

TUMWATER CITY COUNCIL 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, Community Development Director Michael Matlock, Communications Manager Ann Cook, and City Clerk Melody Valiant.

SWEARING-IN CEREMONY FOR 2022 ELECTED OFFICIALS BY WASHINGTON SUPREME COURT CHIEF JUSTICE GONZÁLEZ:

City Administrator Doan welcomed everyone to the Council's first hybrid meeting since the Council began virtual meetings 21 months ago. He acknowledged the virtual attendance of Councilmembers Joan Cathey, Leatta Dahlhoff, Angela Jefferson, and Eileen Swarthout. Councilmembers in attendance included Peter Agabi, Michael Althausen, and Charlie Schneider, and Mayor Debbie Sullivan.

City Administrator Doan acknowledged the support and efforts by staff to conduct the first hybrid meeting. Since the last in-person meeting, the quality of the sound system and other technology improvements were completed by staff.

City Administrator Doan outlined the hybrid meeting format and ways to participate or speak during the meeting. One of the benefits for the City of Tumwater has been the historic honor by Justices of the State Supreme Court to conduct the swearing in ceremony. He acknowledged Supreme Court Justice Mary Fairhurst for administering the oath of office for the City Council for many years. Judge Fairhurst passed away on December 28, 2021 and the City offers its condolences to her family, friends, and the Supreme Court.

This year, the City is honored to welcome Chief Justice Steven González to swear in the new Mayor, a new Councilmember, and several returning Councilmembers.

Chief Justice González administered the oath of office to Debbie Sullivan as the Mayor of the City of Tumwater.

Chief Justice González administered the oath of office virtually to Angela Jefferson for Council position #2 for the City of Tumwater.

Chief Justice González administered the oath of office virtually to Eileen Swarthout for Council position #4 for the City of Tumwater.

Chief Justice González administered the oath of office to Michael Althausen for Council position #5 for the City of Tumwater.

Chief Justice González administered the oath of office to Peter Agabi for

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Council position #6 for the City of Tumwater.

Justice González thanked the City and the Council for the opportunity to officiate the swearing in of the Council and Mayor. Mayor Sullivan conveyed appreciation to Justice González for his willingness to perform the ceremony.

**PUBLIC
COMMENT:**

Karen Meyer, The Athena Group, said she was available to answer any questions from the Council regarding the proposed consultant contract with The Athena Group.

Steven Zimmerman reported that during the recent storm event, the City's response in his neighborhood near Old Highway 99 and 93rd Avenue was practically nonexistent. The sections of road maintained by Thurston County were cleared, sanded, or salted while the sections maintained by the City were untouched. The intersection near Kilpert's Feed Store was so bad that motorists were sliding through the intersection at slow speeds even though the speed limit is 50 mph. He observed one motorist slide off the road. The conditions on 93rd Avenue were equally bad with no City snowplows for sanding or salting. The only sections cleared were sections Thurston County maintains. After many phone calls and emails he was able to reach a staff member in public works who informed him the City sold 19,000 tons of material to the City of Olympia and had no additional supplies to address his issues. In an email from Transportation Manager Ames, she indicated the City's snow and ice plan addresses streets with high volume traffic at higher speeds and main arterials. He understands the plan but those roads were cleared many days prior to any response to The Preserve or Bradbury subdivisions. The response plan needs to be updated. An email from City Administrator Doan confirmed the City sold storm product to the City of Olympia and that Tumwater's reserves were low because the City had used a significant amount of product during the snow event. Mr. Zimmerman said there was no subsequent clearing of Old Highway 99, 93rd Avenue, or the two neighborhood subdivisions. The developments were sheets of ice until it began raining. Any emergencies occurring in the subdivision would not have been served by an ambulance or a fire truck because of road conditions. Many children and adults in the community were left to fend for themselves because of the City's lack of response. In 2020, when a similar event occurred, no assistance was provided to his neighborhood. The City of Tumwater has had 16 years to develop a plan to serve the communities. The City has failed but continues to collect 16 years of property taxes, yet according to the City Administrator the City does not have the equipment or staff resources needed to service the community during a snow event. He cited the cost of equipment and the amount of property tax contributed by residents from The Preserve and suggested the City could increase storm response effectiveness by purchasing light duty and heavy duty trucks with snowplow prep packages averaging \$300 a vehicle. A small plow for the

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vehicles would cost \$7,000 to \$11,000. The City should be able to afford those simple ways to improve the flexibility of the fleet after receiving \$2.6 million in property tax from neighborhood residents. Another option is contracting with a vendor to fill the gaps. The Council has a responsibility to the residents of the community. There is also a responsibility when it comes to the stewardship of the public's funds and public officials in the City should be accountable for their actions or lack of actions.

Communications Manager Cook reported the Council will accept written comments from Walter Jorgensen due to technical difficulties.

Mayor Sullivan reported Pamela Hansen also submitted an email with comments.

CONSENT CALENDAR:

- a. Approval of Minutes: City Council, December 7, 2021
- b. Payment of Vouchers
- c. Pioneer Park Restoration Grant Agreement
- d. Andersen Water Right Agreement
- e. Resolution No. R2022-001; Ratifying and Reaffirming Emergency Actions in Response to the Declared Emergency Related to Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19)
- f. Regional Fire Authority Planning Consultant Contract with The Athena Group
- g. 2022 Lewis County Jail Interlocal Agreement Amendment

MOTION:

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

Mayor Sullivan reviewed the items approved on the consent calendar.

COUNCIL CONSIDERATIONS:

ELECTION OF MAYOR PRO TEM:

City Administrator Doan reported the Council selects the Mayor Pro Tem, a position serving as the alternate to the Mayor during times of absence or other situations. The Mayor Pro Tem represents the City and the Mayor at civic events and functions. The election process is not prescribed and is dependent upon a majority vote of the City Council. Councilmember Cathey previously served as Mayor Pro Tem.

NOMINATION:

Councilmember Cathey nominated Councilmember Althausser to serve as Mayor Pro Tem.

Councilmember Cathey cited Councilmember Althausser's strength, intelligence, and his compassion and caring, which all serve to bring people together.

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Councilmember Dahlhoff seconded the nomination.

No other nominations were offered.

Councilmember Althaus said he was humbled by Councilmember Cathey's nomination. He greatly values Councilmember Cathey's service, friendship, and mentorship she has offered him over his first term.

AFFIRMATION: By a vote of unanimous affirmation, the Council elected Councilmember Alternative to serve as Mayor Pro Tem.

**COMMITTEE
REPORTS:**

PUBLIC HEALTH & SAFETY: The next meeting is scheduled on Tuesday, January 11, 2022 at 8 a.m. The agenda includes the selection of the committee chair and an update on the Code Enforcement Program.
Leatta Dahlhoff

GENERAL GOVERNMENT: The committee did not meet in December. The next meeting is scheduled on January 12, 2022 at 3 p.m. to receive an update on the Long-Range Planning Work Program and the Tumwater Housing Action Plan. The committee is scheduled to select the committee chair.
Debbie Sullivan

PUBLIC WORKS: The next meeting is scheduled on Thursday, January 6, 2022. The agenda includes selection of the new chair for 2022 and consideration of the Tumwater Hill Park Trail Crosby Connector Authority to Solicit Bids and recommend awarding a bid.
Eileen Swarthout

BUDGET AND FINANCE: There was no meeting and no report.
Debbie Sullivan

MAYOR/CITY ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT: City Administrator Doan updated the Council on snow and ice response by the City. The City's Snow and Ice Plan is published on the City's website. The plan guides the City's response during a snow event. The first priority is lifeline and priority-one streets in addition to intersections, bridges, and hills with high traffic volume. Staff first clears lifeline streets used by emergency vehicles that typically are primary transportation routes in the City. Following the clearing of priority and lifeline roads, City crews clear primary roads followed by neighborhood streets. The City does not clear private streets or driveways. During a typical snow event, the City plows priority and primary streets followed by neighborhood streets. The challenge during the last snow event was snowfall over many days making it extremely difficult for the plows to keep pace clearing primary and lifeline streets as snow continued to accumulate. It was further compounded by the

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Christmas and New Year holidays. The City plowed streets in 12-hour shifts 24 hours a day for approximately 8.5 days or 724 hours of which 557 hours were overtime and 167 hours were regular hours. Road crews are assigned to the Transportation and Engineering Department as well as some staff from the Water Resources and Sustainability Department. Approximately 6,080 miles of streets were plowed or treated. The City currently has six snow and ice response vehicles comprised of three dump trucks equipped with plows and sanders, a utility truck with a plow, and two street service trucks available to apply brine to streets. The crews treated City streets with 70,000 pounds of salt, 120,000 pounds of sand, and 19,000 gallons of brine (salt and water solution). Brine is only effective if the temperature is above 25 degrees. The City provided brine to the City of Olympia early during the snow event. As the City began to run out of salt and sand, the Washington State Department of Transportation provided the City with salt and sand in the event snow occurs in the next several days. The City's response during a snow event is also communicated to the public via an online snowplow tracker on the City's website and a link to the Facebook page. Staff posted frequent information to advise the community of road conditions. The site received nearly 2,100 views. Following a severe weather event, the City completes an after analysis report on effective and ineffective actions. Over the next month, staff will examine whether the plan should be modified with recommendations to the Council for potential funding decisions.

Councilmember Althaus agreed to the importance of the City evaluating its response as he did not ever recall the region experiencing an extreme weather event with sustained snow, ice, and temperatures in the 20s over a period of time. The event inconvenienced everyone. With climate change, events will continue to disrupt the entire community. Any changes in the response plan should account for climate change.

Councilmember Schneider acknowledged the road conditions in The Preserve and along Old Highway 99 and 88th Avenue. It took approximately seven days for the City to clear those streets. His concern surrounds the lack of supply and how the City ensures sufficient product in the event of another snow storm. City Administrator Doan said the City plans to purchase more sand and salt and create more brine to ensure the City is prepared in the event of another snow event. The last event was very early in the season as snow events typically occur in late January or February.

Councilmember Schneider referred to Mr. Zimmerman's comments and questioned why the Bradbury subdivision never received a response by the City. City Administrator Doan described the City's priority of response. During a snow event, the optimum time to plow is before the snow has become compacted or has turned to ice. Once those conditions occur, it is much more difficult to clear streets.

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Councilmember Dahlhoff commented that she lives off 70th Avenue and continues to have iced-over roads. She asked about the possibility of enabling residents to share feedback on the website to track trouble spots in the City. City Administrator Doan advised that the option could be reviewed as part of the after-action review. Extra emphasis this year included staff monitoring social media comments to identify areas of concern.

City Administrator Doan reminded the Council to complete and submit the City's Economic Development Survey.

The Council received an email on a funding request from TOGETHER! for additional rental assistance funds. In response to a request from the Council, staff will contact TOGETHER to obtain information on the organization's history of funds previously awarded to the organization by the City.

Governor Inslee has declared June 19 as "Juneteenth", a state holiday. A draft ordinance for the Council's consideration will be scheduled for the Council's consideration to codify observance of the holiday by the City.

City Administrator Doan referred to an outline of the proposed Council retreat spanning approximately 1.5 days. The proposal includes Nancy Campbell serving as the retreat facilitator and preparing the retreat agenda based on interviews with the Council and Mayor. Given the new make-up of the Council, rules, norms, and procedures would be included for review. The retreat would be held at the ASHHO Cultural Community Center in Tumwater sometime during late January or early February.

Councilmember Cathey recommended focusing the retreat on reviewing financial accomplishments, achievement of goals, and establishing new goals for the future rather than reviewing rules, norms, and procedures. City Administrator Doan responded that the purpose of the interviews by Ms. Campbell is to receive feedback from each member on the development of the retreat agenda.

City Administrator Doan addressed additional questions on the costs associated with the facilitator and the purpose of reviewing Council rules. Several Councilmembers offered feedback and supported a retreat with a facilitator to afford an opportunity for the Council to revisit rules, norms, operating procedures, accomplishments, review strategic priorities and goals, establish future goals, and review the status of timelines for new initiatives adopted by the Council. Staff will schedule the interviews with each Councilmember.

City Administrator Doan thanked all City employees for their efforts in

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response to the snow event who have worked to plow, sand, and apply brining on roadways for over a week, as well as fire and police personnel for whom response becomes more difficult. He thanked Facilities and Parks employees for ensuring City Hall had heat and other employees who provided City services during the snow event.

City Administrator Doan welcomed Mayor Sullivan and Councilmembers.

Mayor Sullivan thanked City staff for their work and assistance. She extended her gratitude and appreciation to former Mayor Kmet for his assistance in making the transition as easy as possible. She looks forward to his counsel in the future. She thanked her family for their support.

COUNCILMEMBER REPORTS:

Leatta Dahlhoff:

At the last Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion meeting, referrals from Nisqually were reviewed. The group is also pursuing connections with the Chehalis Tribe and received referrals from the Department of Corrections, City of Yelm, and Thurston County Jail. The group is also working on referrals from Mason County. The grant-funded program is growing capacity and has nearly doubled the number of referrals since July 2021.

Thurston County 911 Communications is meeting on Wednesday, January 5, 2022. Executive Director Keith Flewelling's last day is Wednesday, January 5, 2022. His replacement is Wendy Hill, who currently serves as Deputy Director.

The LOTT Clean Water Alliance Board meeting was canceled in January. The Regional Fire Authority Planning Committee is scheduled to meet on January 24, 2022.

Eileen Swarthout:

There were no meetings and no report.

Joan Cathey:

The next meeting of the Solid Waste Advisory Committee is on Wednesday, January 6, 2022 followed by the Regional Housing Council funding subcommittee on Monday, January 10, 2022.

Angela Jefferson:

There were no meetings and no reports.

Charlie Schneider:

At the last Tumwater Chamber of Commerce monthly forum, participants toured the South Puget Sound Community College/Heritage Distilling Company complex off Capitol Boulevard. Councilmember Schneider attended the Tumwater Chamber of Commerce monthly Board meeting. The chamber is hosting two golf tournaments in February at the

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Airport Golf Course and one in June at Tumwater Valley Golf Course.

Councilmember Schneider assisted in the distribution of Christmas stockings, clothes, and Christmas gifts at a second annual event held at the YWCA in Olympia. He thanked Tumwater firefighters and Santa Claus for visiting The Preserve. Residents donated canned goods to the Thurston County Foodbank.

Peter Agabi:

Councilmember Agabi said it was his honor to attend his first Council meeting and he is ready to serve the community. He thanked Councilmembers who supported and assisted him during his campaign. He congratulated Mayor Sullivan for her election as Mayor.

Michael Althaus:

The Joint Animal Services Commission meeting on December 20, 2021 included the adoption of the annual budget. For many years, residents living in unincorporated Thurston County or the City's urban growth area lacked services for animals due to the great recession and the county's withdrawal of its annual assessment for services from the Joint Animal Services. The 2022 budget includes Thurston County's assessment to ensure service is provided to county residents. The City's assessment increased by approximately \$10,000 during 2022. Councilmember Agabi is assigned as the City's representative on the Joint Animal Services Commission during 2022.

The next meeting of the Regional Housing Council is on Wednesday, January 19, 2022.

OTHER BUSINESS: City Administrator Doan advised that in the near term, City Council regular meetings and worksessions will continue as virtual meetings.

ADJOURNMENT: **With there being no further business, Mayor Sullivan adjourned the meeting at 8:09 p.m.**

Prepared by Valerie L. Gow, Recording Secretary/President
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