

MINUTES FOR GIG HARBOR CITY COUNCIL MEETING
Monday, January 11, 2021 – 5:30 p.m.

Due to public health concerns, this meeting was held remotely.

CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL: Mayor Kuhn called the meeting to order and called roll. Those present: Councilmembers Abersold, Denson, Franich, Himes, Markley, Rodenberg and Woock.

Staff present: City Administrator Bob Larson, Community Development Director Katrina Knutson, Chief Kelly Busey, Finance Director Dave Rodenbach, Public Works Director Laura Pettitt, Building Official Paul Rice, Court Administrator Stacy Colberg, City Clerk Molly Towslee, Assistant City Clerk Josh Stecker, and City Attorney Daniel Kenny.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

CHANGES TO THE AGENDA: There were none.

CONSENT AGENDA:

1. Approval of Council Minutes a) December 14, 2020; and b) Special Meetings Dec. 14 and Dec. 28, 2020
2. Receive and File: a) City Council Study Session Minutes (December 16); b) Finance & Safety Committee Meeting Minutes (December 21); c) Parks Commission Meeting Minutes (November 4); d) Planning Commission Minutes (Nov. 19); e) Planning/Building Committee Meeting Minutes (Dec. 7); f) Intergovernmental Affairs Committee Minutes (Nov. 23)
3. Resolution 1195 – Astound Broadband Telecommunications Franchise Agreement Change of Control
4. Purchase Authorization – Vactor Truck
5. Approval of Payroll for the month of December: Checks #8236 through #8243 and direct deposit transactions in the total amount of \$729,649.49
6. Approval of Vouchers for December 28, 2020: Checks #94327 through 94422 and ACH payments in the amount of \$493,400.59
7. Approval of Vouchers for January 11, 2021: Checks #94423 through #94497 and ACH payments in the amount of \$830,317.31

MOTION: Move to approve the Consent Agenda as presented
Franich / Himes – unanimously approved

PRESENTATION: City Forms of Government. Mayor Kuhn introduced Michael Wilson, Retired City Manager/City Administrator and Former Board Member of AWC and MRSC. Mr. Wilson shared information on his experience with both City Manager and City Administrator forms of Government. He addressed questions and comments.

At the completion of the presentation and discussion, Councilmember Woock requested that a resolution be brought forward to put the change to a Council – Manager form of government on the April ballot. A point of order called by Councilmember Franich led to the determination that this action would more appropriately occur under the council comment portion of the meeting.

MAYOR'S REPORT: Mayor Kuhn reported that there was a MRSC presentation to Council on the forms of Government last Thursday, the 7th of January and the public can listen to the

recording from the city website. MRSC said that 71% of the cities our size in Washington have our form of Government.

CITY ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT: None

PUBLIC COMMENT ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS:

Jeff Katke – 7521 Soundview Drive NW. Mr. Katke shared several reasons he believes that the strong mayor form of government is best for Gig Harbor. The system of checks and balances of a strong mayor and council form of government is good for the citizens. The Council-Manager form is management by committee and a bad idea. It's better for the employees to report to one person, not a council. He believes the citizens should be able to choose the city's leader. He urged council to vote no on the Council-Manager form of government.

Robert Soltis – 4819 Old Stump Drive. Mr. Soltis said as the city grows the problems become more complex; the city must evolve to keep up. The elected council sets policy, priorities, approves budgets to ensure the city is well-run. The city needs a professional manager with the autonomy to implement council decisions and to manage the day-to-day operations. Mr. Soltis spoke to the complex regional role this city plays and recommended moving in the direction of a seasoned professional manager.

Administrator Larson read the following comments submitted in writing;

Lynn and Jamie Stevenson – 7604 Hill Drive. We believe this is an inappropriate time to be considering such a radical redesign of our city's infrastructure. Currently, every citizen is dealing with the consequences of the global COVID pandemic that is raging worse than ever. As a result, distributing information is more complicated and it is impossible for citizens to congregate and have open, transparent discussions. We feel very strongly that a decision like this demands focused input from the public at large, and request that you reschedule this discussion for a more appropriate time, post-pandemic.

Matthew Rice 9302 Goodman Drive. Mr. Rice said that elected officials often serve with great sacrifice and often with great criticism. An elected "strong mayor," is responsive to the voters, and is the best model for town and city government. The elected mayor's skills may need enhancement, but the key is that the voters decide who can be mayor, just as it decides the city council. A "weak mayor" form of government can lead to partisan politics and special interests served. A "strong mayor" allows for a balance of power. The city can set thresholds for mayoral candidates, politic for best candidates, budget for appropriate training and assistance, and work together for a responsive and accountable government.

Mary Kazlusky – Heron's Key. Ms. Kazlusky says she fully supports the efforts of the community ad-hoc committee seeking to rename the Austin Estuary area next to the Harbor History Museum to Twalwacut Park. This would belatedly honor the original residents of the Gig Harbor waterfront, the Sxwəbabč, a band of the Puyallup Tribe who lived on this spot in a village called Twalwacut. I also support the addition of the Austin name to the Donkey Creek Park area (i.e., The Austin Mill at Donkey Creek) to continue to honor one of the leading families in the logging industry which contributed to our heritage here in Gig Harbor.

OLD BUSINESS: None

NEW BUSINESS:

1. First Reading of Ordinance – Updates to Title 15 Building and Construction.

Building Official Paul Rice presented this ordinance to adopt updates to the State Building Code that occur every three years. He answered questions.

There were no public comments. This will return at the next meeting for second reading.

2. Well No. 3 Public Works Contract Award.

Works Director Jeff Langhelm shared the background for a contract to drill a replacement production well. He answered questions.

MOTION: Move to award and authorize the Mayor to execute a Public Works Contract with Tacoma Pump & Drilling Co. Inc., in an amount not to exceed \$948,896.65 for Well No. 3A Reconstruction, and authorize the City Engineer to approve additional expenditures up to \$75,000 to cover any cost increases that may result from contract change orders.

Woock / Rodenberg –approved 7/0

3. **Resolution 1196 – Quarterly Budget Objective Update Policy.** Councilmember Woock provided information for this policy to provide a quarterly budget objective report. Council deliberated. City Administrator Larson described that this would be in addition to the other reports regularly shared with council.

MOTION: Move to approve Resolution 1196

Woock / Markley – six voted yes. Councilmember Himes abstained

STAFF REPORT:

Tourism / Communications Director Laura Pettitt reported that the Lodging Tax Advisory Committee is supportive of the allocation of \$5000 to be used for an updated catalogue of city art. The committee wants the catalogue to include all public art; not just city owned. They also want to include public art just outside the city limits.

COUNCIL REPORTS / COMMENTS:

1. **Finance & Safety Committee: Dec. 21.** Councilmember Rodenberg said that HR Director Kameil Borders presented information on reported OSHA claims. They also addressed the employee survey comments on the city's response to COVID-19.

2. **Planning & Building Committee: Jan. 4.** Councilmember Himes reported they discussed the 2021 Annexation Feasibility Study, the Buildable Lands Report, and the state's Growth Management Act. He said these are all inter-related and make clear the need to move forward on the annexation study.

3. **Parks Commission: Jan. 6.** Councilmember Abersold said they received an update from the Restoring a Park Name Ad Hoc Committee and discussed the 2021 Parks Commission Work Plan; the process to hire a Parks Manager, and the process to appoint sub-committees.

4. **Intergovernmental Affairs Committee: Jan. 6.** Councilmember Denson reported that they had a productive conversation with Representative Caldier on the transportation request related to congestion on Highway 16 and the RCO grant request for the Sports Complex. The lobbyists reported on the upcoming legislative session and will let us know about opportunities.

5. Mayor Kuhn asked for Councilmembers to weigh in on whether they would like to change committees. Each took turns saying they would like to remain on their committees through 2021.

Councilmember Woock shared comments on the staff turnover the past three years. She made a request to bring forward a resolution at the next council meeting to place a change to the Council-Manager form of government for the citizens to vote on the special election ballot on April 27.

There was clarification on the rules of procedures to place a resolution on the agenda and the Mayor and Councilmembers deliberated this action.

MOTION: Bring back a resolution at the next council meeting to place a change to the Council-Manager form of government for the citizens to vote on the special election ballot on April 27.
Woock / Rodenberg – roll call vote:

Markley – nay; Franich – nay; Woock – aye; Denson – aye; Himes – nay; Rodenberg – aye; Abersold – nay. Motion failed 4-3

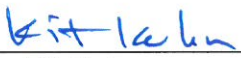
Councilmember Markley thanked our Washington State Legislators for the challenges they will face in the upcoming virtual session, adding that her thoughts and prayers are with them.

ANNOUNCEMENT OF OTHER MEETINGS:

1. Public Works Committee - Tuesday, January 12 at 3:00 p.m.
2. City Council Study Session - Thursday, January 14 at 3:00 p.m.
3. Martin Luther King Jr. Day – City Offices Closed January 18
4. Board & Commission Candidate Review Committee – Tuesday, January 19 at 3:00 p.m.
5. Intergovernmental Affairs Committee – Monday, January 25 at 4:00 p.m.
6. Mayor and Council Retreat – Wed January 27 8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

ADJOURN

MOTION: Move to adjourn at 7:33 p.m.
Franich / Markley – unanimously approved



Mayor Kit Kuhn



Molly Towslee, City Clerk