

**TUMWATER CITY COUNCIL MEETING  
MINUTES OF HYBRID MEETING  
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**CONVENE:** 7:07 p.m.

**PRESENT:** Mayor Debbie Sullivan and Councilmembers Peter Agabi, Michael Althausen, Joan Cathey, Leatta Dahlhoff, Angela Jefferson, Charlie Schneider, and Eileen Swarthout.

Staff: City Administrator John Doan, Economic Development Manager Austin Ramirez, and City Clerk Melody Valiant.

**SPECIAL ITEMS:**

**PROCLAMATION:  
NATIONAL VOTER  
REGISTRATION  
DAY, SEPTEMBER  
20, 2022:** Councilmember Cathey emphasized the importance of all eligible voters to vote on election day. She read a proclamation encouraging all eligible City of Tumwater residents to register to vote and to make it a priority to vote on Election Day.

**ASSOCIATION OF  
WASHINGTON  
CITIES ADVANCED  
CERTIFICATE OF  
MUNICIPAL  
LEADERSHIP  
PROGRAM:** Alicia Seegers Martinelli, Deputy CEO/COO, Association of Washington Cities (AWC) presented Advanced Certificates of Municipal Leadership Program to Councilmembers Swarthout and Dahlhoff.

AWC serves elected officials and city employees through its mission of supporting members through advocacy, education, and services. AWC serves all 281 cities and towns in Washington State. Working through members and the Board of Directors, AWC serves as the voice of municipalities to the Legislature, Executive Branch, and regulatory agencies. The Council is encouraged to remain updated on the AWC's advocacy news and announcements by reviewing AWC's Legislative Bulletin, as well as participate in webinars, and participate in city action days on February 15-16, 2023.

Ms. Martinelli cited several programs AWC offers municipalities. AWC has sponsored the Municipal Leadership Program for 25 years. The program recognizes mayors and councilmembers for accomplishing training in five competency areas. The core requirements include the categories of roles and responsibilities and legal requirements, public sector resource management, community planning and development, effective local leadership, and diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Ms. Martinelli congratulated Councilmembers Dahlhoff and Swarthout for achieving the Advanced Certificate of Municipal Leadership.

Councilmembers Swarthout and Dahlhoff commented on the ability to take advantage of the classes and seminars as many were held virtually enabling them to participate. They thanked AWC for the opportunity to participate in the program.

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**PUBLIC COMMENT:** There were no public comments.

**CONSENT  
CALENDAR:**

- a. Approval of Minutes: City Council, September 6, 2022
- b. Contract Renewal – Tumwater Prosecution Services
- c. Bush Prairie Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) Phase 2 Second Amendment to Service Provider Agreement
- d. Audit Engagement Letter
- e. Contract Salary Changes

**MOTION:** **Councilmember Swarthout moved, seconded by Councilmember Agabi, to approve the consent calendar as presented. A voice vote approved the motion unanimously.**

**COUNCIL  
CONSIDERATIONS:**

**SERVICE PROVIDER  
AGREEMENT WITH  
THE THURSTON  
EDC FOR  
THURSTON  
STRONG PHASE II:**

Economic Development Manager Austin Ramirez reported the Council previously approved allocating \$350,000 of federal American Recovery Plan Act (ARPA) funds to support Thurston Strong Phase II efforts. Since then, staff and others have been working on ways to invest the funds for the community.

Jason Robertson with J. Robertson & Company reported he has been coordinating the Thurston Strong program over the last several years. The program is resetting following the last several years of the pandemic. At the onset of the pandemic, he was scheduled to develop an economic development plan for the City of Olympia when the first case of COVID was diagnosed in Seattle. Soon after, efforts changed focus with contacts to other cities and community development organizations to form Thurston Strong, comprised of the largest cities in Thurston County, Thurston County, Port of Olympia, Pacific Mountain Workforce Development, Thurston Economic Development Council (EDC) serving as the fiscal agent, Thurston County Chamber of Commerce, and later South Puget Sound Community College, and the Community Foundation. All parties played instrumental roles in assisting with recovery efforts for businesses and employees.

When the pandemic first hit, no one knew what to think or what would be coming next, as there was much disinformation and different efforts on how to operate in a pandemic environment. Thurston Strong served to assist businesses and workers in recovery efforts with the Department of Health leading health efforts. The EDC established a 1-800 hotline and received 15,000 points of contact through the hotline, via online, or by visiting EDC's office. The Thurston Strong website was established with 19,000 unique users. The website served as a grant portal for applicants and an informational source on how to reopen, ways to convert a business, and ways to receive credits for retaining employees, etc.

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Thurston Strong Phase 1 received \$9 million in federal CARES funding contributed through the county and from local cities. At that time, the focus was on childcare with three funding rounds of childcare grants to help different types of providers. Data helped drive other decisions. The program supported microbusinesses, such as restaurants, retail, non-profits, food systems, as well as providing scholarship training for businesses to help convert to an online presence with delivery service.

Councilmember Dahlhoff questioned the possibility of highlighting Tumwater examples in terms of workers and businesses assisted during Phase I efforts. Mr. Robertson advised that he can query the database to document businesses and workers receiving assistance in Tumwater.

Efforts on Phase II coincide with the release of federal American Recovery Plan Act (ARPA) funds. The new funding program is somewhat different as it is more difficult to release the funds to organizations although the grant term is longer than the CARES funding program. The county's funding program includes a non-profit grant with a target of \$900,000, which has been received and expended. The microbusiness grant program was relaunched with over \$1 million remaining in the program. It is more difficult to qualify for the funds because businesses must show proof of loss. The Ag Market Program was reset with a goal to release 100 grants to food system operators involving farmers, processors, or retailers of honey.

Another \$100,000 was provided to food assistance on behalf of non-profits receiving food deliveries to retail to their specific customers.

Since April 1, 2022 most grants were awarded to businesses most impacted by the absence of workers, such as personal services, food services, and other businesses. As part of the reset of the plan, emphasis has been on BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color) community engagement and support. As businesses reopened, efforts were explored on how to facilitate workers returning to work. One action was through the Job Champions Network, which places dislocated workers into jobs with non-profit agencies gaining the ability for workers to change their career trajectory by paying for a year's worth of salary enabling a worker to gain experience and the non-profit benefitting by having additional personnel providing services to the community. The program is a partnership with PACMountain and the Community Foundation. Mr. Robertson displayed a list of non-profit organizations receiving one or two employees through the program.

Worker training pivoted to the City of Olympia after the city contributed some funds to form the Olympia Career HUB, which is currently operating and expanding. The HUB offers a construction corps program where people can receive training on basic building skills and receive certification with connection to local builders constructing affordable housing. Other programs include hospitality training and other certificate programs. The City of Olympia is exploring a program enabling homeless individuals to work a

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limited hour work schedule to gain work experience and transition to other well-established programs. Thurston County allocated \$100,000 to support entertainment recovery efforts.

Thurston EDC secured a \$100,000 grant from the U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) to enable the completion of a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy for the region encompassing Grays Harbor, Thurston, Mason, and Pacific Counties. Once certified by the EDA as an Economic Development District, the region is able to seek other types of larger grants for infrastructure, broadband, and other large projects.

Resiliency training was expanded to help businesses with different technical, financial, and access to capital needs. Many businesses are taking advantage of the program.

The EDC hired a BIPOC business community liaison, Mayra Pena, who operates from the EDC office. The office provides information in Spanish. She visits BIPOC businesses to assess needs and help businesses grow. The Thurston County Chamber of Commerce also sponsors an informal networking BIPOC group for mutual support and to learn about marketing goods and services.

Thurston County committed to providing \$500,000 Target Zone start-up grants. The program assists in helping launch businesses in census districts that are disproportionately impoverished or at risk of socioeconomic issues. The program received many applications. The county agreed to increase the funding to \$1 million enabling the distribution of 10 grants of \$100,000.

EDC Executive Director Michael Cade introduced Sean Moore, Director, Center for Business Innovation. The EDC consists of two non-profits, the EDC and the Center for Business Innovation. Mr. Moore has served as the director for approximately 18 months and has assumed many of the responsibilities for the Thurston Strong Program.

Mr. Moore shared information on some of the Target Zone grant winners and the businesses they opened.

Councilmember Dahlhoff reemphasized an ongoing request by several Councilmembers for the EDC to provide the Council information pertinent to businesses in Tumwater or how funds contributed by the City benefit the community. Mr. Robertson said the information with respect to outcomes in Phase II did not include any Tumwater funds. The programs have been funded by Thurston County and City of Olympia to serve as many community members throughout the community as possible. During Phase 1 efforts, the EDC provided a table of the funding level from Tumwater and the benefits the community received. Councilmember Dahlhoff asked that the

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information identify the businesses that benefitted in Tumwater to enable the City to work with and partner with those companies in the future.

Councilmember Cathey asked about the status of work underway in Tumwater to utilize the \$350,000 allocation the Council previously authorized..

Mr. Cade explained that funding received by the program does not exclude the community of Tumwater and that work continues. As the work program was developed last year, EDC worked with City staff to ensure the strategies were in keeping with the direction of the efforts. Some of the work was temporarily delayed to ensure cohesiveness with Tumwater staffing. Today, the City has a new Economic Development Manager. During the next phase of work, a better network is in place to work with City staff.

City Administrator Doan added that the conversation with EDC has been ongoing since the Council allocated \$350,000 in terms of how to expend funds in Tumwater that would benefit the community. The intent was not adding the funds to the regional pool but discuss what funding allocations might benefit the City. It took some time to hire Manager Ramirez, who has been working on the program to determine what makes the most sense to Tumwater. When the \$350,000 was approved, the Council reviewed and agreed to follow the pattern of Thurston Strong. Since then, City and EDC staff have been meeting to develop a recommendation on how to allocate those funds within the City.

Councilmember Cathey responded that she believes funding for childcare continues to be important; however some of the recommendations are nebulous and not clearly defined. She asked how the City knows that some of the proposed projects are relevant a year later.

Manager Ramirez explained that when he joined the City, it was the first question he discussed with the EDC and some of the projects reflect an extension of Phase I, as well as addressing some foundational gaps in the economic development ecosystem today. The amount set-aside for non-profit support would not meet current needs that it would have met last October, which speaks to why the scope of services with the EDC totals \$300,000 rather than \$350,000 as staff continues to discuss with partners to determine the best investment of limited resources.

Councilmember Dahlhoff proposed deferring the proposal to a Council worksession. Councilmember Cathey supported the recommendation to revisit how the funds should be expended.

Councilmember Althaus said he reviewed the plan and is confident of the plan but prefers not acting if some Councilmembers are not ready to act on the plan. The plan calls for allocating \$205,000 for childcare, which he

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supports as the licensing capacity for childcare in the City is more than prior to the pandemic; however, fewer children are receiving childcare services, which is reflective of a staffing capacity issue for childcare providers. He supported the suggestion to convene a worksession to discuss the merits of the plan and acknowledged the efforts for development of a plan that makes sense to him.

Councilmember Schneider supported deferring action until the Council conducts a worksession.

Councilmember Swarthout asked that staff provide more information on how some of the funding recommendations were developed.

Manager Ramirez explained that the role childcare plays in the regional economy is reflective of an industry that allows all other sectors to be possible. Phase I continued to reflect much unfunded needs based both on data and anecdotally when discussing the issue with parents and businesses who are struggling. Childcare providers continue to struggle with staffing, increased costs, and capacity issues.

The Council agreed to defer the proposal to a worksession for additional review and discussion.

**COMMITTEE  
REPORTS:**

**PUBLIC HEALTH &  
SAFETY:**  
*Leatta Dahlhoff*

At the last meeting on September 13, 2022, the committee received updates from the Thurston County Prosecutor's Office. Data from the therapeutic courts will not be provided until the end of September. Other data on referrals for domestic violence reflect 119 referrals in 2020 and 415 referrals for non-domestic violence. Of those, 75% were charged. Data reflects that in Tumwater the trend in domestic violence is increasing. Jail booking priorities are limited to violent and person-on-person crimes. Thefts and other lesser offenses are not booked in jail based on caps and restrictions, which should be lifted on October 31, 2022 based on the Governor's emergency orders. The next meeting is on October 11, 2022. The agenda includes a discussion on School Resource Officer roles and responsibilities and reviewing the 2023 to 2025 School Resource Officers contract.

**GENERAL  
GOVERNMENT:**  
*Michael Althaus*

The committee met on September 14, 2022 and reviewed two ordinances on general housekeeping amendments to the code. The committee referred the ordinances to the Council worksession on September 27, 2022.

**PUBLIC WORKS:**  
*Eileen Swarthout*

The next meeting is scheduled on Thursday, September 22, 2022 to discuss the Percival Creek Fish Passage Barrier Replacement Scope Amendment #1, Somerset Stormwater Project, and an ordinance on removal of properties from the Hopkins Drainage District.

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**BUDGET AND  
FINANCE:**

*Debbie Sullivan*

The Council is scheduled to continue to review the City's budget over the course of several worksessions.

**MAYOR/CITY  
ADMINISTRATOR'S  
REPORT:**

Mayor Sullivan recognized Bob Neal with TCTV, who is retiring, for his many years of support providing media services for the Council.

**COUNCILMEMBER  
REPORTS:**

*Angela Jefferson:*

During the recent meeting of Experience Olympia and Beyond, members discussed moving the retreat from October to November 15, 2022 to enable additional planning time. The hotel occupancy for July 2022 fell below rates during July 2019 and 2021. Daily occupancy continues to perform well. The website is receiving a high number of unique visits compared to previous years. Social media audiences have increased significantly as well. Consumer E-newsletters and mail outs of visitor guides continue to increase. The organization is seeking an increase in lodging tax funds for 2023. The organization's budget was reduced by \$100,000, and the organization has identified priorities and work that can be completed or delayed until 2023.

*Joan Cathey:*

Councilmember Cathey reported on her attendance to the General Government Committee, Regional Housing Council, Solid Waste Advisory Committee, and the Olympic Region Clean Air Authority meetings.

*Charlie Schneider:*

Councilmember Schneider plans to attend the next Public Works Committee meeting on September 22, 2022 and the Climate Action Steering Committee meeting.

Tumwater's annual Clean-Up Drop-Off Event is on Saturday, September 24, 2022 from 9 a.m. to noon. The event features a prescription medication drop off area, Thurston County Food Bank Booth for food donations, shredding services, and a booth featuring the Stream Team.

The Senior monthly picnic was held at Tumwater Historical Park with 60 seniors participating in addition to Mayor Sullivan.

Councilmember Schneider attended events sponsored by the Olympia Yacht Club and the Thurston County Chamber of Commerce honoring 250 service personnel during a day of fun, food, and relaxation on a private island.

The Tumwater Area Chamber of Commerce held its Business After Hours Social at Inferno's Pizza. The monthly forum on September 21, 2022 at Inferno's Pizza will feature Don Trosper as the keynote speaker.

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The Tumwater Youth Program begins on Friday, September 30, 2022 for grade school students at Tumwater Middle School from 7 p.m. to 9:30 pm. for an entry fee of \$10.

The first annual Falls Fest will be held at Brewery Park at Tumwater Falls from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Saturday, October 1, 2022. The event will feature viewing of the return of Chinook salmon.

Councilmember Schneider requested an update on status of the community gardens at United Methodist Church.

***Leatta Dahlhoff:***

The Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion (LEAD) group recently held a meeting and discussed dashboard statistics on progress of diversion activities. From January 1, 2022 to August 31, 2022, 183 referrals were received, 157 individuals were served, and 1,435 total services were provided. The majority of referrals involved males aged 25 to 54 years with the majority of individuals identified as Caucasians. Members identified a need to identify the number of veterans referred. With the work of the Thurston County Opioid Response Task Force, some questions were raised about the high number of fentanyl overdoses in the community. Members discussed Naloxone Leave Behind Program containing Narcan and dependent upon the demographic, some drug users do not use fentanyl while others purposely use fentanyl. Fentanyl test strips are available to include in the kits as well as a list of resources. The task force is researching the price of Naloxone Leave Behind Kits and seeking a series of free informational brochures.

The Regional Fire Authority Planning Committee appreciated the Council's questions and input during the last several meetings as it assisted the planning committee in reviewing the different kinds of questions the Council is receiving from the community. She asked the Council to continue forwarding questions and maintain a non-bias position in terms of a regional solution that may help both Tumwater and Olympia. The planning committee plans to provide updated information for the Council to make an informed decision as to whether the regional solution will benefit the community.

***Peter Agabi:***

At the last meeting of the Joint Animal Services Commission (JASCOM), members received a presentation from City of Lacey staff on a plan to renovate the animal services facility. JASCOM plans to spend several million of dollars upgrading the facility.

Councilmember Agabi reported on his ride-along with a Tumwater Police Officer throughout the City during a seven-hour period.

At the last Transportation Policy Board, members received a briefing on the 2023-2026 Draft Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP) and the criteria for submitting a project for funding. TRPC staff presented information on the Human Services Transportation Plan (HSTP) Update.



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The goals set forth in the last several versions of the Plan still resonate with the community and include increase mobility options, improve individual service, increase coordination with other systems and programs, improve efficiency, identify and obtain sustainable funding to close gaps, and broadly distribute information about available transportation options.

***Michael Althausen:***

Councilmember Althausen reported on his attendance to the Regional Fire Authority Planning Committee on September 12, 2022.

The Capitol Lake-Deschutes Estuary Funding and Governance Work Group is scheduled to meet on Thursday, September 22, 2022 to review and discuss the memorandum of understanding.

Councilmember Althausen attended the Regional Housing Council meeting in conjunction with Councilmember Cathey. The Community Action Council did not renew the contract for Housing and Essential Needs Program. Thurston County is working to ensure constituents will not fall through the cracks as the program transitions to new service providers. Thurston County has entered into an interim contract to continue to provide services, as well as issue checks as the county issues an RFP for a new provider. Members scored applicants and acknowledged the high scorer as Catholic Community Services for providing Rapid Re-Housing (RRH) Program services and the HEN (Housing and Essential Needs) program. Thurston County is required to certify the approval of the application. Members also discussed governance of the RHC. Results from the recent retreat acknowledged the desire to build in more lived-in and community expertise in the decision-making process. Members considered an interim governance proposal for creation of several subcommittees for different types of services and providers and adding some community members to the subcommittees. Members discussed whether to incorporate two members of the Housing Action Team to the RHC and whether they should be considered as voting members. Members deferred action to the later date.

***Eileen Swarthout:***

Councilmember Swarthout chaired the Tumwater HOPES meeting on September 14, 2022. The director has moved to a new position with the state. The organization is participating in the Clean-Up Drop-Off Event on Saturday, 24, 2022.

Councilmember Swarthout attended the September 12, 2022 Regional Fire Authority Planning Committee meeting.

Councilmember Swarthout is chairing the Lodging Tax Advisory Committee meeting on September 21, 2022 to consider 16 applicants requesting funding totaling \$278,088 with only \$190,000 available to distribute.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

**With there being no further business, Mayor Sullivan adjourned the meeting at 8:39 p.m.**

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Prepared by Valerie L. Gow, Recording Secretary/President  
Puget Sound Meeting Services, [psmsoly@earthlink.net](mailto:psmsoly@earthlink.net)