

**TUMWATER CITY COUNCIL WORKSESSION**  
**MINUTES OF VIRTUAL MEETING**  
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**CONVENE:** 5:30 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, Finance Director Troy Niemeyer, Parks and Recreation Director Chuck Denney, Economic Development Program Manager Austin Ramirez, and City Clerk Melody Valiant.

**BUDGET WORKSHOP #3:** City Administrator Doan reported the workshop will cover proposed changes and updates to the 2023-2024 Tumwater Biennium Budget.

The general fund comprises approximately one-third of the total budget and is funded primarily by taxes, contracts, and fees. Separate funds or proprietary funds are not included in the general fund. The proposed budget represents some updated figures since the Council's last review reflecting a reduction in some expenses. As property valuation increases in the City, the tax rate decreases. The recent increase in valuation reduced the City's property tax rate by \$.50 per \$1,000 of assessed valuation resulting in accelerating the decline in the tax rate significantly.

Three requested language changes include exploring a youth advisory committee. Currently, the City has an assigned youth council that supports the Parks and Recreation Department. The addition of a youth advisory committee evolved from discussions to form a youth council as a way to explore broader public policy issues. It may be possible to expand the existing youth council or create new one. No funds have been allocated at this time.

The second request is whether to provide compensation to members of advisory boards and commissions. The City of Olympia compensates boards and commission members with a small stipend as a way to expand the pool of participants.

The final change pertains to assessment of expanded aquatic access that could be specific only to the City or through a partnership with an organization or another city. During the discussions on the new community center, community feedback supported inclusion of a swimming pool. However, the City elected to consider purchasing land of sufficient size to accommodate a future swimming pool.

City Administrator Doan reported the requests are a recommendation to study over the next two years.

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City Administrator Doan said another request is specific to the Fire Department. The budget includes a proposal to move to a four-battalion chief model created with an existing firefighter position, two additional firefighters, and one firefighter/paramedic that would be funded by Medic One.

Another request was prompted by discussions and requests to increase the hours of the volunteer coordinator position, which has been a halftime position. During the pandemic, the position was moved from administration to parks and recreation. Parks and recreation staff assumed volunteer coordinator duties by overseeing volunteer events, maintaining park cleanup and street cleanup programs, as well as participating in other City-sponsored events. The budget proposal retains the position as a halftime position. Staff recommends not increasing the hours of the position at this time as the halftime position would provide sufficient capacity. Increasing hours of the position equates to approximately \$25,000 for each quarter of a FTE. At this time, the volunteer coordinator position does not exist as the duties have been assumed by Recreation Manager Todd Anderson with support from other staff members.

Councilmember Cathey conveyed support for increasing hours of the volunteer coordinator position by one-quarter because of the importance of supporting City programs, as well as encouraging community members to volunteer in support of the community.

Councilmember Schneider said he also supports increasing the position to a .75 FTE.

Mayor Sullivan recommended establishing a .5 FTE position initially and increasing the hours if necessary.

Discussion ensued on the flexibility to increase the hours if a need is identified. A majority of the Council spoke in support of establishing the volunteer coordinator as a .75 FTE because the need currently exists to support community gardens, Stream Team events, lending library program, food pantries, neighborhood parties, and community engagement, etc.

City Administrator Doan reported on the request to add a Parks and Recreation Department Assistant, which was included in the budget prior to the pandemic but later removed. Demands are increasing to support adding the position as more programs and events are expanded, as the Arts Program is launched, and with the addition of the .75 FTE Volunteer Coordinator. The proposal funds the position from the Metropolitan Park District of 60% with 40% from recreation programs. The City will likely

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become eligible for federal funding of the lunch program at the Old Town Center creating another source of revenue, as the City currently subsidizes the lunch program. Federal funding of the lunch program would help offset the additional costs in the recreation program. The net increase would be approximately \$185,000 during the biennium with 40% covered by offsetting the lunch program with federal funding and 60% from the Metropolitan Park District (MPD).

Director Denney described the duties of the position that serves as the department's front desk position interacting with the public and supporting online registrations, handling phone inquiries, and supporting historical and recreation programs and activities.

City Administrator Doan reviewed the request for an additional \$62,000 for lease space for Engineering or Water Resources.

City Administrator Doan reported the budget included \$90,000 to replace police tasters during the next biennium; however, the price is scheduled to increase and it is possible to place the order within the current biennium saving approximately \$5,000 to \$10,000. The request is to move the funds from the proposed 2023-2024 budget to the current biennium budget reducing the ending fund balance by \$90,000 while reducing expenses in the next biennium budget.

Another budget request is to restore professional services funding of \$250,000 within the Stormwater Utility to provide consultant services for culvert replacements and other stormwater utility projects.

The last request is a request to replace the pump at the golf course responsible for pumping and transferring reclaimed water from the storage system to the golf irrigation system. Currently, the system operates with an inefficient single-speed pump. The proposal replaces the pump with a variable speed pump to extend the life of the irrigation system and reduce electricity consumption saving approximately 25% to 30% of the operating cost. The purchase of the pump at \$40,000 and would be funded from the Facility Reserve Fund.

In response to a question about the status of frontage improvements along Isabella Bush Park, Director Denney described staffing capacity issues contributing to the delay in the project and other major City projects. He is scheduled to meet with Director Hicks to discuss the scope and timing of the \$215,000 project for completion in 2023, as well as meeting with the Tumwater School District to submit a joint grant application to the State Recreation Conversation Office for a \$200,000 grant to add to the park

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development budget and to expand ADA improvements. The project was included in the Capital Facilities Plan (CFP) prior to the pandemic. The cost of the project has increased because of construction cost increases and inflation.

City Administrator Doan reported public hearings are scheduled on the property tax levy and the City's budget. One final workshop is tentatively scheduled. The salary schedule will be presented, which is adopted in conjunction with the budget. The Council is scheduled to adopt the budget on December 6, 2022.

**MINUTES:**

City Administrator Doan briefed the Council on a proposed change in how minutes for meetings are completed to take advantage of technology and the different work environment caused by the pandemic prompting the City to move to teleworking and virtual meetings.

City Clerk Valiant provided background on the minutes service provided by Puget Sound Meeting Services for the last 25 years. Today with increased accessibility to meetings, staff explored options for streamlining minutes and producing action minutes. The proposal is to move to action minutes for all City meetings (Council, boards, and commissions) with a link to the audio file of the meeting. She shared information on a small city in California that utilizes the same agenda management program used by the City. She demonstrated the program that enables the user to click on the meeting agenda to access portions of the meeting. Transitioning the process of preparing minutes is possible as the pandemic required staff to assume hosting duties for zoom meetings. Staff responsible for hosting a meeting would produce action minutes for the specific meeting body.

The Council supported moving forward with the proposal.

**CAPITOL LAKE –  
DESCHUTES  
ESTUARY  
MEMORANDUM OF  
UNDERSTANDING  
FOR GOVERNANCE  
AND FUNDING OF  
A RESTORED  
ESTUARY:**

City Administrator Doan reported in 2018, following many efforts to determine the future of Capitol Lake, another effort was initiated through the leadership of the Department of Enterprise Services (DES) and local jurisdictions, Thurston County, Squaxin Island Tribe, Port of Olympia, and the LOTT Clean Water Alliance. The parties pursued completion of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for future management options funded by the state with some local funding. The original legislative proviso included provisions that the state would consider contributing state funding as long as financial support was provided by affected agencies and jurisdictions for a long-term management option. A Funding and Governance Work Group was formed to propose a funding and governance structure.

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The proposal is a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), an agreement with two state agencies (DES and the Department of Natural Resources), LOTT Clean Water Alliance, Thurston County, cities of City of Olympia and Tumwater, Squaxin Island Tribe, and Port of Olympia specifying that the state would fund the capital cost and other signatories to the MOU would be responsible for ongoing maintenance of restoring the estuary. The City's contribution is \$2,865,000 in today's dollars with escalation occurring over time. The initial draft formula directs the Stormwater Utility Fund to fund the amount through an increase in stormwater utility rates ranging between zero to .5% projected to year 2050. The MOU is the City's commitment to enable DES to demonstrate to the Legislature local support and participation in a funding strategy and leveraging funding from the Legislative for the first phase of the project for design, engineering, and permitting over the span of three to five years.

The Council supported moving the MOU forward as a Council consideration item.

**LEGISLATIVE  
AGENDA:**

City Administrator Doan reviewed the annual process for development of the legislative agenda. The City's Legislative Agenda advances a list of funding and/or policy requests to the Legislature.

City Administrator Doan reviewed the City of Tumwater's proposed 2023 Legislative Agenda:

- Capital and Transportation Proposals
  - E Street Extension Engineering and Permitting - \$6,600,000
  - WSDOT Regional Office Redevelopment - \$2,800,000
  - Tumwater Boulevard/I-5 Interchanges - \$5,000,000
  - Gopher Mitigation/Economic Development Funding - \$4,000,000 (\$2.5 million in funding for Tumwater and \$1.5 million for Yelm to initiate the mitigation bank)
- Shared Legislative Agenda – a list of regional proposals by participating agencies:
  - I-5 Improvements - \$1.5 million for planning of shoulder running option along I-5
  - Homeless Response Funding – operational funding for facilities developed to house the homeless
  - Maker Space Expansion - \$1 million to expand the Lacey Makers Space as part of a four-pronged innovation approach that includes the craft brewing and distilling center, the art center in Olympia, and the Ag Center in Tenino
  - Climate Change Response – funds for specific

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improvements in local communities to advance climate change initiatives

Councilmember Althausen suggested considering the addition of funding for the Capitol Lake/Deschutes River management option.

Councilmember Schneider recommended including installation of EV charging stations within the funding request for Climate Change Response.

- Policy & Statewide Issues
  - Increasing and aligning 1% Property Tax Cap with an inflation index
  - Eliminating the requirement to renew the 10-year term of a Transportation Benefit District
- Association of Washington Cities (AWC) is advancing five priorities:
  - Respond to Blake decision with funding and investment in alternatives to prosecution
  - Address vehicle pursuits for public safety by clarifying the ability of law enforcement to conduct vehicle pursuits using reasonable suspicion standard in specific circumstances
  - Ensure basic infrastructure funding by fully funding the Public Works Assistance Account
  - Increase housing availability and affordability with additional tools, incentives, and revenues
  - Provide behavioral health resources with great access to services at the community level including substance use disorder treatment, dual diagnosis treatment facilities, and co-responder programs to aid law enforcement.

City Administrator Doan reported the proposal will be presented to the Council for adoption. Staff utilizes the information to develop communication materials supporting different proposals.

Councilmember Althausen asked whether the City has contracted with a company to assist in distributing the information. City Administrator Doan responded that the City issued a Request for Proposal for assistance in distributing information. Unfortunately, the City received no responses.

Manager Ramirez added that staff also contacted some vendors based on recommendations from partners. The vendors were experiencing capacity issues and did not respond.

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

Councilmember Dahlhoff announced YMCA's *Breakfast for Belonging* on November 2, 2022 at the South Puget Sound Community College (Lacey Campus) from 7:00 a.m. to 8:30 a.m. Two chairs at Tumwater's table are vacant and need to be filled otherwise the YMCA will sell the two spots.

City Administrator Doan reported the October 25, 2022 Council worksession is a joint worksession with the City of Olympia Council at 5 p.m. The City of Olympia is providing dinner. The meeting will be held in the Olympia Council Chambers. The agenda includes the Regional Fire Authority (RFA) Planning Committee's recent recommendation to move the Draft RFA Plan forward.

**ADJOURNMENT:**      **With there being no further business, Mayor Sullivan adjourned the meeting at 7:09 p.m.**

Prepared by Valerie L. Gow, Recording Secretary/President  
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