

**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 Althaus, Joan Cathey, Angela Jefferson, Eileen Swarthout, and Kelly Von Holtz.

Excused: Councilmember Leatta Dahlhoff.

Staff: City Administrator Lisa Parks, City Attorney Karen Kirkpatrick, Finance Department Director Troy Niemeyer, Police Chief Jon Weiks, Fire Chief Brian Hurley, Community Development Department Director Michael Matlock, Transportation & Engineering Department Director Brandon Hicks, Water Resources & Sustainability Department Director Dan Smith, Parks and Recreation Department Director Chuck Denney, Administrative Services Department Director Michelle Sutherland, Planning Manager Brad Medrud, IT Manager Lance Inman, Police Commander Jay Mason, Communications Manager Jason Wettstein, Engineering Services Manager Bill Lindauer, Capital Projects Manager Don Carney, City Clerk Melody Valiant, and Deputy City Clerk Tracie Core.

SPECIAL ITEMS:

**PROCLAMATION:
GIS DAY,
NOVEMBER 20, 2024:** Councilmember Swarthout read a proclamation declaring *November 20, 2024 GIS Day*. The proclamation called upon the people of the City of Tumwater to learn about the GIS applications and data available on the City's website, and encourage geospatial education within the community.

Mayor Sullivan presented the proclamation to GIS Coordinator Jennifer Radcliff and other GIS staff members.

PUBLIC COMMENT: **Dave Nicandri, 505 4th Avenue SW, Tumwater**, commented that as someone who has written about pioneering geographers, such as Captain Cook, Lewis and Clark, George Vancouver, and Alexander McKenzie, he recognizes the importance of GIS. He congratulated voters in the state who had the good sense of voting in favor of Initiative 2066. He has testified many times before the Council over the last 18 months pleading for some common sensibility about the mad rush to electrify everything within the infrastructure system, which was particularly auspicious since the lights are flickering because of high winds. It is nice to know the City has back-up energy to keep the City's communications systems, employees, and visitors safe should the electrical grid go down as many weather forecasters have warned. The City would be advised to install a natural gas hook-up to keep the emergency generator running when needed rather than using fuel or diesel oil. He thanked Mayor

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Sullivan for scheduling a meeting of the Historic Preservation Commission to enable the Commission to complete some productive efforts in support of the City. Given the wind, he stopped by the Davis-Meeker oak tree and observed that the tree is in good condition. He sent Councilmembers Althaus and Dahlhoff text messages about a 20-foot long 6-8-inch diameter piece of a large Douglas-fir branch that had fallen in proximity to the sidewalk leading to the Tumwater Library. The tree was a true widow maker, which speaks to the capriciousness of the idea that the oak tree ought to be removed when there is a tree literally across the street that could have easily killed someone because of the limb that fell in close proximity to the sidewalk.

Eric Johansen said he forwarded a two-page letter to the City Council. As mentioned by the previous speaker, he understands a meeting of the Historic Preservation Commission is planned later in the week. He is hopeful that some of his ideas shared with the Council could entail further discussion. The primary focus of his comments pertain to the Cowlitz Trail and to a lesser degree, the Davis-Meeker oak tree and tribal land acknowledgement. He cited GIS Coordinator Radcliff for her helpfulness and assistance during a recent call requesting a GIS layer of a City map. She affirmed the ability to produce the map and two hours later he had a copy of the map.

**CONSENT
CALENDAR:**

- a. Approval of Minutes: City Council, November 4, 2024
- b. Payment of Vouchers
- c. Ordinance No. O2024-006, Ad Valorem for Regular Property Taxes for the Fiscal Year 2025
- d. Ordinance No. O2024-010 Amending Tumwater Municipal Code 2.06 and Tumwater Municipal Code 2.10 Relating to Administration and Personnel Creating a New Department to be Entitled the Information Technology Department
- e. Interlocal Agreement with Cities of Lacey, Olympia and Yelm for Accessory Dwelling Unit Plans
- f. Interagency Agreement with Washington Department of Commerce for Tumwater Fire Stations Solar + Storage Feasibility
- g. Grant from the Dept of Ecology for the Golf Course Stormwater Retrofit Project Amendment 2
- h. Interlocal Agreement with City of Olympia for Mark Noble Regional Training Center
- i. Interlocal Agreement with City of Olympia for FDCARES Program
- j. Acceptance of Work with Sound Pacific Construction for the 2022 Pedestrian Improvements project
- k. Acceptance of Work with Miles Resources, LLC. for the 2023 Pavement Maintenance project
- l. Old Hwy 99 & 79th Ave Roundabout Schedule 74 Underground Conversion Design Agreement with Puget Sound Energy
- m. Bargaining Agreement between the City of Tumwater and the

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International Association of Firefighters Local No. 2409
encompassing January 1, 2025, through December 31, 2027
n. Advisory Board Appointment of Alex Chacon to the Tree Board

MOTION:

Councilmember Althaus moved, seconded by Councilmember Von Holtz, to approve the consent calendar as published. A voice vote approved the motion unanimously.

Mayor Sullivan reviewed the items approved on the Consent Calendar.

PUBLIC HEARINGS:

**ORDINANCE NO.
2024-007, 2025-2026
BIENNIAL BUDGET:**

Mayor Sullivan noted the public hearing is the second hearing on the City's 2025-2026 biennial budget. All cities and communities are experiencing difficulty with ending fund balances with many jurisdictions utilizing reserve funds to ensure a balanced budget. The City is fortunate that the utilization of ending fund balance has been reduced from a preliminary estimate.

City Administrator Parks presented the 2025-2026 biennial budget. The presentation included information on the context and framework for the budget centering on the City's Mission, Beliefs, Financial Policies, and Council Goals and Strategic Policies, current and future challenges in response to growth in the City outpacing the City's ability to provide services, and the lack of revenue to keep pace with growth.

City Administrator Parks described the budget development process by staff and the City Council through Council retreats, reviews of financial forecasts and projections, input from the management team through workforce planning to identify required resources to accomplish City goals and priorities, four municipal finance work sessions with the Council, and development of the initial budget proposal and subsequent review to reduce expenditures in the Mayor's proposed budget. The City Council participated in three budget workshops. Since then, additional changes to the budget have reduced the amount of ending fund balance required.

The budget focuses on a multi-year strategy of balancing and stabilizing current conditions by matching expectations of work and delivery of services at the City's current revenue and staffing capacity, hiring additional employees in early 2025, and contracting with a municipal financial advisor to assist the City in identifying opportunities for development of a 10-year financial plan to assist in preparing and forecasting future budgets beginning with the 2027-2028 biennial budget.

Budget priorities identified include:

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- Non-represented salary market adjustments
- Adding employee positions
- Space and security needs at City Hall
- Identification of deferred building maintenance throughout City facilities

City Administrator Parks shared a graphic representing the difference in salaries between union and non-union employees. The information reflects market rate increases to ensure salary parity and to assist in hiring and retaining employees. Employee positions covered by the market rate increase are approximately 125 with an average below market salary rate of 15%. The proposed salary adjustments average 14%.

The budget forecasts total revenue of \$95,703,000.00 with an existing beginning fund balance of \$119 million and projected general fund expenditures of \$106 million leaving a projected ending fund balance of \$13 million. To pay for all identified expenses in the budget, staff proposed using \$10.2 million of reserves to support the biennial budget. Because the amount was not acceptable or fiscally responsible, staff identified savings and potential new revenue sources reflecting an acceptable and fiscally responsible budget utilizing approximately \$5 million of the ending fund balance over the next two years.

City Administrator Parks addressed questions from the Council. Staff identified reserve accounts that are obligated by City resolutions and ordinance to maintain. All reserve accounts are maintained within the proposed budget. Of the projected ending balance of \$18.5 million, the City anticipates allocating \$5 million over the next two years to pay for expenses; however, over the next two years, efforts will be pursued to examine revenue sources, community expectations of service delivery, and ways to pay for service delivery expectations as it is not sustainable to utilize ending fund balance to balance the next biennial budget. It is necessary for this proposed budget to afford time for the Council and staff to undertake some difficult work to identify additional revenue sources, programming options, and different strategies to achieve a balanced budget.

City Administrator Parks added that the current revenue projection of \$96 million includes approximately \$1.2 million from an increase in revenue if the Council adopts a proposed increase of 6% in utility tax only for City-owned utilities equating to an average \$8.08 increase in a monthly utility bill.

City Administrator Parks addressed questions as to the reasons attributed to the budget deficit and indicated the primary reasons are increasing

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expenses related to inflation and the inability for the property tax levy to increase above 1% limiting the City's revenue growth. The City's primary and most stable source of revenue continues to shrink each year.

City Administrator Parks reviewed a summary of the general fund budget comprised of the City's major expenditures and revenue by category. Salaries and benefits necessary to provide public services constitute approximately 67% of general fund expenditures. Police and fire services are the largest component followed by Parks and Recreation. The City's four enterprise funds of Water, Sewer, Storm, and Golf Course are self-funded by ratepayers and users of the systems with the exception of the Golf Course. One strategy is identifying all costs associated with the golf course to ensure transparency and to identify the amount of support from the general fund to sustain golf course operations. The City's combined Capital Facilities Plans (General Government and Transportation) anticipate expending \$71 million on a variety of parks, brewery redevelopment, transportation projects, and equipment. The Capital Facilities Plans are adopted every other year with the next review scheduled in late 2025. The plans include planned and necessary projects based on input from the community and requirements of the regulatory environment.

City Administrator Parks reviewed proposed expenditures, revenues, and ending fund balance for the 2025-2026 biennial budget of \$428,940,178, which is inclusive of all funds administered by the City of Tumwater.

The next step is seeking direction on the proposed utility tax and adoption of the budget at the December 3, 2024 Council meeting.

**PUBLIC
TESTIMONY:**

Mayor Sullivan opened the public hearing at 7:50 p.m.

With there being no public testimony, Mayor Sullivan closed the public hearing at 7:50 p.m.

Mayor Sullivan advised that the proposed budget is scheduled for consideration during the December 3, 2024 meeting.

**COUNCIL
CONSIDERATIONS:**

**ORDINANCE NO.
O2024-009
AMENDING TMC
3.28.040 IMPOSING
UTILITY TAXES ON
WATER, SEWER AND
STORMWATER**

Director Niemeyer presented the proposal to increase utility tax on City utilities from 6% to 12% to increase revenue in the general fund.

Director Niemeyer reviewed the history of utility tax, which was established by the City in 1974 at 3%. It remained at 3% until 1991, when the City Council increased the rate to 6%.

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UTILITIES:

The increase will fund general government services, as the source of tax is unrestricted and can pay for any general fund expenditure. The tax would apply to Water, Sewer, and Stormwater utilities for residential and commercial users.

Director Niemeyer reviewed tax rates of neighboring jurisdictions. Proposed changes in rates and utility tax reflect an average residential bill lower than neighboring jurisdictions of \$5 to \$7 monthly.

The City realizes that increasing utility rates and taxes can be difficult for some households and offers a Utility Hardship Program of financial assistance to customers once annually with certain income limits or for hardship reasons. The program is currently under-utilized with staff working with Communications staff to advertise the program to the community. Another program is the Lifeline Program offering a 50% discount similar to the county's program for discounts on property tax for seniors and low-income disabled individuals.

Councilmember Jefferson commented on the lack of participation in the Utility Hardship Program and urged staff to increase efforts in communication with the community. She suggested adding messages on the monthly billing statement as well as on the billing envelope.

Mayor Sullivan advised that the program was previously administered by the Community Action Council of Mason and Thurston, which has since been returned to the City to administer, which should result in an increase in participation.

Councilmember Cathey addressed the increase in utility fees each year and the impact to seniors and lower income households in the City. She prefers not increasing the utility tax because of the financial impact to many community members. Director Niemeyer advised that the utility tax has not been increased for 33 years; however, utility rates are evaluated annually and are typically increased to keep pace with inflation and growth.

City Administrator Parks provided additional information on the reason for the proposed utility tax and the increase in each utility service rate. Utilities are self-supporting proprietary funds with rates paid by users for water, sewer, and stormwater services. All capital projects required for growth, regulatory compliance, or repairs and maintenance must be supported by each fund. Utility tax is the only exception and is unrestricted in its use. The purpose of the proposed increase in utility tax is to support expenditures within the general fund. Currently, the Hardship Program is under-utilized with staff focused on proactively communicating the availability of the program. The Lifeline Program currently serves 110 Tumwater customers, which is also insufficient.

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The City plans to communicate the program to the community, as well as reviewing the parameters of the programs to ensure consistency with state law and to identify the possibility of expanding the eligibility parameters to increase participation. She described outcomes if the budget is reduced by \$1.2 million in the general fund to include priorities not completed because of insufficient revenue to fund priorities. Staff has reviewed many options of delaying, deferring, or cutting to produce a budget that only requires \$5 million from the ending fund balance for the next two years instead of \$6.2 million if not for an increase in the utility tax. Distribution of current 6% utility tax includes 1.5% to help fund capital facilities projects with the remaining 4.5% funding activities from the general fund.

Councilmember Cathey conveyed appreciation for describing the issue and the status of the City.

Mayor Sullivan commented on the priority by staff to advertise the programs to the community. One result of recent efforts generated \$250 in community donations to support the programs.

Director Niemeyer responded to inquires as to the number of paper bills the City sends to customers. Currently, of the 10,000 customer accounts, the City sends approximately 4,000 billings with 6,000 receiving a bill electronically. He described the difference in utility bills between the three cities. The City of Olympia currently assesses a 12.5% utility tax. The City of Olympia's 2024 total monthly bill was \$143.88 and increases to \$148.33 because of utility rate increases. Lifeline Program funds are not included in the general fund budget and are considered a trust fund held separately. The funds for the Hardship Program are generated by community donations. Initially, the program was funded by the City with a contribution of \$3,000. Ongoing community donations continue to fund the program.

City Administrator Parks added that the Lifeline Program is reflective of a reduction in utility revenue to account for reduced bills. The Lifeline Program is a monthly program providing a 50% reduction in utility rates as long as the user meets the qualifications established by the City.

Director Niemeyer affirmed Councilmember Jefferson's explanation that if the City does not increase the utility tax, the City would need to explore other taxing options or reduce services or programs, as well as eliminating positions.

Councilmember Von Holtz commented on how an increase of \$8 in utility tax would affect many households who may not qualify for assistance but are low-income residents. There are many in the community one bill away from becoming unhoused. She understands

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inflation and efforts by staff to work more with less. The issue is heartbreaking especially with recent announcements by Walmart and Lowe's to increase prices. Consumers are being hit with increases in costs in all areas.

Director Niemeyer reported Carollo Engineers, a water engineering consulting firm, is completing a cost of service study for the City. A component of the study includes an affordability element with a request to recommend programs to assist in keeping lower utility costs and assisting people who can least afford increases.

Director Niemeyer outlined prior briefings of the proposed increase in utility tax. If adopted, the increase would be effective on January 1, 2025.

Director Niemeyer described the need for the proposed increase in utility tax and cited examples of inflationary impacts incurred by the City. One example is a park estimated to cost \$1 million in 2017 that now costs \$4 million.

Councilmember Althauser emphasized that he agrees with comments by other Councilmembers as no one on the Council considers an increase of \$8 as not much of an increase as it will have an impact on many in the community. The increase was not proposed without serious consideration. However, based on the current situation of the City contending with global factors of higher insurance, inflation, and other costs that are outside the control of the City, the Council is tasked with responding to the situation in a way that is deemed the most responsible and equitable for the community. The Council's toolkit of additional revenue sources is severely limited and a sales tax increase would be one of the most regressive of the different revenue options. An increase in utility tax is a one-time action that raises revenue and provides the best resource to meet obligations and continued level of service the community wants. Services funded by the budget are essential to the function of the community as well as for the future as a prosperous City.

MOTION:

Councilmember Althauser moved, seconded by Councilmember Jefferson, to adopt Ordinance O2024-009, amending Tumwater Municipal Code 3.28.040, as discussed at the October 22, November 4, and November 12, 2024, City Council meetings.

Councilmember Swarthout agreed the Council did not consider the increase lightly. Staff members have scoured the budget many times to present a feasible budget that meets both City and community needs. The action is difficult despite forecasting through fiscal conservative lens. The City continues to grow and that growth is reflected in services provided by the City, which also require an increase in funds to operate,

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maintain, and expand services, which is why she supports adoption of the ordinance.

MOTION:

Motion carried. Councilmember Cathey opposed.

**PERCIVAL CREEK
FISH BARRIER
REMOVAL
PROJECT,
CONSTRUCTION
ROAD CLOSURE:**

Manager Carney briefed the Council on the proposal for a road closure during the Percival Creek Fish Barrier Removal project.

The project site is located on Sapp Road. The scope of the project is removal of an existing fish barrier, a five-foot culvert that serves as a barrier to fish traveling upstream in Percival Creek. The project replaces the culver with a 19-foot wide, 8-1/2-foot high by 60-foot long precast concrete split box culvert. The project includes instream channel improvements and road upgrades by widening existing travel lanes to 11 feet and adding six-foot wide bike lanes and five-foot wide sidewalks.

Staff plans to solicit for project bids in December with construction anticipated to begin in late June through September 2025.

The detour request follows the requirements of the RCW for road closures providing authority to city governing bodies to close roads. Staff requests a full road closure of Sapp Road during the construction period. The closure would span approximately four months from June through September 2025 with local access available to businesses and residents. Detour signage will be posted during the duration of the project.

Manager Carney displayed an illustration of several proposed detour routes for the project and described average delay time for motorists dependent upon the detour route.

Manager Carney responded to concerns about access by emergency responders and described routes available for emergency vehicle access. He explained the reason for proposing a road closure during the project. A road closure reduced costs and construction time, as well as increasing safety to both the public and construction personnel.

Manager Carney responded to several questions from the Council. He described the public notification and signage process for the project. During the project, the creek flow will be blocked using bypass pipes to enable stream flow around the project site.

MOTION:

Councilmember Von Holtz moved, seconded by Councilmember Agabi, to authorize the closure of Sapp Road SW from Crosby Blvd SW to RW Johnson Rd SW with traffic detour for the duration of the project. The roadway will be open to local traffic only. The authorization for closure was recommended for consideration at the

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Public Works Committee November 7, 2024 meeting. A voice vote approved the motion unanimously.

**COMMITTEE
REPORTS:**

**PUBLIC HEALTH &
SAFETY:**

Peter Agabi

The committee reviewed and recommended approval of an Interlocal Agreement with Thurston County Prosecuting Attorney's Office for Prosecution Services, an Interlocal Agreement with Olympia for Mark Noble Regional Training Center, Interlocal Agreement with Olympia for FDCARES Program, and referral to the Council of Resolution R2024-015, Affirming the Council's commitment to equality, dignity and the protection of civil rights, and standing against hate, bigotry and discrimination.

**GENERAL
GOVERNMENT:**

Michael Althaus

The committee received a briefing and considered Amendment One to the Interlocal Agreement with the Regional Housing Council for the Franz Anderson Project and an Interlocal Agreement with Cities of Lacey, Olympia, and Yelm for the update of Accessory Dwelling Unit Plans. Both items were approved on the Consent Calendar. The committee also reviewed proposed changes to Ordinance No. O2024-005, Development Code Administration.

PUBLIC WORKS:

Eileen Swarthout

The next meeting on November 21, 2024 includes briefings and consideration of a Service Provider Agreement with Pacific Testing & Inspection for On-Call Material Testing Amendment No. 3, Service Provider Agreement with Materials Testing & Consulting for On-Call Material Testing Amendment No. 3, Supplemental Agreement No. 1 with Tierra Row For X Street Roundabout Project, Service Provider Agreement With Cardinal Architecture for the Historic Brewery Tower Project Amendment No. 6, and a Service Provider Agreement with HDR Engineering for Old Highway 99 And 79th Avenue Roundabout Project Amendment No. 1.

**BUDGET AND
FINANCE:**

Debbie Sullivan

There was no meeting and no report.

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

City Administrator Parks advised of a delay of the Linwood Crosswalk project based on the delay of materials with completion of the pavement and striping scheduled next spring.

Mayor Sullivan reported on her attendance to the Intercity Transit Authority meeting on November 6, 2024. The Authority conducted a public hearing on the draft budget, surplused several vehicles, and scheduled a public hearing on the 2025-2030 Draft Strategic Plan on Wednesday, December 4, 2024. The Authority is scheduled to conduct

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interviews for an expiring Community Board position on the Board.

Mayor Sullivan attended the November 7, 2024 JBLM Elected Officials breakfast meeting. Congresswoman Marilyn Strickland was able to attend the meeting rather than participate via Zoom.

Mayor Sullivan reported that she has always cared about Tumwater and is proud to be part of the community. As an appointee to the Planning Commission in 2003, she served on the Commission for 10 years with seven of those years as the Chair. After deciding to become part of the legislative branch, she was elected to serve two terms as a Councilmember. When former Mayor Pete Kmet decided not to run for re-election she worked with him and received his endorsement to replace him as Mayor. She has taken the responsibility of being the first woman Mayor of Tumwater seriously and always wanted to set the best example of leadership. She has always strived to be an example of collaborative leadership and tried to keep the politics of being the Executive for the City at a minimum as much as possible. She grew up on a ranch in Montana and at a very young age was responsible for taking care of many animals. Her family raised horses and registered AKC dogs. She was responsible for training horses at the age of 12 including the years when her family had 35 horses used for guided tours. Her employment history includes small business owner, working for a large international company, a non-profit, a trade association, and state government. She believes her history bridges many different industries and she has worked hard during her 70 years on earth. Midway through her first year as Mayor, her husband was diagnosed with cancer and at the end of that year he passed away. The end of the month will be the second anniversary of his death and she has been blessed to have her career that helped her process the unexpected and major adjustment in her life. She had always planned to serve two terms as Mayor; however, after many discussions with her family who say she works too hard, it is time for her to retire and enjoy life more. Therefore, she is announcing that she will not be seeking a second term as Tumwater Mayor and will be serving her final year as Mayor completing many of the goals she set out to achieve. She values the amazing staff at the City of Tumwater and appreciates their dedication to the City every day.

**COUNCILMEMBER
REPORTS:**

Angela Jefferson:

At the earlier meeting of Experience Olympia and Beyond Board meeting, members received notification that the Executive Director plans to resign with her last day on December 31, 2024. The Board has initiated recruitment for the upcoming vacancy.

Councilmember Jefferson attended the Emerging Multicultural

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Leadership Experience (EMLE) conference in Tacoma. It was her first civilian leadership experience. The experience was pleasantly calming compared to military leadership conferences. Advice was shared on leadership, networking, workshops, and teamwork for making communities better.

At the last Tumwater HOPES meeting, members discussed ways to improve student-to-student communication. She reached out to staff at the Tumwater School District and discussed assigning younger Tumwater HOPES ambassadors to schools to help other students during times of stress or anxiety, as well as to share information on prevention and to promote the career pathways of future mental health professionals.

Joan Cathey:

There were no meetings and no report.

Eileen Swarthout:

Councilmember Swarthout thanked Mayor Sullivan for sharing and for her service.

There were no meetings and no report.

Kelly Von Holtz:

Councilmember Von Holtz conveyed appreciation to Mayor Sullivan for her service. She acknowledged Mayor Sullivan as the first woman Mayor of Tumwater and for her serving as her mentor.

Councilmember Von Holtz attended the third anniversary celebration of ASHHO Cultural Community Center. Numerous attendees were from Tacoma and other communities in the region.

Councilmember Von Holtz reported that she, Mayor Sullivan, and Councilmember Dahloff attended the Veterans Day event at the State Capitol. A youth choir was featured in the rotunda.

Peter Agabi:

Councilmember Agabi commented on Mayor Sullivan's announcement and wished her Godspeed. He thanked her for serving as the City's first female Mayor and for her service to Tumwater. Mayor Sullivan's tenor has been very positive and she has accomplished much.

Councilmember Agabi attended the Joint Animal Services Commission and received briefings on the increased cost in assessments to local jurisdictions. The proposed increase is 14.8% for services for all member jurisdictions (Olympia, Tumwater, and Lacey). The City's cost is estimated to be \$200,000. Recent statistical results of the shelter reflect an increase in surgeries. The shelter plans to post lost pet announcements through various venues.

At the Transportation Policy Board meeting, two Tumwater projects were submitted during the Call for Projects process. One project is a

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traffic feasibility study from Littlerock Road to Tumwater Boulevard, which may not be funded; however, the brewery project was funded up to 98% of the project cost.

Michael Althaus:

At the last meeting, members of the Regional Housing Council (RHC) discussed whether the body wants to engage in policy work in the future. The RHC has largely served as a funding entity with recommendations on projects to fund based on advice from advisory boards and community members and individuals with subject matter expertise. The recommendations are forwarded to the Thurston County Board of County Commissioners for approval. Members have discussed pursuing more work and reached consensus for staff to pursue an opportunity for the RHC to pursue more work in terms of recommendations on housing policy and other issues surrounding housing. The next step is receiving information from staff to schedule a half-day retreat to discuss potential possibilities in early spring 2025.

Councilmember Althaus thanked Mayor Sullivan for her service. One of their first conversations when he was a Planning Commissioner centered on his interest in serving the community on the City Council. One of the first questions she asked of him was whom he wanted to help. That question impressed him as it speaks to her character, drive, and accomplishments.

**EXECUTIVE
SESSION:**

Mayor Sullivan recessed the meeting at 9:03 p.m. to an executive session for approximately 20 minutes to discuss Collective Bargaining pursuant to RCW 42.30.140(4)(b) and Potential Litigation pursuant to RCW 42.30.110(1)(i). No action is anticipated following the executive session.

**RECONVENE &
ADJOURNMENT:**

Mayor Sullivan reconvened and adjourned the meeting at 9:23 p.m.