

# **TUMWATER PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE**

## **MINUTES OF VIRTUAL MEETING**

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**CONVENE:** 8:00 a.m.

**PRESENT:** Chair Eileen Swarthout and Councilmembers Michael Althausen and Charlie Schneider.

Staff: Transportation and Engineering Director Brandon Hicks, Water Resources and Sustainability Director Dan Smith, Transportation Manager Mary Heather Ames, Engineering Service Manager Bill Lindauer, Water Resources Educator Meridith Greer, and Administrative Assistant Cathy Nielsen.

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES: PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE, OCTOBER 21, 2021 & FEBRUARY 3, 2022:**

**MOTION:** Councilmember Schneider moved, seconded by Chair Swarthout, to approve the minutes of October 21, 2021, and February 3, 2022, as published. A voice vote approved the motion. Councilmember Althausen abstained.

### **DAY – RIGHT OF ENTRY AGREEMENT:**

Director Smith reported the request is to obtain access to Barnes Lake for the contractor to treat the lake using a boat. The new contract limits the timeframes for access. The property owned by Dana Day is the only property that enables access to the lake by boat. As part of the treatment, the consultant, Northwest Aquatic Ecosystems, will reevaluate the access area on the property with the possibility of some modifications required at the expense of the Barnes Lake Management District (LMD). Additionally, the LMD has agreed to compensate Ms. Day for disturbances on her property and for providing access by waiving the LMD assessment for the property.

Staff recently met with members of the LMD and discussed the potential increase in LMD assessments for the first time since the LMD was created. Some members of the community provided favorable feedback on the proposed increase. The committee will receive a proposal to increase the annual assessment and present the annual work plan for Barnes Lake and budget.

Staff requests the Public Works Committee recommend the City Council approve and authorize the Mayor to sign the Day Right of Entry Agreement with Dana Day to support LMD vegetation management efforts.

Councilmember Schneider inquired about the amount of Ms. Day's annual assessment. Director Smith said Ms. Day's property is assessed an annual fee of \$240 with a proposed increase of 5%. Access to the lake is for

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multiple times throughout the treatment season. The treatment window is only from March to the end of June.

Councilmember Althauser inquired about the status of lake levels and beaver activity on the lake. Director Smith advised that lake levels continue to remain steady despite the large rain event in January 2022. The lake is continually monitored to provide accurate readings. A recent rain event did not increase water levels. Beavers continue to live in the lake system with additional dam materials discovered; however, the material is not impacting water levels on a regular basis.

Chair Swarthout noted the draft agreement lacks the applicable dates. Director Smith said the agreement is for two years.

#### **MOTION:**

**Councilmember Althauser moved, seconded by Councilmember Schneider, to recommend the City Council approve and authorize the Mayor to sign the Day Right of Entry Agreement with Dana Day to support Barnes Lake Management District (LMD) vegetation management efforts.**

#### **LINWOOD AVENUE SIDEWALK GRANT AGREEMENT:**

Manager Ames reported the project is designed to improve safety and pedestrian connectivity on Linwood Avenue in the vicinity of Michael T. Simmons Elementary School. Project components include infilling sidewalk gaps, replacing non-ADA compliant curb ramps, constructing new ADA curb ramps where missing, adding curb extensions at strategic locations to reduce crossing distance and traffic speeds, re-striping shoulders, adding signage and bike symbols to provide designated bike lanes, and extending the pedestrian transportation network on Linwood Avenue. The project also includes the addition of a marked crossing in the vicinity of a transit stop. The Transportation Improvement Board (TIB) selected the project for award of funds. The total estimated cost of the project is \$825,000. The grant is for \$371,250.

Manager Ames displayed an illustration of the project site and described the locations of the different improvements. The City's acceptance of the grant enables staff to begin work on the project.

Staff requests the committee recommend the City Council move to authorize the Mayor to sign the Linwood Avenue Sidewalk Fuel Tax Grant Agreement.

Councilmember Schneider inquired about the timeline for constructing the project. Manager Ames advised that the grant agreement enables the City to move forward at any time; however, the capacity of staff will enable design completion this year with construction following in 2023 or 2024 dependent upon staffing resources.

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Manager Ames added that staff has been seeking grant funds for the project for some time.

Chair Swarthout said it appears the sidewalk component would extend from Linwood to Pioneer with some sidewalk existing as part of a new subdivision. Manager Ames said staff anticipates completing the sidewalk within the exiting right-of-way extending past Pioneer to connect with new sidewalk.

#### **MOTION:**

**Councilmember Schneider moved, seconded by Councilmember Althausser, to recommend the City Council authorize the Mayor to sign the Linwood Avenue Sidewalk Fuel Tax Grant Agreement.**

#### **REEP 2021 REPORT CARD:**

Educator Greer reported the City of Tumwater collaborates with the Cities of Lacey and Olympia as well as Thurston County to provide high quality educational opportunities focused on stormwater issues to local residents through the Regional Environmental Education Partnership (REEP). She reviewed accomplishments during 2021.

The REEP program includes two components of the Stream Team and the Stormwater Outreach Group. The Stream Team is the public component providing volunteer activities while the Stormwater Outreach Group focuses on technical specifications and hosting of free workshops and educational materials. With the onset of the pandemic, the program was reconfigured to work within the constraints of social distancing and masking for educational outreach. Subsequently, the program began offering educational webinars, online classes, and training opportunities, to extend and improve the program's social media presence and the ability to reach more people. The program sent monthly emails to subscribers with information on workshops and other community events, published articles in local news outlets, and created more at-home educational activities focused on school-aged children. As a result, more youths became engaged in the program.

In 2021, the program hosted 14 workshops drawing approximately 740 participants. This year, a new program, Nature Sleuths, was launched where participants engage at their own pace by visiting different parks and trails in Thurston County completing different activities focused on the natural environment. The completed information is submitted electronically. Over 130 participants completed one or more of the park missions. A number of individuals have been reached through educational posts on Facebook, Instagram, and local news outlets. Hard copies of newsletters continue to be distributed throughout the community. Copies of the newsletters were available at the Brewery Park at Tumwater Falls during the fall. Other efforts included coffee sleeve giveaways as a way to reach new audiences with four different coffee sleeves created with educational messages. The sleeves were provided to local coffee shops throughout the cities.

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During the last two years of the pandemic, much was learned about distance learning. In 2021, efforts were stepped up to reach more community members. Workshops were increased by 40% with a 145% increase in the number of people attending. Additionally, the program was able to increase its reach across social media platforms and identify community members who were interested in participating in programs.

The focus during 2022 is to increase ways to effectively reach out to the community by:

- Conducting REEP audience analysis
- Increasing multi-language outreach efforts
- Providing new outreach channels
- Exploring new partnerships
- Re-engaging community members at in-person events

Councilmember Schneider commented on his appreciation for Educator Greer's leadership with the Stream Team and her constant communication with him. He wished her well on her new endeavor as a consultant.

Chair Swarthout asked about plans to host more in-person events during the summer. Educator Greer replied that previous in-person events focused on small family groups with participants wearing masks. This fall, it is anticipated more restoration events can be hosted with many more people, such as stream maintenance and planting trees events. Chair Swarthout mentioned prior projects involving high school students spray painting asphalt near storm drains with messages warning citizens not to dump polluting materials. Educator Greer said the program continues through the promotion of placing buttons near storm drains. She has been discussing options with Parks and Recreation Department staff for sponsoring an art program during the 4<sup>th</sup> of July Parade for storm drains to draw attention to them.

Chair Swarthout thanked Educator Greer for all her efforts.

#### **SEWER OVERFLOW RESPONSE UPDATE:**

Director Smith updated members on the status of recent sanitary sewer overflows. The December 2021 sewer overflow incident off Somerset Hill Drive was caused by a plugged main from a construction plug used during construction that created a backup with sewer spilling onto the road and entering the stormwater system discharging directly to Percival Creek. Other significant discharges have occurred in May 2019, November 2020, and a recent sewer overflow event in February 2022. The May 2019 discharge was located downstream of the February 2022 spill in a system owned and maintained by the City of Olympia. The spill was due to some construction-related blockages.

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An overflow incident in November 2020 was in the vicinity as the February 2022 incident near Somerset Hill Drive and Percival Creek. The site is challenging because of the remoteness of the area. The site is located on a berm behind residential homes with no roadway access. Historically, staff has been notified by residential customers of a sewer spill they discover as they walk or bike throughout the area. At that particular site, no trail is located in the area. Spills are also discovered during regular, semiannual inspections. Recently inspections have increased to every few months because of the volume of sewer hole covers throughout the system.

The most significant discharge occurred in February 2022 near the same site as the November 2020 overflow because of cold weather and lack of traffic. Staff had recently inspected the lines in December. The event was caused by grease creating a blockage in the area of a shallow sewer manhole with limited storage capacity. The blockage caused sewer spillage into Percival Creek. After the City was notified, staff responded quickly and was able to clear the blockage and clear the lines within several hours; however, the notification did not occur for a number of days. Based on onsite conditions, staff was able to estimate the amount of discharge of 26,000 gallons occurring over multiple days.

Staff plans to obtain some remote monitoring technology. The prior estimate was approximately \$30,000 for the equipment. Staff completed additional research and was able to locate some equipment estimated to cost \$6,000, which includes the equipment and initial operating software. An ongoing expense is approximately \$500 annually. The system is a device that resembles a water level reader used at Barnes Lake. The device is placed in the sewer hole and as sewer begins to build up, an alarm is triggered enabling an immediate response by staff. Staff has initiated an order for the equipment. In the meantime, staff is visiting the site on a weekly basis to ensure normal operations. Additionally, staff is identifying other potential sites by reviewing the system's mapping and other sewer holes located in remote areas.

Director Smith noted that although sewer spills are an uncommon event, they have become more common lately partly because of aging infrastructure. One of the sewer overflows was at the Palermo lift station where the golf course restaurant and other facilities connect to the sanitary sewer system. A grease blockage created some pressure on a joint located at the golf course to the public sewer main creating a break in the sewer main in an old concrete pipe. The concrete pipe disintegrated as staff was attempting to clear and reconnect the pipe. The City has some aging infrastructure in many areas of the City. Current efforts include completing age and condition ratings over the next year and mapping of the system to identify potential trouble spots. New sewer crews will focus on system maintenance, operations, and identifying and replacing aging infrastructure.

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In response to the overflow incident in Percival Creek, staff is outreaching upstream residences. Approximately 56 residential units are located upstream and contribute to that particular sewer hole cover where the overflow occurred. Educational outreach efforts will be increased reminding community members not to pour fats, oils, and grease down drains. The City has experienced some greater impacts during the pandemic as many more people are cooking at home.

Prior to the committee's meeting in January 2022, the City experienced 27 sewer overflows since 2008. Generally, the overflows were minor and typically were caused by construction activities or a break in the line with most related to grease blockages. Staff worked with the LOTT Clean Water Alliance on educational outreach to restaurants to reduce grease discharges by restaurants. Currently, the City has experienced an increase in discharges with six discharges occurring since the committee's last meeting with the most significant occurring at Somerset Hill Drive with the grease blockage creating a 36,000 gallon discharge. Other areas of backups/dischARGE include a 4,500 gallon discharge into a catch basin near 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue and Desoto downstream of residential neighborhoods, a small break at the Shalimar apartments located off Capitol Boulevard caused by a grease blockage, and an overflow near the Starbucks located off Henderson Boulevard and Yelm Highway related to construction activities caused by a (private) pipe drilled through the sewer main. Staff is working to identify the owner of the pipe to address the issue. The last spill was caused by an unknown break releasing approximately 15 gallons of sewage off Cleveland Avenue into a catch basin discharging to surface waters.

Director Smith added that staff is working on acquiring the equipment for installation at the Somerset Hill Drive location as the area is remote and discharges are difficult to detect.

Councilmember Schneider asked about the mechanics of an overflow process. Director Smith explained that it typically entails an obstruction in the pipe causing an overflow to occur in the sewer line creating pressure and lifting the sewer manhole cover with sewer discharging to the ground. Councilmember Schneider asked whether the homes in the vicinity of the February incident were impacted. Director Smith advised that the overflow drained away from the residential area and discharged directly into Percival Creek. Councilmember Schneider asked whether a program of replacement for aging infrastructure has been developed versus monitoring and piecemeal repairs. Director Smith said the City continues to work on building capacity. Funding is available in the capital program for water main and sewer main replacements. The City also continues to build capacity internally to enable execution of a program. When opportunities arise, mains are evaluated for potential replacement or upgrades. Staff has not implemented a systematic program of identifying older areas of the system to replace pipes; however, funding has been allocated to pursue the program when staffing resources

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become available.

Chair Swarthout asked about the timing for installation of the monitoring equipment. Director Smith advised that the order has been placed. Staff is evaluating conditions at the location as the equipment is a remote telemetry monitoring device that must have access to the satellite. Staff is evaluating satellite connectivity during the winter season when leaf cover is minimal. Staff is optimistic conditions will be conducive for the equipment to operate. The equipment includes a 30-day trial period following installation to ensure the system is connected and operating properly. The equipment should be installed within the next several months.

**2021 PAVEMENT  
MAINTENANCE  
PROJECT –  
ACCEPTANCE OF  
WORK:**

Manager Lindauer reported the request is a recommendation to the City Council to approve acceptance of work for the 2021 Pavement Maintenance Project. He displayed a vicinity map of the project sites. The project components included pavement overlay over existing pavement, pavement repair of segments in poor condition, and crack sealing of pavement to increase the life of pavement. The project included many areas in the City. The project supports the City's mission and beliefs by strengthening the commitment to the City of Tumwater's strategic priorities and goals for 2021-2026 to create and maintain a transportation system safe for all modes of travel and ensure sustainable funding to maintain and improve streets and sidewalks.

The scope of the project was identified from the results of the roadway pavement ratings categorizing and prioritizing different roadways in the City to determine timing of improvements to ensure roadway maintenance is reduced over time. The areas were grouped to ensure the contractor was able to mobilize operations in a specific area of the City rather than mobilizing in multiple areas and increasing the cost of the project. The project included a mix of mainline heavily traveled roads and residential streets throughout the City.

Project accomplishments included the installation of 10,000 tons of asphalt for the overlay projects and asphalt grinding of 45,000 square yards of existing asphalt in those areas that required additional repair. The project along Old Highway 99 included grounding and installation of a geofabric to reduce reflective cracking from the concrete panels below the asphalt followed by an asphalt overlay. Additionally, another 3,000 square yards of pavement repair were completed in other locations in the City with the sections removed and rebuilt to address subgrade or base failure in the roadway. The project included completion of 10 new ADA curb ramps and 250 square yards of new sidewalk around the City. Over 100 utility covers were either adjusted to grade or replaced. Crack sealing was completed on 12 miles of roadway to help increase the longevity of pavement. Pavement markings were applied to the entire project.

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Project construction began on March 2021 and ended in October 2021. The project was funded through the Transportation Benefit District (TBD). The engineer's cost estimate was \$2.6 million. The contract amount was \$2,282,205.00 with the final contract totaling \$2,265,581.00, for a savings of approximately \$17,000.00.

Manager Lindauer shared several before and after photographs of project sites.

Chair Swarthout asked about the timing for the 2022 pavement project. Director Hicks advised that no pavement maintenance project is scheduled this summer because resources will be focused on the Capitol Boulevard/Trosper Road project. With the deferral of the pavement project, the City continues to accumulate funds in the TBD with a goal to complete the City's largest pavement maintenance project next year with an emphasis on residential streets and combined with the annual sidewalk program for a substantial project costing approximately \$3-\$4 million.

#### **MOTION:**

**Councilmember Schneider moved, seconded by Councilmember Althaus, to recommend the City Council accept the 2021 Pavement Maintenance project as complete and authorize the release of the performance bond as soon as the laws of the state of Washington allow.**

#### **ADJOURNMENT:**

**With there being no further business, Chair Swarthout adjourned the meeting at 8:57 a.m.**

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