

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

PRESENT: Mayor Debbie Sullivan and Councilmembers, Michael Althaus, Joan Cathey, Leatta Dahlhoff, Angela Jefferson, Eileen Swarthout, and Kelly Von Holtz.

Excused: Councilmember Peter Agabi.

Staff: City Administrator Lisa Parks, City Attorney Karen Kirkpatrick, Finance Department Director Troy Niemeyer, Acting Police Chief Jay Mason, Fire Chief Hurley Brian Hurley, IT Department Director Lance Inman, Community Development Department Director Michael Matlock, Water Resources & Sustainability Department Director Dan Smith, Parks and Recreation Director Chuck Denney, and Deputy City Clerk Tracie Core.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: Mayor Sullivan recessed the meeting at 7:01 p.m. for approximately ten minutes to discuss pending litigation pursuant to RCW 42.30.110(1)(i). Further action following the executive session is expected.

RECONVENE: Mayor Sullivan reconvened the meeting at 7:12 p.m.

PUBLIC COMMENT: Susie Williams, owner of Elevate Pacific Northwest Real Estate, Lakewood, Washington, said she is representing Cindy Martin, owner of a property located off Capitol Boulevard in Tumwater. A tenant on the property applied to the City to update the address of his business and was denied a business license. The business is a retail business and is allowed within the property's zone district. She requested an explanation as to why the request was denied.

Mayor Sullivan advised that she would follow up with Ms. Williams.

Cindy Martin said she operated a business from the same property. She has had several other tenants in the building ranging from a motorcycle repair shop, dog groomer, locksmith, and an auto detail business. She would like to see more locally owned businesses in the community. The current tenant has expressed interest in purchasing the building but she is not ready to sell the property at this time.

Brea Funk supported the comments by the previous speakers. She is an attorney and is assisting with the issue. She offered to assist in facilitating the process and will follow up with Ms. Williams on the process to schedule a meeting.

CONSENT CALENDAR:

- a. Approval of Minutes: City Council, February 4, 2025
- b. Payment of Vouchers
- c. Service Provider Agreement with ICF Jones & Stokes, LLC for Bush

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- Prairie Habitat Conservation Plan Phase 4
- d. First Amendment to Service Provider Agreement with the Housing Authority of Thurston County for Tumwater Inn – Affordable Senior Housing
 - e. Interlocal Agreement with Thurston County for Basic Life Support Funding
 - f. Settlement Agreement

MOTION: **Councilmember Dahlhoff 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.

**COUNCIL
CONSIDERATIONS:**

**RESOLUTION NO.
R2025-003
APPOINTING A
COMMITTEE IN
SUPPORT OF
PROPOSITION NO.
1:**

Director Hicks reported that because the City received no letters of interest for participation on the committee opposing Proposition No. 1, the request is confined to Resolution No. R2025-003 Appointing a Committee in Support of Proposition No. 1 for extending the Tumwater Transportation Benefit District (TBD). The City received communications from former Mayor Pete Kmet and Nancy Stevenson to serve on the committee in support of Proposition No. 1. The City is required to submit the resolution to Thurston County by Friday, February 18, 2025 to meet the April election deadline.

Councilmember Jefferson requested additional information on the necessary steps moving forward. City Attorney Kirkpatrick described the steps the City must complete to ensure Proposition No. 1 is placed on the April ballot. As the City did not establish a committee in opposition because of the lack of volunteers, Thurston County has the authority to solicit volunteers to serve on an opposition committee. Additionally, if a member of the community submitted their name after the City's deadline for membership on the committee supporting the measure, the individual would have the opportunity to work closely with the committee to support the measure.

Councilmember Althauser inquired about potential action for the City to either oppose or support the proposition. Director Hicks advised that the Council is scheduled to consider a resolution either supporting or opposing the proposition on March 18, 2025.

MOTION: **Councilmember Swarthout moved, seconded by Councilmember Jefferson, to adopt Resolution No. R2025-003, appointing a committee to prepare arguments in support of Proposition 1, seeking renewal of two-tenths of one percent (0.2%) sales and use tax to be collected for ten years to fund TBD transportation improvements, to be included in the Thurston County Local Voters' Pamphlet.**

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Councilmember Althaus spoke in support of the two individuals offering to serve on the committee supporting the proposition.

MOTION:

A voice vote approved the motion unanimously.

**ORDINANCE NO.
O2025-007,
AMENDING THE
2025 SALARY
SCHEDULE:**

City Administrator Parks reported that in early 2024, City department directors engaged in workforce planning to identify needed City resources for personnel to provide mandated services by state statute and many services desired by the community. At that time, the City's IT staff positions were included within the Finance Department. As part of the workforce planning process, two organizational charts were developed as alternatives. The first chart reflects IT positions remaining in the Finance Department and a second chart reflects IT positions as a new stand-alone IT Department. During the budgeting process, the IT positions retained position descriptions, and salary grades as assigned to the Finance Department because no decision had been rendered to establish the IT Department at that time.

A separate ordinance approved by the Council established the IT Department on November 19, 2024. Since then, the IT Department under the leadership of Director Inman has been working on recruitment and hiring for two new positions within the department in support of the implementation of the ERP System and the police body-worn camera project. To facilitate and improve the process, Director Inman requested some minor changes to the position titles and an adjustment of some salary bands. The request does not require a budget amendment.

As the Council is responsible for establishing positions and salary ranges during the budget process, the request is limited to only amending the salary schedule.

Director Inman summarized the department's constraints identified during the workforce planning process. They included the future of the City in terms of needs for projects and service management and consideration of allocating staff resources from day-to-day activities for short- and long-term projects, as well as considering business continuity during leave and vacancy of positions to provide services on a 24/7 basis.

As part of the position descriptions, the goal was to ensure the position titles reflected the work assignments within the organization that match with industry standards, as well as ensuring sufficient support for critical projects (ERP and body-worn cameras, etc.).

Director Inman displayed graphics of the department under the Finance Department and as a standalone department. The standalone department does not include a position for the ERP Implementation Manager because the positions existed in the Finance Department. However, the position will

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transfer to the new department as the IT Project Manager. Other staff will be responsible for day-to-day operations and customer service while other staff will have more time to manage critical projects. Additionally, the process defined teams within the IT Department to help ensure 24/7 coverage and that the appropriate skill sets are available to address all City needs.

Councilmember Jefferson asked about the number of personnel within the department at this time. Director Inman advised of six positions with one vacant position due to a recent retirement. The two new positions are a Systems Administrator II (Body Worn Camera Program) and Business Applications Analyst II (ERP System).

MOTION: Councilmember Dahlhoff moved, seconded by Councilmember Von Holtz, to adopt Approve Ordinance No. O2025-007 amending the 2025 Salary Schedule in support of the creation of the Information Technology Department. A voice vote approved the motion unanimously.

**COMMITTEE
REPORTS:**

PUBLIC HEALTH & SAFETY:
Peter Agabi The meeting on Tuesday, February 11, 2025 included briefings and consideration of an interlocal agreement with Thurston County for Basic Life Support Funding and the Police Body Camera and In-car Camera Implementation Plan.

GENERAL GOVERNMENT:
Michael Althausser The special meeting earlier in the day included a discussion on the Bush Prairie Habitat Conservation Plan and a service provider agreement for Phase 4, an amendment to the service provider agreement for the Housing Authority for Thurston County for a senior housing project, suspension of the annual Comprehensive Plan amendment process, and an update on the greenhouse gas emissions reduction and goals and strategies within the Climate Element of the Comprehensive Plan.

PUBLIC WORKS:
Eileen Swarhout Members received a briefing on the Water System Cost of Service Report and an update on the City's Utility Assistance Programs during its February 6, 2025 meeting. The next meeting is scheduled on Thursday, February 20, 2025.

BUDGET AND FINANCE:
Debbie Sullivan The committee's next meeting is on February 28, 2025. The agenda includes a review of the monthly budget report.

MAYOR/CITY ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT: City Administrator Parks reported on the status of the road project at the Tyee Drive and Kingswood intersection near Home Depot as part of a development project.

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The Tumwater Youth Showcase performing “Jazz Night” was held at the Washington Center for the Performing Arts on Wednesday, February 12, 2025. A second show is scheduled on Tuesday, February 25, 2025 from 6:30 p.m. to 8 p.m. for Orchestra Night. Approximately 150 students are expected to perform. The program is a collaboration of the Tumwater School District and City of Tumwater’s Arts Program. Twin Star Credit Union supported the programs.

The next meeting is a joint work session with the Planning Commission in the format of a City tour focusing on transportation issues. The Council will receive a presentation from the consultant assisting the City in updating the Transportation Plan within the Comprehensive Plan.

Mayor Sullivan participated in a panel presentation for the Association of Washington Cities (AWC) on mobile home park solutions and issues many parks are experiencing.

On February 7, 2025, Mayor Sullivan attended the Joint Base Lewis-McChord Quarters 1 Open House (Commanding General’s home).

On February 12, 2025, Mayor Sullivan participated in the Chamber Forum featuring a presentation on youth workforce and challenges businesses and government are facing because of the generational differences in terms of job duties. She also announced the opening of the Tumwater Youth Showcase later in the evening at the Washington Center for the Performing Arts.

On February 15, 2025, Mayor Sullivan visited the Black History Museum under creation in Lacey at the New Life Baptist Church. The last opportunity to view the museum is Saturday, February 22, 2025 from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m.

Future meetings include attendance include the February 19-20, 2025 AWC City Actions Days and the Thurston Economic Development Council (EDC) Board meeting on February 26, 2025.

**COUNCILMEMBER
REPORTS:**

Joan Cathey:

Councilmember Cathey attended the last meeting of the Solid Waste Advisory Committee meeting, participated in the election of officers, and received a presentation from a legislator on the status of legislative actions surrounding the disposal of waste. The Olympic Region Clean Air Agency meeting included discussion on the quality of air. The organization represents five counties. Thurston County was recognized for the removal of a substantial number of wood stoves through conversion of homes and businesses.

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Eileen Swarthout:

At the last meeting of the Thurston Climate Mitigation Collaborative Executive Committee, members approved the Home Energy Score Model Ordinance. The ordinance will be considered by each local jurisdiction to pass a similar ordinance. The Home Energy Score applies to sales of homes requiring a rating that ranks the energy efficiency of the home.

At the last Thurston Regional Planning Council meeting, Councilmember Swarthout was elected as Secretary of the Council. Members received a presentation from a member of the Washington State Transportation Commission on Washington State's efforts to enact a Road Usage Charge (RUC). Members discussed its upcoming retreat and formed a retreat subcommittee.

Michael Althausen:

Councilmember Althausen advised of providing an update at the next meeting on the outcome of the upcoming Regional Housing Council meeting.

Leatta Dahlhoff:

Councilmember Dahlhoff reported the first Thurston County Opioid Abatement Council meeting will be held on Wednesday, March 5, 2025. She and City Administrator Parks plan to attend representing the City of Tumwater.

At the meeting of the Thurston County TCOMM 911 Administration Board, members completed an evaluation of the Executive Director and discussed moving forward in 2025 on stories data reveal such as the type of 911 calls, how the calls are coded, and how information can be shared to contribute to better policies.

The Thurston County Opioid Task Force met and discussed goals and strategies.

Councilmember Dahlhoff attended the Family Education Support Services (FESS) Seeds of Hope event. FESS is discussing a pilot program for a senior rental assistance program. FESS currently provides rental assistance for other demographics.

At the LOTT Clean Water Alliance Board meeting, Thurston County Commissioner Menser was elected as the President and Councilmember Dahlhoff was elected as the Vice President of the Board.

Angela Jefferson:

At the last meeting of Tumwater HOPES, members discussed organizing a QPR Institute suicide prevention program. QPR stands for Question, Persuade, and Refer, a suicide prevention program designed to teach individuals how to recognize the warning signs of a person in crisis and how to respond effectively. The program is designed to reduce the stigma around mental health issues and empower people to take action when they suspect someone may be struggling. The training is scheduled on April 10, 2025.

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The Council is invited to attend. Training sessions can be scheduled with a minimum attendance of five individuals required. Training is provided by ESD 113 professionals. Members discussed the coalition assessment tool. Some strengths of the organization are regular meetings with effective communications. In April, members plans to discuss marketing strategy to ensure maximum participation.

The Board of Directors for Olympia and Beyond discussed the status of the search for the Executive Director position. The goal is to hire by July 1, 2025. The Community Sports Awards event is scheduled on June 4, 2025 at South Puget Sound Community College. On September 4, 2025, the annual meeting will be held at Indian Summer Golf Course. On May 4, 2025, a shellfish lover's party is scheduled at the Port Plaza in downtown Olympia hosted by numerous local restaurants and sponsored by Taylor's Shellfish Farm.

Kelly Von Holtz: Meetings attended include the Public Health & Safety Committee, Intercity Transit Authority, Seeds of Hope event sponsored by FESS, and the Boys and Girls Club Youth of the Year event.

ADJOURNMENT: **With there being no further business, Mayor Sullivan adjourned the meeting at 7:56 p.m.**

Prepared by Valerie L. Gow, Recording Secretary/President
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