

Oak Harbor City Council
Workshop Meeting Minutes
March 22, 2023

This was both a physical meeting location and a virtual meeting The meeting was viewable via YouTube www.youtube.com/cityofoakharbor and Facebook or could be viewed on Channel 10/HD 1090 following the meeting. Public Comments are not normally taken or included for Council Workshops, although the Council may allow or request participation.

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Pro Tempore Hizon called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL

City Council Present:

Mayor Robert Severns - absent
Mayor Pro Tem Tara Hizon
Councilmember Beth Munns
Councilmember Jim Woessner - absent
Councilmember Bryan Stucky
Councilmember Dan Evans
Councilmember Shane Hoffmire
Councilmember Eric Marshall

Staff Present: Videoconference

City Administrator Blaine Oborn
Finance Director David Goldman
Public Works Director Steve Schuller
Parks and Recreation Director Brian Smith
Police Chief Kevin Dresker
Fire Chief Ray Merrill
Principal Planner Cac Kamak
Central Services Supervisor Sandra Place
Senior Services Administrator Liz Lange
Communications & IT Manager Sabrina Combs
City Administrator Executive Assistant Macalle Finkle
City Clerk Julie Nester

Also in attendance: City Attorney
Hillary Evans of Kenyon Disend, PLLC

MAYOR

Mayor Pro Tempore Hizon called the workshop to order and welcomed those in attendance. She noted she was presiding on behalf of Mayor Severns.

DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

- a. Active Transportation Plan - Update

Principal Planner Kamak provided an update to the Active Transportation Plan (ATP), the work that has been done so far and what to expect in the coming months. The ATP is a subset of the City's existing Transportation Plan. The Transportation Plan was updated in 2016. As part of that update, steps were taken to have a more in-depth look at walkability, bike-ability, and so on, as elements of the Comprehensive Plan.

In November 2022, the City hired consultant group Toole Design, to help with creating its first Active Transportation Plan. The Plan will identify strategies to improve conditions for walking, biking, and rolling throughout the City. It will identify and prioritize projects that will improve safety, access and connectivity of pedestrian and bicycle networks; develop a strategy for funding, implementation, and maintenance; and improve coordination across City departments to advance equitable and sustainable travel options. WSDOT approved the contract in December of 2022, with the first project meeting in January 2023. Planner Kamak also reviewed Island County Regional Transportation grant funding.

Planner Kamak reviewed the process for the update. The City has formed a team of employees that meet with the consultants every two weeks to advance the project. He noted tremendous progress has been made with the existing conditions analysis and work in ongoing preparation for project launch and public input. He reviewed the community engagement plan, which will include:

- Steering Committee formation
- Focus Groups
- Print and web communication
- Stakeholders walk/bike ride
- Interactive Web Map and Survey
- Pop-up event
- Timelines

Items will include:

- Key person interviews
 - Development Services – policies, development review, design guidelines etc.
 - Public Works – Streets, Engineering, Utilities
- Draft Survey and Web map
- Public Launch Date April 3rd
- Network Analysis – Technical approach
- ATP Plan Outline
- Draft criteria

A steering committee meeting on April 20th and a meeting with focus groups on April 28th. Community engagement is planned for a booth at Holland Happening April 29th and 30th, online forms for survey and comments, at the entrance to the local Safeway Store. A public web page is being developed.

Councilmembers Munns, Hoffmire, Marshall and Mayor Pro Tem Hizon provided their respective questions and comments.

PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT

a. Purchase Authorization – Parks and Recreation Bus

Senior Services Administrator Lange reviewed the recommendation for the purchase of a wheelchair accessible, 14 passengers + driver, non CDL, "coach" bus for the sustainability of current and future recreational programming needs for the community. The funds for the purchase are available in the vehicle replacement Senior Services fund. Administrator Lange explained the cost of using a charter

service for the transportation of the current travel program has significantly increased over the last four years and has become cost prohibitive. A decline in ridership and higher rate of tours canceled are in direct correlation to the high-cost increase which has become too high for many low- and fixed-income seniors. The travel program provides older adults who don't otherwise have the ability to leave the island to enjoy cultural, shopping, and other opportunities.

Charter rate fees: Charter rate in 2019 was \$2.38 a mile + \$18 an hour + \$23.80 service fee. The Current charter rate is now over \$3.00 a mile + \$57 an hour + \$57 service fee. The City owned and operated a 2009, 25 passenger bus in the past, however that vehicle required a CDL licenses driver and additional Department of Transportation regulations. The City sold the bus at auction in 2020.

An In-house operating rate would be approx. \$2.50 a mile, \$25 an hour The in-house operating rate includes vehicle replacement funds, operating and maintenance fees, insurance, and fuel. The bus, the size of which is commonly called a "coach", will be operated by city employees. Once the bus is delivered two .25FTE bus drivers will be created and hired. A bus of this size does not require a CDL license endorsement. This will not increase the current budget expenses, as the wage will be covered by the program revenue currently being paid to the charter company.

Administrator Lange explained by bringing the transportation back in house and purchasing a smaller size bus the department will have the flexibility to offer more affordable rates as well as allow for more trips that have smaller groups to travel. For trips that sell over 14 passengers we still have the option to charter a larger bus as needed. The charter company the City has been using does not have the ability to travel into Canada. With transportation in-house, the Center can resume its popular trips into Canada. There are also opportunities and interest to use the bus for additional community groups associated with parks and recreation. Those with an interest in utilizing the bus include North Whidbey Pool, Park, and Recreation, Big Brothers / Big Sisters, and the potential for shuttling visiting boaters from the Marina to the downtown. The Center currently has \$100,000 in the 502 Fund. Quotes on a bus are running in the range of \$120,000-130,000. Staff will look at ways to secure funds before bringing the item back to the Council for approval.

Councilmembers Hoffmire, Stucky, Munns and Mayor Pro Tem Hizon provided their respective questions and comments.

This item will be brought to Council for approval at a future meeting.

ADMINISTRATION

a. City Administrator's Report

City Administrator Oborn provided highlights of his monthly report to Council:

Leadership – City Administrator Oborn led and moderated a February 22, 2023 Department Director's retreat utilizing a theme and staff implementation of each department's top priorities for the coming year, for the next five years, and for beyond five years, as well as incorporating the City Council's priorities as applied to that matrix, and reviewing staff "bright ideas" derived from the November All-Hands meeting.

Legislative Outreach – Submitted Federal Fiscal Year 2024 Congressionally Directed Spending (CDS) request through Senator Maria Cantwell's office in the amount of \$4,125,000 for dredging the Oak Harbor Marina. City Administrator Oborn voiced appreciation for the letters of support from the Economic Development Council for Island County, Board of Island County Commissioners, Oak

Harbor Yacht Club Commodore, and the Oak Harbor Marina Advisory Committee.

Attended the March 11, 2023 Town Hall hosted by Representative Shavers. Rep. Shavers noted in his March 16, 2023 Week 10 report: Legislative Update & Important Funding for our Community email referencing Projects That Help Our Communities states “Oak Harbor – Utility Debt Relief: Local utilities continue to experience large debt payments resulting in increased costs for consumers. Reducing this debt can lead to cost savings for households every year. Helping local partners reduce this debt is critical to reducing wastewater rates for working families.” This is in reference to the City’s request for \$20 million in Wastewater Clean Water Facility debt forgiveness.

Attended the March 18, 2023 Town Hall hosted by Senator Muzzall and Representative Paul. City Administrator Oborn is working with Rep. Paul on a legislative request for an Oak Harbor Downtown Properties grant.

Attended the February 21, 2023 Broadband Action Team meeting and responded to a Zply proposal email sent to City Councilmembers.

Attended the February 22, 2023 Island Regional Transportation Planning Organization (IRTPO) meetings. Topics included WSDOT Aviation Division Brief, Safe Streets for All Grant implementation, and Washington State Ferries Mukilteo-Clinton ferry run electrification project update.

Finance - Conducted a successful bond sale on March 7 for approximately \$8.5 million to Fidelity Capital Markets; bonds will be paid over 21 years with final maturity being December 1, 2043.

Parks & Recreation – Marina – Working on finalizing Mariner’s Haven boat yard purchase.
Parks – Rewriting the Parks Board Ordinance to include expansion for Recreation.
Senior Services – The Center will be closed May 14-21, 2023 for roof replacement.

Public Works - continually working to focus its communication through the most widely used and helpful forms of outreach and engagement. Before this monthly report is issued, in most cases we will have already posted news and updates to the City’s website, social media platforms, or through physical signage in your neighborhood.

Councilmembers Stucky, Hoffmire and Mayor Pro Tem Hizon provided their respective questions and comments.

CITY COUNCIL

Councilmember Munns and Mayor Pro Tem Hizon provided their respective questions and comments. Councilmember Munns noted appreciation for staff in-person attendance at meetings when able. Mayor Pro Tem Hizon recognized videographer Tim Shelley for having never missed a City Council or Planning Commission meeting in six years. She also inquired is a CPR certification training was coming up. Fire Chief Merrill affirmed this and will send information to interested Council members.

ADJOURN

Hearing no other discussions. Mayor Pro Tem Hizon adjourned the workshop at 3:00 p.m.

Certified by Julie Nester, City Clerk