

GIG HARBOR CITY COUNCIL MEETING OF DECEMBER 12, 2005

PRESENT: Councilmembers Ekberg, Young, Franich, Conan, Dick, Ruffo and Mayor Wilbert. Councilmember Picinich was absent.

CALL TO ORDER: 7:05 p.m.

SPECIAL PRESENTATION: Dick Bower, Building Official/Fire Marshal was presented the Environmental Excellence Award by Mr. Manning of the Department of Ecology for his handling of the Gig Harbor Marina Fire on August 31, 2005. Mr. Manning considered Mr. Bower's response to be "text book perfection" due in part to being prepared by having the boom and training in place 3-months before the fire. Mr. Manning identified the City of Gig Harbor as a leading example for other jurisdictions. If not for the local boom, it would have taken over two hours to receive assistance and instead it was contained to a very small area. Mr. Bower was also honored by the Department of Homeland Security and the U.S. Coastguard who presented him with a public service commendation.

SWEARING IN CEREMONIES:

Mayor Gretchen Wilbert officiated and swore in the oaths of office for:

Mayor Chuck Hunter	Councilmember Steven Ekberg
Councilmember Derek Young	Councilmember Tim Payne
Councilmember Paul Kadzik	Judge Michael Dunn

HEALTHY YOUTH AWARENESS DAY: Mayor Wilbert read the proclamation and introduced Beth Losey and George La Masurier, editor of the Peninsula Gateway. Mr. La Masurier spoke of the benefits of this foundation that will fund youth leadership projects for healthy lifestyle choices in order to help change the mindset of young people. Some of the programs include organized runs, campaigns, and foods served in the school cafeterias.

CONSENT AGENDA:

These consent agenda items are considered routine and may be adopted with one motion as per Gig Harbor Ordinance No. 799.

1. Approval of the Minutes of City Council Meeting of November 28, 2005.
2. Correspondence / Proclamations: a) Youth Health Awareness Day; b) Letter from the Department of Archaeology & Historic Preservation; c) Letter from DCTED; d) Letter from Sierra Bucher.
3. Assigned Counsel Agreement – 2006.
4. Renewal of Interlocal Agreement – Fire Investigation Agreement with Pierce County.
5. Eddon Boat Net Shed Re-Roofing Contract Authorization.
6. Resolution 658 – Declaration of Surplus Property.
7. Public Use of City Civic Center Facilities - Policy and Agreement.
8. 36th / Pt. Fosdick Intersection Improvement Project – Change Order No. 1.
9. City Shop Ventilation System – Contract Authorization.

10. Approval of Payment of Bills for December 12, 2005:
Checks #48874 through #48979 in the amount of \$336,117.28.
11. Approval of Payroll for the month of November:
Checks #4029 through #4065 and direct deposit entries in the amount of \$255,104.89.

MOTION: Move to approve the Consent Agenda as presented.
Ruffo / Ekberg – unanimously approved.

OLD BUSINESS:

1. Second Reading of Ordinance – Hall Street Vacation. John Vodopich recommended approval of the ordinance and stated that the legal issues that arose at the last meeting had been addressed by the City Attorney and incorporated into the revised ordinance. The city will retain a 7 ½ foot easement necessary to maintain the utilities.

Councilmember Dick said that his questions had been addressed and thanked staff for taking the time to answer his questions.

Jane Koler – 5801 Soundview Drive. Ms. Koler stated that she was the attorney representing the petitioner and referenced the letter that she sent to Council, dated December 3, 2005, attempting to address the issues raised by Council at the Public Hearing on November 28, 2005. She was available to answer any questions if needed.

MOTION: Move to adopt Ordinance 1023 as presented.
Ruffo / Conan – unanimously approved.

2. Second Reading of Ordinance – Increasing Monthly Water Rates. Dave Rodenbach recommended approval of this ordinance that would increase the monthly water rates by 5%. This increase was based on a study performed by Gray & Osborne in 2003. This increase is expected to generate an additional \$35,000, effective January 1, 2006.

MOTION: Move to adopt Ordinance 1024 as presented.
Dick / Ruffo – unanimously approved.

3. Second Reading of Ordinance – Increasing Monthly Sewer Rates. Dave Rodenbach recommended approval of this ordinance that would increase the monthly sewer rates by 5% and is expected to generate an additional \$75,000, effective January 1, 2006.

Councilmember Franich stated that he is never in favor of raising the rates of the citizens however both of the proposed rate increases did come from the study performed in 2003 and the increases are small amounts. Councilmember Franich said

that after his discussions with City Administrator Hoppen, there may be one additional increase that was identified in the study. He spoke of the importance of having a plan that was balanced in order to keep both funds solvent.

MOTION: Move to adopt Ordinance 1025 as presented.
Ruffo / Conan – unanimously approved.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Appointment to the Planning Commission. Mayor Wilbert explained that Marilyn Owel submitted her resignation and a notice was placed in the Peninsula Gateway Newspaper for interested applicants. Mayor Wilbert stated that she had received a letter from Mayor-elect Hunter requesting that the appointment to Planning Commission be delayed and readvertised since only two letters of interest had been received. Mayor Wilbert said that this was an option that the Council had and added that she had received letters of interest from two qualified people and her recommendation to fill this vacant position was Jeanne Derebey.

Councilmember Conan was in favor of readvertising and taking a little extra time since the appointment is a five-year commitment; however he thought that both people that applied were qualified.

MOTION: Move to table the appointment and readvertise the Planning Commission position until the first meeting in January 2006.
Conan / Ekberg – unanimously approved.

Councilmember Ruffo commented that he thought it was appropriate for the new Mayor and Council to appoint this position because it is a long-term appointment although the two people who have applied are qualified.

2. Resolution for Public Hearing F.H. Adams Addition Alley Vacation Request – Willis/Ross Condominium Building. John Vodopich stated that this resolution was to set a public hearing date for January 9, 2006 at 7:00 p.m. for the requested vacation of a 15-ft. alleyway located behind 3010 Harborview Drive, also commonly known as the Willis Building.

MOTION: Move to adopt Resolution 659 as presented.
Ruffo / Conan – unanimously approved.

STAFF REPORT:

1. Jennifer Sitts, Senior Planner – Planning Commission Work Program. No verbal report presented.

Jennifer Kilmer, Director, Gig Harbor Peninsula Historical Society – 4218 Harborview Drive. Ms. Kilmer stated that GPHS had applied for a code amendment to create a height exception for museums which is necessary to house and exhibit the Shenandoah

on the proposed new property. She explained that they needed to move through the code amendment process in order to proceed with their general site planning and design review process as well as significant fundraising for the project. She requested Council to urge staff to make this code amendment a high priority for their consideration and evaluation.

Councilmember Young asked for a timeframe. Ms. Kilmer stated that they were hoping to move through this by January or February of 2006. She explained that from a fundraising perspective, obtaining a final decision on the code amendment is important for presenting an accurate vision to potential donors as well as keeping them on schedule for the site plan and design review process.

Councilmember Franich asked for clarification on the staff report and the prioritization of the work load presented. Mr. Vodopich explained that at the last meeting, Council requested a list of what was on the Planning Commission's docket. He said that staff had put together a first, second, and third tier priority list under which the Planning Commission would consider the applications that are currently in their queue. Mr. Vodopich further explained that staff is looking for either a modification or concurrence of the list as presented.

Councilmember Franich asked when the Planning Commission would begin their review of the projects on the second tier list, which contained the critical areas/wetlands update. Jennifer Sitts, Senior Planner replied that the second tier would be reviewed in May or June 2006 assuming that the Planning Commission is able to have one work session and then one public hearing and limit most of the projects to a total of two meetings, with the exception of the Comprehensive Plan Amendments.

Councilmember Young asked if some of the easier projects could be added to the first tier rather than being held back to the third tier. Ms. Sitts explained how the projects were grouped to help expedite the Planning Commission's review. Councilmember Young suggested swapping the Modifying Building Size Limitations in the RB-1 zone (tier one) with Combination of Nonconforming Lots (tier two). Councilmember Conan was in agreement with this change.

Councilmember Franich expressed that he would like to see the critical areas ordinance moved up to tier one but understood the reasoning to move up the

MOTION: Move to accept the staff's recommendation for the prioritization of the Planning Commission's work program with the exception of swapping the Modifying Building Size Limitations in the RB-1 zone with Combination of Nonconforming Lots.
Young / Ruffo – five voted in favor. Councilmember Franich voted no.

2. Stephen Misiurak, City Engineer – Eddon Boat EPA Grant Applications. No verbal report presented.

3. Mike Davis, Chief of Police – GHPD November Statistics. No verbal report presented.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Laurie Winkle – 6216 110th St Ct NW. Ms. Winkle, a local professional ice skating instructor, presented a PowerPoint presentation about the importance of having a positive outlet for young people. She presented some information about partnering the idea of an ice arena in Gig Harbor. She described ice skating as a great physical outlet that provided a great sense of community. Ms. Winkle presented photos of young people at Harbor Ridge Middle School enjoying a day of ice skating and spoke of an arena in McCall, Idaho that she hoped could be used as a prototype in Gig Harbor. She said that a suitable site for an arena would need approximately 3 ½ acres with 350-ft. of northern exposure. Ms. Winkle stated that she was committed to bringing this vision to Gig Harbor.

COUNCIL COMMENTS / MAYOR’S REPORT: Moving Forward with Partnerships.

Mayor Wilbert spoke about public/private partnerships. The Volunteer Center is now partnering with the Chamber of Commerce and Mayor Wilbert explained its functions and its benefits. Mayor Wilbert spoke of cultural diversity and the culture of communities. She talked about the student exchange program that Gig Harbor has developed with Japan and China. Mayor Wilbert encouraged families to host exchange students and learn about other cultures and discussed its great benefits.

Mayor Wilbert thanked the Council and presented Councilmember Ruffo with a commemorative plaque and thanked him for his dedication and six years of service on the City Council. Due to illness, John Picinich was not present to receive his plaque.

Councilmember Franich thanked Councilmember Ruffo for his service. He also thanked Mayor Wilbert for her excellent service to the City. The Councilmembers, staff and members of the audience gave Mayor Wilbert and Councilmember Ruffo a standing round of applause.

Councilmember Dick also thanked Councilmember Ruffo for sitting on the Council and said that he enjoyed and benefited from working with him. Councilmember Dick thanked Mayor Wilbert and stated that he would not have participated in the way that he has if it had not been for her suggestions, comments, and encouragement. He thanked the Mayor for her leadership and for being a great peacemaker. He wished her well and thanked her for her inspiration and for what she has brought to the city.

Mayor Wilbert spoke of the importance of an Emergency Preparedness Plan and encouraged everyone to work with Pierce County on a neighborhood by neighborhood level.

Councilmember Young said that Mayor Wilbert's accolades are well known and he didn't wish to add any further comments to what Councilmember Dick had already said about Mayor Wilbert's years of service because they were so well stated. He did want to add something about Councilmember Ruffo and said that over the years whatever labor negotiation or land use contract that the City had been involved with, Councilmember Ruffo has been the Council's representative in almost every case. He said that often times this service goes unnoticed and Councilmember Ruffo's experience has been indispensable to the Council. Councilmember Young thanked him for his expertise and service.

MOTION: Move to adjourn to executive session at 8:35 p.m. for approximately 30 minutes to discuss property acquisition per RCW 42.30.110(1)(b).
Franich / Ekberg – unanimously approved.

MOTION: Move to return to regular session at 9:05 p.m.
Franich / Young – unanimously approved.

MOTION: Move to authorize the Mayor to sign the Purchase and Sale Agreement for the acquisition of property for the development of the future Westside Park in the amount of \$250,000.00 subject to a Phase 1 Environmental Assessment and an appraisal.
Ruffo / Conan –

Councilmember Franich stated that the net gain for spending this money is not justified. He stated that there are already existing amenities which include a soccer and baseball field under the existing property.

Councilmember Ekberg disagreed and stated that he thought it was in fact very justifiable because it has been in the city's Parks Plan and the money has been earmarked for acquisitions. Other Councilmembers agreed that the property will become more valuable due to the combined square footage.

Councilmember Dick said that the facts are that the people have already spoken regarding how much of a park and what kind of a park is needed in this area. This location has already been identified in the Parks Plan and was thought to be appropriate and necessary and has been part of the justification for putting money aside for acquisitions. Councilmember Dick said the purchase should move forward, the public has agreed and that is why it was put in the Plan and remained there so long. He further added that now that this site has become available, it is appropriate for the city to purchase it. He further stressed that unless there is some competing project that is so pivotal, we ought to do what we planned and purchase this park site.

Councilmember Franich asked if the exact location of this proposed park site on the Westside has been in the Plan for a number of years. The Council and City Administrator all replied in the affirmative. Councilmember Franich called for the question.

RESTATED MOTION: Move to authorize the Mayor to sign the Purchase and Sale Agreement for the acquisition of property for the development of the future Westside Park in the amount of \$250,000.00 subject to a Phase 1 Environmental Assessment and an appraisal.
Ruffo / Conan – Five voted in favor. Councilmember Franich voted no.

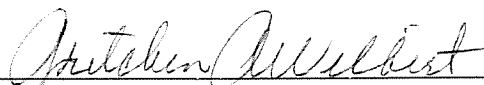
The Mayor said that she would sign the Purchase and Sale Agreement with regret because she believes that the city has not spoken with the entire neighborhood and the commercial businesses.

Mark Hoppen said that before anything is designed, the city will talk with the neighborhood and local businesses about the nature of the neighborhood amenities in the park and hear their voice.

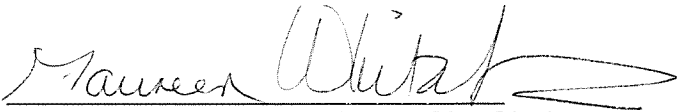
ADJOURN:

MOTION: Move to adjourn at 9:30 p.m.
Ekberg / Dick – unanimously approved.

CD recorder utilized:
Disk #1 Tracks 1-12.
Disk #2 Tracks 1-13.



Gretchen A. Wilbert, Mayor



Maureen Whitaker, Assistant City Clerk