

**TUMWATER CITY COUNCIL MEETING  
MINUTES OF HYBRID MEETING  
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**CONVENE:** 7:00 p.m.

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

Excused: Councilmember Joan Cathey.

Staff: City Administrator John Doan, Police Chief Jon Weiks, Planning Manager Brad Medrud, and City Clerk Melody Valiant.

**SPECIAL ITEMS:**

**PROCLAMATION:  
BLACK HISTORY  
MONTH, FEBRUARY  
2023:** Councilmember Agabi read a proclamation recognizing the month of February 2023 as *Black History Month*. The proclamation acknowledges disparities that continue to plague society and urged the people of the City of Tumwater to continue to eliminate barriers of equality and recognize and raise their voices to bring about lasting systemic and societal change against racism.

Representatives from the Fred U. Harris Lodge No. 70 Mason Center accepted the proclamation from Mayor Sullivan.

Melvin Butler, member of Fred U. Harris Lodge #70, accepted the proclamation on behalf of the Lodge and Black members of the community.

An unidentified member of the Lodge commented that *Black History Month* challenges everyone to expand their knowledge of the many contributions made by Black people in every facet of the American Experience. He cited Dr. Carter G. Woods who was responsible for forming Negro History Month. Dr. Woods dedicated his life to the pursuit and education of a nation on the accomplishments and achievements of Black Americans. Dr. Woods authored over 200 books about Black history and founded the Associated Publishers, Inc. in 1829 to publish his own works and the works of other marginalized authors because major publishing companies showed no interest in producing serious work on the topic. The publishing company closed in 2005. President Ford extended recognition through a weeklong event and called upon the nation to seize the opportunity to honor the often neglected and accomplishments of Black Americans in every area of endeavor throughout the country's history. The City of Tumwater exists today due to the contributions of a man of mixed race but still considered a Negro, George Bush and his family. Celebrating *Black History Month* is an opportunity to learn of Mr. Bush and a commitment for gaining knowledge of the sacrifices, contributions, and experience of Black Americans beyond limited information to which Americans are exposed in order to learn of other cultures and history that creates empathy and a better understanding and often solidarity.

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**PUBLIC COMMENT:** **Ray Gleason** reported he is an arborist and forest scientist and has worked on maintaining George and Isabella Bush's heritage. During recent efforts, he observed the placement of George and Isabella Bush headstones, which have been fractured as well as other headstones surrounding their grave sites. Many surrounding trees are suffering from fungus growth. He asked City staff to conduct some inspections. Staff consulted with an arborist to complete the inspections who rated the tree as a level 1 risk inspection with inspection confined to the tree. The arborist reported the tree posed a moderate rating with a consensus of failure somewhat likely. Mr. Gleason said he disagreed with the assessment as the Douglas fir tree has previously failed causing significant decay to the tree. When the top of the tree failed and fell, it damaged George and Isabella Bush's headstones as well as many other family member headstones. Mr. Gleason shared a photograph of the site with the Council. With respect to the citizens of the City of Tumwater and to citizens of the state of Washington, he believes it is the responsibility of everyone to care about the past for future generations. Based on his research, he learned the headstone was repaired 31 years ago, which is indicative of when the tree first failed. Pieces of those headstones were carried by children through the Mills and Mills Cemetery. He asked whether it was necessary for the public to collect donations in order to preserve history, as the cemetery is City property and should be properly maintained to preserve history.

**Reginald Cuffee** referred to the Kingswood Apartment 12-year multifamily tax exemption proposal. He forwarded the Council an email earlier in the day addressing his concerns about the proposal. His concern is that the proposal should be re-examined in terms of the viability of the tax exemption. He asked for a meeting with the Council to discuss future ways of addressing affordable housing. He does not believe, according to Tumwater Municipal Code 3.30, that the proposal as presented adequately addresses the problem.

**CONSENT  
CALENDAR:**

- a. Approval of Minutes: City Council, February 7, 2023
- b. Payment of Vouchers
- c. Resolution No. R2023-006; City Logo
- d. Interlocal Agreement Amendment Two with Regional Housing Council (Thurston County, Cities of Lacey, Olympia, Tumwater, and Yelm) for Regional Housing Council Structure
- e. Service Provider Agreement with SCJ Alliance for Capitol Boulevard, Israel Road to M Street Design, Amendment 1
- f. Contract Approval for a 12-Year Multifamily Tax Exemption for the Kingswood Apartments (TUM-22-1630)
- g. Real Estate Purchase and Sale Agreements with DJ Properties II, LLC, for 116 Lee Street SE and 109 Ruby Street SE and Lease Agreements for 116 Lee Street SE
- h. Site Lease Agreement with Dish Wireless for the Airport Reservoir L

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- i. Lease Payment Allocation Agreement with Dish Wireless for the Airport Reservoir
- j. Appointment of Blake Chard to the Civil Service Commission and David Nicandri to the Capital Area Regional Public Facilities District Board of Directors

**MOTION:**

**Councilmember Althausen moved, seconded by Councilmember Schneider, to approve the consent calendar as published. Motion carried unanimously.**

Mayor Sullivan reviewed the items approved on the consent calendar.

Councilmember Althausen thanked Mr. Cuffee for his comments. As Chair of the General Government Committee, it would be appropriate for the committee to schedule a worksession to explore the merits of tax exemption provisions. The Council adopted both tax exemptions prior to the pandemic and prior to the peak in the housing crisis. The Council approved an 8-year tax exemption that might warrant a review as rental rates were 45%-50% lower four to five years ago.

**COUNCIL  
CONSIDERATIONS:**

**PRELIMINARY  
DOCKET FOR 2023  
COMPREHENSIVE  
PLAN  
AMENDMENTS:**

Manager Medrud introduced Erika Smith-Erickson who joined the City on Thursday, February 16, 2023 as an Associate Planner.

Manager Medrud reported the proposal is to adopt the Preliminary Docket of 2023 Comprehensive Plan Amendments. City code dictates the process for considering all Comprehensive Plan amendments as a two-part process. The first step is the Preliminary Docket of proposed amendments presented at the beginning of each year. The Planning Commission reviews the preliminary docket and forwards a recommendation to the City Council. The preliminary docket establishes the agenda for Council and staff reviews of all proposed amendments for the year. Following review of the amendments by staff, the amendments are presented as a Final Docket of Comprehensive Plan Amendments to complete the public process through the Planning Commission and the Council.

This year, the preliminary docket includes two public text amendments. They include the Capital Facilities Plan (CFP) Update and the Old Highway 99 Corridor Plan. The Council approved an ordinance last year suspending the Comprehensive Plan annual amendment cycle with the exception of City-sponsored amendments to enable staff to devote resources for the full update of the Comprehensive Plan.

The CFP is a six-year plan of capital projects in support of Comprehensive Plan policies and actions. The CFP is reviewed by the Council in alternate

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years of the City's biannual budget review process. The CFP covers capital projects for water, sewer, stormwater, transportation, parks and recreation, and City facilities.

The Old Highway 99 Corridor Plan was developed by the Transportation and Engineering Department for incorporation within the Comprehensive Plan. The plan covers all modes of transportation along the corridor to include land use and environmental considerations. The plan identifies future improvement projects along the corridor.

The General Government Committee and the Planning Commission recommended the Council approve including both amendments as part of the Final Docket. Staff requests approval of the Preliminary Docket for preparation of the Final Docket of Amendments for review and approval by the City Council later in the year.

Manager Medrud responded to the questions concerning the review process for the CFP, which will include reviews by the Public Works Committee beginning in June.

**MOTION:** **Councilmember Althausen moved, seconded by Councilmember Dahlhoff, to approve the proposed Preliminary Docket of 2023 Comprehensive Plan Amendments to go forward for the review as part of the Final Docket of Comprehensive Plan amendments.. Motion carried unanimously.**

**COMMITTEE  
REPORTS:**

**PUBLIC HEALTH &  
SAFETY:**

***Leatta Dahlhoff***

The committee received an update on the Tumwater Police Department K9 Program and members are scheduled to meet with the K9 handler and the canine, Thor. The next meeting is scheduled on March 14, 2023 and includes updates on Tumwater HOPES and South Sound Behavioral Hospital.

**GENERAL  
GOVERNMENT:**

***Michael Althausen***

The committee received briefings on the Regional Housing Council interlocal agreement, Preliminary Docket for 2023 Comprehensive Plan Amendments, and Urban Forestry Management Plan amendments for tree vegetation preservation regulations. The next meeting is on March 8, 2023.

**PUBLIC WORKS:**

***Eileen Swarthout***

The next meeting on Thursday, March 9, 2023 includes consideration of an amendment to the service provider agreement with PBS for the Percival Creek Fish Passage Barrier Removal project and a discussion on the I-5/Trosper Road/Capitol Boulevard Reconfiguration project.

**BUDGET AND  
FINANCE:**

There was no meeting and no report.

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***Debbie Sullivan***

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

City Administrator Doan reported on the departure of Administrative Services Director James Trujillo. He and his family are relocating to Oregon. Director Trujillo joined the City during the pandemic. Administrative Services was impacted by the pandemic, experienced an increase in hiring of new City positions over the last two years, and addressed issues surrounding transitioning to a new work environment, recruiting for new positions, and negotiating labor contracts. He thanked Director Trujillo for his service to the City and to the community.

Mayor Sullivan reported the Association of Washington Cities (AWC) formed a new cabinet on Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging covering 14 districts represented by city officials. AWC received 50 membership applications for the new cabinet. Mayor Sullivan was selected to serve on behalf of District 6 as a cabinet member representing the City of Tumwater.

At the February 15, 2023 Intercity Transit Authority meeting, members received three presentations on the 2022 Rock n Roll Program, 2023 Procurement Work Plan, and the Road Map to Zero Emission Fleet. Staff reported Intercity Transit has achieved 74% of its pre-COVID service level. Staff provided information on the Winter Bike Commuter Challenge scheduled during February. To date, 273 individuals registered to participate with cyclists logging over 11,000 miles during the first two weeks of the challenge. The agency's new Rock n Roll Education Center has scheduled an open house on March 7, 2023 from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m.

**COUNCILMEMBER  
REPORTS:**

***Leatta Dahlhoff:***

The LOTT Clean Water Alliance (LOTT) Board of Directors elected new officers. Olympia Councilmember Lisa Parshley was reelected to serve as President and Thurston County Commissioner Tye Menser was reelected to serve as Vice President. Lacey Councilmember Carolyn Cox will continue representing LOTT on the Thurston Regional Planning Council, Councilmember Parshley will represent LOTT on the Capitol Lake/Deschutes Estuary Long Term Management Project Executive Workgroup, and Councilmember Dahlhoff will represent LOTT on the Sea Level Rise Committee.

At the last Thurston County Opioid Task Force meeting, members developed new goals for four strategies to expand resources, reduce stigma, work on safe medication return, and identify safer storage options for opioids.

***Angela Jefferson:***

At the Tumwater HOPES Coalition meeting, Councilmember Jefferson was elected to serve as Co-Chair of the Leadership Team, a three-member group

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working with the Coalition Coordinator on an action plan and Goal #8 to improve family problems

The LEOFF Disability Board held elections for officers. Rick Sapp was elected to serve as Chair and Robert Drewett was elected to serve as Vice Chair.

Emergency Medical Services Council members discussed issues associated with the public's approval of a Medic One levy and an error in language adopted by the Board of County Commissioners, EMS Council, Department of Revenue, and the Thurston County Assessor's Office. The error creates a \$4.5 million deficit in 2023, \$5 million in 2024, and \$6 million in 2025 for Medic One. Members reviewed corrected language reflecting a levy rate of \$.38 per \$1,000 of assessed value versus \$.30 per \$1,000 of assessed value and identified a \$26 million deficit over the life of the levy. The timeframe before Medic One dips below two months of cash flow begins in 2024 requiring the Council to address the issue by offering a ballot measure to the voters to correct the discrepancy. The Council appointed a committee to explore the issue, seek legal advice, and identify options.

Councilmember Dahlhoff suggested adding a discussion to the EMS Council agenda on implications to Medic One if the Regional Fire Authority ballot measure is approved by voters in April.

***Charlie Schneider:***

Councilmember Schneider and Councilmember Swarthout are scheduled to meet with Sustainability Coordinator Jones Wood in preparation for the Climate Action Steering Committee meeting on Monday, February 27, 2023.

Councilmember Schneider plans to attend the next Public Works Committee on Thursday, February 23, 2023.

On February 8, 2023, Mayor Sullivan participated in coffee hour prior to the senior luncheon at the Old Town Center. Mayor Sullivan addressed questions and concerns from seniors regarding the community. Next month, in addition to Mayor Sullivan, Fire Chief Hurley will attend the coffee hour and senior luncheon.

On February 16, 2023 in honor of Black History Month, the Olympia Tumwater Foundation held a monthly presentation at Heritage Distilling Company featuring guest speaker, Dr. Thelma Jackson. Dr. Jackson shared information on a book, *Blacks in Thurston County, Washington 1950 to 1975, A Community Album*. When the City of Lacey was first established, many non-white people moved to the city because there were no restrictions or barriers for purchasing homes.

The Tumwater Youth Program has hosted two Friday night events since the last Council meeting. The program was established 28 years ago serving

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youth in the community.

Councilmember Schneider recognized Director Denney and City staff for working many years and hours to ensure The Park at the Preserve is completed.

***Peter Agabi:***

Councilmember Agabi attended the last meeting of the Public Health and Safety Committee. He missed the Transportation Policy Board meeting but plans to forward a meeting summary to the Council.

The next meeting of the Thurston Economic Development Council Board is on Wednesday, February 22, 2023 at Tumwater Library.

***Michael Althausen:***

At the last Regional Housing Council (RHC) meeting, members discussed the final version of the interlocal agreement approved earlier by the City Council. Members discussed a potential affordable housing development in Olympia. The request to the RHC is for a letter of commitment to recommend and support funds for the project. To satisfy the conditions of the State Housing Finance Commission, developers of the project require a letter in support by late February or early March. Following multiple presentations on the project to the RHC, members agreed to provide a letter in support of the project. The project would provide 162 units of permanently affordable housing. A local match of funds is required of approximately \$2 million to leverage \$16 million in credits and other funding. The review prompted more conversations on the future of other projects brought forth outside the funding cycle. The Council established the Affordable Housing Advisory Board and the Homelessness Advisory Board. The RHC received many applications for membership on the boards from the community with lived experience, as well as service experience. The technical team narrowed the list of applications for review by the RHC.

***Eileen Swarthout:***

There were no meetings and no report.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

**With there being no further business, Mayor Sullivan adjourned the meeting at 7:48 p.m.**