilmember Daniels made motion to set the public hearing, Councilmember Koehler seconded; all were in favor the motion carried.

Mollie also reminded the council that ARPA Funds must be obligated before the end of the year. If anyone has suggestions let her know.

7. Voucher Approvals

The bills were presented for approval and payment. Check numbers 43728 through 43783 for \$51,798.80; voided check 23712, EFTs in the amount \$145,593.79 and September 2024 Payroll for \$193,408.94. Councilmember Postma made a motion to pay the bills, Councilmember Daniels seconded; all were in favor the motion carried.

8. Adjournment

Councilmember Jesse Clawson made a motion to adjourn the meeting, Councilmember Koehler seconded; all were in favor the motion carried.

_____, Mayor

ATTEST:

_____, City Clerk