

**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, Joan Cathey, Leatta Dahlhoff, Angela Jefferson, Charlie Schneider, and Eileen Swarthout.

Staff: City Administrator John Doan, City Attorney Karen Kirkpatrick, Parks and Recreation Director Chuck Denney, and City Clerk Melody Valiant.

**SPECIAL ITEMS:**

**PROCLAMATION:** Councilmember Dahlhoff read a proclamation declaring the month of April as *Child Abuse Prevention Awareness Month*. The proclamation urges all Tumwater residents, communities, state agencies, faith groups, elected leaders, medical providers, educators, and businesses to increase their participation in efforts to support families, increase and support public safety and youth-serving agencies to help prevent the further abuse and neglect of our children and strengthen the community in which we live.

**CHILD ABUSE  
PREVENTION  
AWARENESS  
MONTH, APRIL  
2023:**

Shelly Willis, Executive Director, Family Education and Support Services, and Gretchen Thaller, Community Wellness Director, Thurston County Public Health & Social Services Department, accepted the proclamation from Mayor Sullivan.

Ms. Thaller thanked the Council for issuing the proclamation recognizing the importance of supporting families and children's health and development.

Ms. Willis said the proclamation reflects the City of Tumwater's dedication for ensuring the health and wellbeing of children.

**PROCLAMATION:** Councilmember Schneider read a proclamation recognizing April 22, 2023 as *Arbor Day* in the City of Tumwater. The proclamation encourages all people in the City of Tumwater to participate in the City's Arbor Day and Earth Day celebrations and support efforts to protect trees and woodlands.

**ARBOR DAY, APRIL  
22, 2023:**

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** **Darlene Atkins, 716 Dennis Street SE, Tumwater**, spoke to health and wellness. She thanked the Mayor and the Council for their public service. She recently completed a 21-year Army Reserve career and is looking for ways to engage and contribute to the wellbeing of people. She enrolled in a MPA program and is learning more about public service. Her concerns surround continuing societal problems. She believes several books addressing, such as the *Peer Review Journal*, *My Critical Thinking*, *Collaborative Relationships in the Community* are helpful to assist the community in addressing and solving problems. The continuing crisis of mass shootings and child abuse speak to preventive measures earlier that might benefit children. She has attended Tumwater School Board meetings

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and offered public comments. She expressed support for the teaching information about the human brain earlier in schools and would like to complete a capstone project in partnership with the cities to conduct a health and wellness event for the public.

#### **CONSENT CALENDAR:**

- a. Approval of Minutes: City Council Worksession, March 14, 2023
- b. Approval of Minutes: City Council, March 21, 2023
- c. Payment of Vouchers

#### **MOTION:**

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

Mayor Sullivan reviewed the items approved on the consent calendar.

#### **COUNCIL CONSIDERATIONS:**

##### **MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING WITH SQUAXIN ISLAND TRIBE:**

City Administrator Doan reported the City of Tumwater is located on the ancestral lands of the Squaxin Island Tribe. With a history over the years of interaction with tribal leadership and multiple meetings between the councils, those interactions have led to the development of a relationship with the tribe. The proposed Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) creates the structure and formation of a group meeting on a regular basis to address issues from economic development, habitat, art and culture, and other issues or opportunities for both entities to consider. The request is to authorize the Mayor to sign the MOU. Attached to the MOU is a Letter of Understanding specific to tribal trust land the tribe acquired located adjacent to Port property at the airport off Old Highway 99. The tribe is opening a marijuana dispensary and seeks public services from Tumwater for police, fire, and emergency medical. The letter creates an initial three-year framework with a contribution from the tribe for services. Staff recommends the Council authorize the Mayor to sign the Letter of Understanding.

Councilmember Althausen asked about the assignment of staff support during joint meetings of the councils. City Administrator Doan said it is likely at least one staff member from each jurisdiction would attend joint meetings

Councilmember Swarthout requested clarification on the efforts that might be required to satisfy the provision within the MOU on page 2 that speaks to, "The parties recognize that implementation of this MOU may require educational efforts to promote understanding of the government-to-government relationship within their respective organizations and with the public." City Administrator Doan explained that the MOU is not a contractual relationship but rather a government-to-government relationship between two equal parties. Work completed by City staff will continue

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especially as new employees and elected officials join the City who will need to learn more about the two governments working together.

#### **MOTION:**

**Councilmember Dahlhoff moved, seconded by Councilmember Jefferson, to authorize the Mayor to sign the Memorandum of Understanding and Letter of Understanding with the Squaxin Island Tribe establishing a framework for an on-going government to government relationship. Motion carried unanimously.**

#### **PARK AT THE PRESERVE NAME:**

Director Denney reported the request surrounds the City's newest park located at The Preserve subdivision off Old Highway 99. Development of the park entailed negotiations with two property owners to acquire the 2.5-acre property for a neighborhood park in the southeast area of the City. The anticipated completion date of the park is May 1, 2023. Development of the park encountered many supply chain issues with park structure shipments delayed. The play structure was ordered in October 2022 with the play structure received last week. Director Denney described outstanding park features to be completed to meet the goal of completing the park by May 1, 2023. Park signage is dependent upon the name of the park. Following the adoption of a park name, staff plans to schedule a ribbon-cutting ceremony to open the park.

The City's ordinance on park naming outlines the process for naming a park. The process includes solicitations to the neighborhood or the projected users of the park facility. Staff solicited name suggestions from the Preserve housing development and other surrounding housing developments. The names were reviewed by Director Denney to ensure all names were appropriate. The names were forwarded to the Parks and Recreation Commission for its review. The Commission reviewed the names during its March 15 meeting and selected a name for recommendation to the City Council. The Council has the option of approving the recommended name or selecting another name. The Commission recommends naming the park, *Kindred Park*.

Director Denney reported the proposed park name refers to pioneers David and Talitha Kindred. The Kindred family was good friends with George and Isabella Bush. The two families financed the wagon train that came from Missouri to Tumwater during the 1840s. Upon arrival to Tumwater, the Kindred family claimed 640 acres near Black Hills High School in a donation land claim. Dave Kindred, George Bush, and Michael T. Simmons built the gristmill at Tumwater Falls in the winter of 1846/47. Mr. Kindred was an original signer of the petition asking Congress to create Thurston County. David and Talitha Kindred were buried next to George and Isabella Bush in the Pioneer Cemetery in Tumwater. Improvements to Littlerock Road resulted in the re-internment of the graves to the Masonic Cemetery located off Cleveland Avenue. The headstones are inscribed with, "They settled Tumwater in 1845, and the first school was held in their home in

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1849.”

Several Councilmembers commented that they were unaware of the Kindred family but supported the name recommendation. Councilmember Swarthout supported naming the park after one of the City’s pioneer families.

Director Denney noted the Kindred’s daughter eventually married Michael T. Simmons.

Councilmember Schneider thanked all the residents who acknowledged his work and dedication to ensure the park became a reality. The Council often speaks to honoring indigenous people of the area and addressing the issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion, and it is because of those ideals, he recommended naming the park in honor of indigenous people. One possible name is William Owen Bush, the first African American elected to the Washington State House of Representatives. Mr. Bush also assisted in establishing Washington State University. Other potential names include Bush Prairie Park, New Market Park, or names related to indigenous people.

Councilmember Cathey conveyed disappointed in the choice of the name. Although naming a park from the past is appropriate at times, the proposal of *Kindred Park* is representative of an unknown figure in the City’s past. The proposed name does not represent the neighborhood and not many people know about the Kindred family. Geographically, it is located on the prairie. The Council often discusses steps to take to care for the prairie, and unexpectedly, a name is offered that probably six people in Tumwater know of.

Other suggestions offered by the public include “Preservation Park” and other similar names relating to preservation. The proposed name does not satisfy many of the City’s park naming criteria.

Councilmember Dahlhoff acknowledged both comments; however, neither Councilmember offered a recommended name. She asked for feedback on another name in lieu of “Kindred.” Naming the park after the Kindred family could be a learning opportunity, especially with the help of educational signs. She cited the example of Eva G. Hewitt, who was not well known in the community until the Tumwater Post Office was named in her honor last year.

Councilmember Althaus preferred to defer to the Commission’s recommendation because it presents an opportunity to further the knowledge of the family and deepen the connection with the community. He believes the proposed name could not be disqualified from a policy standpoint.

Councilmember Cathey re-emphasized that in the context of the site and the facility, the proposed name is not appropriate.

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Councilmember Jefferson asked whether other Native American names other than Tumchuck Park were considered by the Commission. Director Denney referred to the list of names considered by the Commission. Councilmember Jefferson suggested soliciting several more Native American names.

Councilmember Dahlhoff asked whether park signs include any history as to the park name. Director Denney affirmed that when Isabella Bush Park was named, information was included describing the historical significance of Isabella Bush. Councilmember Dahlhoff said that although she does not disagree with Councilmember Cathey's comments or naming the park in honor of indigenous people, she prefers a naming process that is not reflective of a performative action. She asked whether any conversations with the Squaxin Island Tribe have been pursued. Any conversations with the tribe would require some time with no naming of the park at this time. Naming the park after Tumwater's history is different and would warrant a recommendation by the Tumwater Historic Preservation Commission.

Councilmember Schneider cited his alternative name suggestions, stressed the importance of naming the park properly, and shared his belief that the recommended name is not appropriate for a City park.

#### **MOTION:**

**Councilmember Cathey moved seconded by Councilmember Schneider, to postpone action on the naming of the park at The Preserve to enable consideration of other park names for future consideration by the Council.**

Discussion ensued on the City's park naming process, which includes a public process and submission of names to the City. The Parks and Recreation Commission reviewed the list of names and unanimously recommended one name for consideration by the Council. The Council can either approve the recommendation or consider another name. If another name is considered, the naming process is returned to the Commission for its process and a recommendation.

#### **MOTION:**

**A roll call vote of the Council rejected the motion:**

**Councilmember Schneider - Yea**

**Councilmember Jefferson – Yea**

**Councilmember Agabi – Nay**

**Councilmember Dahlhoff – Nay**

**Councilmember Althausen – Nay**

**Councilmember Swarthout – Nay**

**Councilmember Cathey – Yea**

#### **MOTION:**

**Councilmember Dahlhoff moved, seconded by Councilmember Swarthout, to name the Preserve park, *Kindred Park*.**

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**A roll call vote Council approved the motion:**

**Councilmember Schneider - Nay**

**Councilmember Jefferson – Nay**

**Councilmember Agabi – Yea**

**Councilmember Dahlhoff – Yea**

**Councilmember Althausen – Yea**

**Councilmember Swarthout – Yea**

**Councilmember Cathey – Nay**

### **COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

#### **PUBLIC HEALTH & SAFETY:**

***Leatta Dahlhoff***

The next meeting is on April 11 2023 at 8 a.m. The agenda includes discussions on Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion Program (LEAD), 2022 Police Data, and Engine #3.

#### **GENERAL GOVERNMENT:**

***Michael Althausen***

The committee's next meeting on April 12 8, 2023 at 8 a.m. includes an ordinance for general guidelines for advisory boards and commissions and an update on the Community Center.

#### **PUBLIC WORKS:**

***Eileen Swarthout***

The next meeting on Thursday, April 6, 2023 at 8 a.m. includes five action items.

#### **BUDGET AND FINANCE:**

***Debbie Sullivan***

There was no meeting and no report.

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

City Administrator Doan shared some notes and communications from the community complimenting the actions of some employees.

On Saturday, April 8, 2023, 20,000 eggs will be placed for many children at Tumwater High School Stadium for the annual Easter Egg Dash. The event is scheduled to begin at 11 a.m.

The next meeting of the Intercity Transit Authority meeting is on Wednesday, April 5, 2023.

Mayor Sullivan attended the Habitat for Humanity groundbreaking for the new project located off Henderson Boulevard and participated in the Joint Base Lewis McChord (JBLM) Community Leaders Breakfast on March 29, 2023.

Mayor Sullivan attended the Black Hills High School senior exit panel interviews. The panel presentations by the seniors were excellent.

On March 30, 2023, Mayor Sullivan attended the retirement celebration for

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Intercity Transit's General Manager Ann Freeman-Manzanares.

**COUNCILMEMBER  
REPORTS:**

***Eileen Swarthout:***

At the March 27, 2023 Climate Action Steering Committee meeting, the discussion focused on a report advancing energy efficiency in residential buildings. The report addressed one strategy in the Climate Action Plan to reduce energy consumption in existing residential buildings. The report provides information on the targets, housing stock, and some incentives. The Legislature will likely pass incentives as part of the issue on carbon capture.

The next meeting of the Thurston Regional Planning Council is on Friday, April 8, 2023.

***Michael Althausen:***

At the meeting of the Regional Housing Council (RHC) on March 22, 2023, members discussed information items and received a presentation on affordable housing allocation illustrating gaps and the needs assessment to achieve desired goals of significantly and substantively addressing the affordable housing crisis in communities. Members reviewed the new advisory boards. One small change was approved for the charters to align with the interlocal agreements. Members established its future meeting schedule and will resume in-person meetings for every other meeting. The next meeting on April 12, 2023 has been cancelled.

***Leatta Dahlhoff:***

Councilmember Dahlhoff shared new information from seniors that she shared with Mayor Sullivan and staff. The Council recently approved tenant protections, which includes seniors. A provision was included for a contract with the Dispute Resolution Center; however, recent information has been shared about the number of manufactured home parks that are experiencing communication challenges between owners, managers, and tenants. She received support from Councilmembers Cathey, Swarthout, and Althausen to reconsider the recent action by reviewing the challenges for seniors and using two manufactured home parks as case studies or pilots for the Dispute Resolution Center contract. She asked Councilmember Schneider about the possibility of gaining any insight from seniors he interacts with during the Town Center senior lunches concerning any gaps seniors may be experiencing. Feedback from the community speaks to the issue of rent increases and advance notification of the increase, which does not help anyone if they lack the finances to pay an increased rent. The real world application of policies is not addressing the plight of seniors facing increased rental rates they cannot afford. Based on her experience with several seniors, they are not eating properly, which is unacceptable. She is scheduled for a site visit at the Lacey Food Bank to discuss the possibility of food distribution with the creator of the little free pantry and how it might be effective for food distribution. One senior is worried about being displaced

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to the streets.

Councilmember Dahlhoff asked the Council to take advantage of their connections with senior and veterans to receive feedback to help inform the Council as it considers updating or modifying policies.

***Peter Agabi:***

The Confederated Tribes of the Chehalis Reservation hosted the March 22, 2023 Thurston Economic Development Council (EDC) Board meeting. Members received a financial report followed by a roundtable discussion on homelessness and the region's interlocal agreement to address the issue. Moving forward, the EDC is establishing a work group chaired by the President-Elect. The next meeting is on April 26, 2023.

Councilmember Agabi also attended a recent meeting of the Joint Animal Services Commission.

***Angela Jefferson:***

Councilmember Jefferson agreed that the situation of housing and seniors is a 911 emergency as many seniors are facing difficulties. A food pantry would assist; however, there is so much shame and stigma associated with food insecurity that it is often difficult for seniors to accept help. She supported participating in a tour of the food bank as well as exploring options with Meals on Wheels. She knows of two seniors who are living in their vehicles.

Councilmember Jefferson participated in the Joint Base Lewis McChord Community Leaders Breakfast on March 29, 2023. The Commanding General for JBLM wants to open base gates to the community. He plans to work on the effort beginning with the air show during the summer. He also spoke about the lack of housing as 70% of military members are living off base with the remaining 30% living on base. Military members living off base increase the rental rates for others. A new program, Partners in Education has been launched. The program provides military parents with a partner at each middle and high school in the communities. They will be assigned a school to provide various duties to support the school from trash pickup, landscaping beautification, or mentoring students.

On March 23, 2022, Councilmember Jefferson met with two YMCA community outreach members. She was contacted through her work with Tumwater HOPES to discuss collaborating to strengthen belonging, inclusion, mental wellness, and drug abuse prevention for youths in Tumwater. She spoke to the issues of belonging, acceptance, and diversity within the community. It is a continuous theme she hears from all her contacts and during various meetings. She recently met with representatives from a community non-profit agency who wanted to discuss the 21-day racial equity training. She shared information about the training as well as thoughts about institutional racism, professionalism, and her experience as a Black woman in the Army and how she was required to wear her hair



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straight as a commissioned officer. It required her to undergo hair treatments every six weeks that exposed her to caustic chemicals. It is important to consider policies and how they affect people. She recently learned that the organization is moving forward on its own racial equity challenge. At the end of the meeting with the YMCA, she was asked about the possible willingness of the City to partner with the YMCA to offer a program for LGBTQ+ youth to reduce suicide and foster a sense of belonging. A neighboring city turned down an invitation to partner. Although, she shared that she could not speak on behalf of the City, she believes the City of Tumwater are trying and taking active measures to become more inclusive and a welcoming City. The City is accepting of all people. She knows this because as a Black woman, immigrant, and a military retiree, she has always felt welcome and accepted from the day she was unanimously appointed to the City Council. The City values its Jewish families, Asian families, Muslim families, and all immigrants. She thanked all executive leaders and every manager who foster a climate of belonging and acceptance and who allow employees and community members to feel valued and accepted.

***Charlie Schneider:***

Councilmember Schneider offered no reports as he was on vacation visiting Washington, D.C. with his grandchildren.

***Joan Cathey:***

Councilmember Cathey conveyed her appreciation to Councilmember Jefferson for her honesty, openness, and bravery. The comments shared by Councilmember Jefferson reflect leadership. She is making a difference in the community.

Councilmember Cathey attended the RHC meeting and is scheduled to attend the Solid Waste Advisory Committee on Wednesday, April 5, 2023.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

**With there being no further business, Mayor Sullivan adjourned the meeting at 8:24 p.m.**

Prepared by Valerie L. Gow, Recording Secretary/President  
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