

GIG HARBOR CITY COUNCIL MEETING OF MARCH 12, 2007

PRESENT: Councilmembers Ekberg, Young, Franich, Conan, Dick, Payne, Kadzik and Mayor Hunter.

CALL TO ORDER: 6:00 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

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 February 26, 2007 and Special City Council Meeting of February 28, 2007.
2. Correspondence / Proclamations: a) Red Cross Month b) Women's History Month.
3. Receive and File: 2006 Court Statistics.
4. Hearing Examiner Contract.
5. Contract for Attorney Services - Rick Aramburu.
6. Wastewater Treatment Plant Sewer Plant Expansion - Consultant Services Contract.
7. On-Call Development Review – Consultant Services Contract.
8. 56th Street/Olympic Drive Improvement Project Cultural Resources Assessment – Consultant Services Contract.
9. Peninsula Family Medical Center Easement Agreement.
10. Community Development Assistant – Special Projects Job Description.
11. Approval of Payment of Bills for March 12, 2007:
Checks #52999 through #53108 in the amount of \$209,852.65.
12. Approval of Payment of Payroll for February:
Checks #4577 through #4607 and direct deposit entries in the amount of \$286,087.69.

Mayor Hunter introduced Nigel English and Kima Douglas from the local Red Cross Chapter, and then presented them with the Proclamation for Red Cross Month. Mr. English gave an overview of activities over the past three months. Ms. Douglas commented on the need for more trained volunteers.

MOTION: Move to approve the Consent Agenda as presented.
Ekberg / Franich - unanimously approved.

OLD BUSINESS: None scheduled.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Resolution Establishing a Narcotics Enforcement Revolving Fund. Chief Mike Davis presented this resolution to establish a revolving fund to keep money available for drug buys in the course of investigations. He described the past practice, explaining that there are times during the weekend when the finance staff is unavailable to process the request for funds. The money is funded completely through drug forfeitures.

MOTION: Move to adopt Resolution No. 703 as presented.
Young / Franich – unanimously approved.

1. First Reading of Ordinance – Flood Plain Regulations. Tom Dolan, Planning Director, presented the background for this ordinance that would allow residents to continue to participate in the National Flood Insurance Program. The city has been notified that the current regulations are inconsistent with the minimum state flood plain regulations and in order to resolve the deficiencies, this ordinance has been prepared. Mr. Dolan gave an overview of the changes.

Mr. Dolan explained that letters have been sent to the six affected property owners informing them of the requirement to obtain the necessary surveys. He addressed questions about the affected properties and offered to bring a more comprehensive list to the next meeting. Mr. Dolan explained that any variances would go before the Hearing Examiner for consideration.

Mr. Dolan addressed questions regarding the discrepancy in the code, explaining that when DOE came in to do an inspection of the harbor they discovered properties without the necessary Flood Plain Certificate. They then reviewed the city's code and determined the minor discrepancies.

John Vodopich addressed a question regarding whether any of the properties were located in a "flood way" in addition to the "flood plain." He explained that the properties identified are essentially along the harbor but not within the stream channel. He added that the rate maps do not identify any "flood ways" in the city or surrounding Unincorporated Pierce County. He further explained that the Department of Ecology performs a review every five years.

Mayor Hunter said that there are benchmark locations around the city for the floodplain. He asked if a map of these be part of the Municipal Code so that people have a reference. Mr. Vodopich said that the city code has a section that refers to the basis for establishing areas of special flood hazard and references the March 2, 1981 F.I.R.M. Map. This map has the benchmarks listed.

This will return for a second reading at the next regular City Council meeting.

STAFF REPORT:

1. Gig Harbor Police Department – February Statistics. Chief Davis offered to answer questions on the report.

Councilmember Kadzik asked for an update on the drug paraphernalia law and the confiscation of vehicles. Chief Davis responded that the drug paraphernalia ordinance worked very well at first, and they have conducted a couple of "sting operations" since inception. The problem has been taken care of and the department will continue to monitor the program. As far as vehicle confiscations, the department follows state procedures. He gave an overview of the procedure in which a judge makes the

determination on whether or not the department gets the property. In many cases, the attorney negotiates a settlement, and this is how the department funds the drug investigations. He explained that there were four vehicles seized in 2006.

Chief Davis invited Councilmembers to a March 22nd presentation by the two newest officers. He said that the officers are going to present their neighborhood portfolio exercises in which they have identified an issue in the community, researched the issue, and developed possible solutions. He said that the presentation will be held at city hall at 6:30 p.m.

2. Council Retreat Follow-up. Rob Karlinsey, City Administrator, explained that the action items from the retreat have been categorized for follow-up action by the different committees. He said that a calendar will be developed and brought back for Council to review.

3. City-wide Newsletter. Rob Karlinsey asked for comments on the draft newsletter to go out to the citizens. He said that the second page contains a "Council Corner" spotlighting Councilmember Ekberg. He added that this will be a regular feature and asked for a volunteer for the next issue.

4. Naming of City Parks. Rob Karlinsey said that the recommendation from the Parks Committee is similar to how we name city streets. If it's located in the historic downtown area, it will be referred to the GHP Historical Society to recommend names for final Council approval. If the park is located outside of the downtown historic area, the Parks Commission would like the opportunity to recommend names for Council approval.

Councilmembers said that they agreed this is a good idea.

5. Proposed Daylighting of Donkey Creek. Rob Karlinsey said that when Councilmembers and he go back to Washington D.C. to lobby for federal funding for the Daylighting of Donkey Creek Project, it will be important to tell them that there is community support. He proposed a neighborhood meeting with the surrounding residential and commercial areas to be held on March 29th at 5:30 p.m. to show them the plan and to obtain input.

Councilmember Franich asked to whom the notice of the meeting would be sent. Mr. Karlinsey responded that it hasn't been determined, but he is thinking all of North Harborview to Vernhardson, and including the Finholm Neighborhood.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Ann Fessler – 7102 78th Ave NW. Ms. Fessler, an Elementary Counselor at Peninsula School District, said she has worked with families who get behind in their rent and have lost their homes. She described events that can lead to a family losing their housing, and the amount of money required to for them to find new housing. She explained that there are two very affordable, low-income rental properties in Gig Harbor; Norwegian

Woods, well-know because it accepts Section 8 vouchers, and another in central Gig Harbor. She commented that rental amounts have increased, making it almost impossible for low-income people to live in the city. She said that if the second apartment complex is demolished, the city will be left with only one affordable housing option. She asked if Council represents the families in these low-income apartments, and if they feel compelled to replace the 20 units that may be demolished. She asked if Council believes in an ethical need to work with Pierce County, the State of Washington, and the Federal Government so that there is no net loss of affordable housing. Ms. Fessler said that she doesn't want to see any of these families become homeless.

Adrian Culp – 5216 Pt. Fosdick Drive. Ms. Culp said that she has lived in the affordable apartment complex next to the Dairy Queen for the past two years. During that time, she has attended Clover Park Technical College and is raising her six-year old son. She is two-weeks shy of obtaining her AA Degree in Dental Assisting and her plan is to continue to live in these apartments until she can get her Dental Hygiene Degree in four years. She said that when she found an apartment for \$516 a month and covers rent, water and sewer, she was overjoyed, because no other apartment on this side of the bridge has the same affordability. Because of the low rent, she can afford child-care for her son, he can attend a good school, and the location is close to the freeway, grocery stores, and daycare. Ms. Culp said that she believes that the City Council should provide affordable housing to all economic segments in the community including low-income people. She said that affordable housing needs to be preserved, and it is incumbent on the Council to ensure that it is. Ms. Culp referred to the Gig Harbor Comprehensive Plan, which cites that there is no net loss of affordable housing, meaning that if her complex is demolished, then 20 more 2-bedroom units must be replaced with comparable rent. She stressed that the City Council needs to work with other agencies to assure low-cost housing is available in the City of Gig Harbor as well as in the larger Gig Harbor area because there are many single-mother households and other “working-poor” families earning a minimum wage.

Marian Berejikian – PO Box 2084, Gig Harbor. Ms. Berejikian, Friends of Pierce County. Ms. Berejikian said that the organization promotes livable communities throughout Pierce County and believes that having a livable community means providing adequate sectors for all including affordable and low-incoming housing. She read from a letter which referred to the city's Comprehensive Plan and the State's Growth Management Act. She quoted the 1999 median income for residents in Gig Harbor and said that those people who make less live in apartment complexes and low-rent homes. Ms. Berejikian further quoted from the Gig Harbor Community Plan which states “It is apparent that the city's housing stock does not fully provide for all economic segments and there is an unmet need for affordable housing for current residents.” The Growth Management Act, RCW 36.70A.020, Planning Goal 4 encourages the availability of affordable housing to all economic segments of the population of this state and promotes a variety of residential densities and housing types and encourages preservation of existing housing stock. Ms. Berejikian said that the GMA requires the city to identify sufficient land for housing adding that if this has not been done, then the

city could be out of compliance. She then referred to the Pierce County Planning-wide Policies which state “The County and each municipality in the County shall meet their projected demand for preservation of existing housing stock through repair, maintenance, rehabilitation and redevelopment.” She quoted the City’s own Comp Plan Goal 5.41, which says “Maintain a no net-loss policy toward affordable housing unit, discourage demolition of existing smaller homes that have reasonable potential for being salvaged.” Ms. Berejikian said that the regulations are silent on replacing low-income housing in the city. She said that staff has said that the only area allowed in the city for transferring density is to Gig Harbor North. She said that this should be a city-wide policy and there needs to be a plan so that there is no net loss of affordable housing.

She requested that the city conduct an inventory to identify existing affordable low-income housing stock and make policies to protect and preserve those areas as required in the Growth Management Act.

Luella Coldeen Hudson – 5708 Rosedale Street. Ms. Hudson explained that she works for the Children’s Home Society as the Information and Resource Specialist. Ms. Hudson described her background in working with low-income families. She said that a grant from FEMA is currently allowing them to provide assistance with emergency food and shelter, rental, and energy assistance to the people of Gig Harbor. She said that the stories that come to her are amazing and gave several examples of regular, working people who come to her for help. She said that those without double incomes cannot afford the high rent costs here, and that the Gig Harbor’s Comp Plan should provide a place for these working people to live. She strongly encouraged the Council to consider housing for people who provide our services in any upcoming Comprehensive Plan adjustments.

Margot LeRoy – outside city limits. Ms. LeRoy shared a story of her Godson, who is 29 years old, serving in the army, and recently transferred here from South Carolina with his wife and two young sons. She said there is a five-month wait for base housing at Fort Lewis so they thought they could find affordable housing in Gig Harbor. That was three months ago and he still hasn’t found a place to live. She commented that while there is talk of supporting our troops, we don’t support them when they need a place to live. Ms. LeRoy said that we are so caught up in real estate values that people are being shut out. These people need an opportunity for good schools and for safe homes that isn’t available, and the Harbor needs to encourage diversity that will enrich this community.

Councilmember Ekberg said that Council had a retreat in February in which affordable housing was discussed. He said that Council is aware of the need to address this issue.

Councilmember Young said that this isn’t going to be solved overnight because of the market forces. He explained that there are a variety of tools that can be adopted, and these will be considered. In order to build more units the infrastructure needs to be in place, which takes time. He said that he is in the same economic position and the

market may eventually drive him out of Gig Harbor. He stressed that you cannot direct a property owner to provide low-income housing, but you can provide incentives for them to choose to do so. The city has opportunities to do this and will be considering all options.

Councilmember Payne thanked the speakers whom he said were "on target" and eloquent. He said that Council appreciates it when the citizens bring issues forward. He stressed that they are aware of the issue and struggle with solutions. He added that one Councilmember is attending an affordable housing seminar next week. He praised Ms. Culp for her courage for coming forward and visiting with Council.

MAYOR'S REPORT / COUNCIL COMMENTS / COUNCIL COMMITTEE REPORTS:

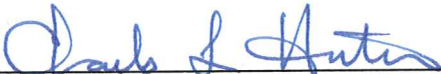
ANNOUNCEMENT OF OTHER MEETINGS:

1. Planning / Building Committee – March 14th, 3:00 p.m. Planning Conference Room.
2. Public Hearing / Worksession - Gig Harbor North Visioning – March 14th, 6:00 p.m. Council Chambers.
3. Operations & Public Projects Committee – Thursday, March 15th, at 3:00 p.m., Engineering/Operations Conference Room.
4. City Council / Planning Commission Joint Worksession - Monday, March 19th, 5:00 p.m. Community Rooms A & B.
5. GH North Traffic Options Committee – Wednesday, March 21st, at 9:00 a.m. Community Rooms A & B.
6. Maritime Pier Committee – Wednesday, March 21st at 7:00 p.m. Executive Conference Room.

ADJOURN:

MOTION: Move to adjourn at 6:51 p.m.
Franich / Conan – unanimously approved.

CD recorder utilized:
Disk #1 Tracks 1- 11



Charles L. Hunter, Mayor



Maureen Whitaker, Assistant City Clerk