

March 16, 2015
Langley City Council Minutes

Mayor McCarthy called the meeting to order at 5:30 PM. Present were Council Members Thomas Gill, Rene Neff, Robin Black, Jim Sundberg and Bruce Allen. Also present were Director of Public Works, Stan Berryman; Chief of Police, Dave Marks; Michael Davolio Planning Director; Finance Director/Clerk, Debbie Mahler. The flag salute was led by Mayor McCarthy.

MOTION: To approve the agenda. Motion – Allen, 2nd - Gill. Motion carried

MOTION: To approve the consent agenda. Motion - Gill, 2nd - Black. The consent agenda was approved with all in favor.

CONSENT AGENDA

- a. Approval of council meeting minutes of 3/2/15
- b. Approval of claims warrants Nos. 32969-33015 in the amount of \$75,894.60
- c. Approval of payroll warrants Nos. 32841-32864 (02/15/15) in the amount of \$51,500.39 and Nos. 32900-32923 (02/28/15) in the amount of \$51,532.63
- d. Liquor License – Prima Bistro

COMMISSION AND BOARD REPORTS

- a. Cemetery Board Semi-Annual Report – Cary Peterson reported that Cemetery Board has a number of new members. They are working on a writing a clear description of the green burial section and the procedures for its use. There was a recent work party at the cemetery with many volunteers, who took care of the invasive weeds.
- b. Upper Langley Update to Council – Cary Peterson and three other members of the upper Langley Proposal were present to report on the project progress. There will be 16 home sites, 13 will be median income or less on ten acres. They have preserved about 6 acres of forest, took down alders in the northeast corner and a few other trees, but kept the woodland forest and meadow. There are three landscapers and two farmers in the owner/developer group. It will be affordable housing, with preserved trail easements. Small homes built by individuals; 900 square feet maximum. There are already six people who have signed letters of intent to buy lots. All social investment, no bank involved. \$60,000 per lot plus \$15,000 towards the commons house. \$105,000 total a piece for the three non-income qualifying lots. The homes will be kept below market value in perpetuity. The project will go before the hearings examiner for approval soon. As soon as that happens, the infrastructure will be put in, roads, sewer, water lines, etc.

AUDIENCE COMMENTS

Tim Callison expressed his viewpoint regarding lessons learned from the Dana Point funicular. The written statement is attached hereto. Kim Tiller stated that visitors coming to Langley by car exceed the number of visitors by boat, and she feels it might be more prudent to put more emphasis on parking than a conveyance from the harbor. She felt the city should encourage development bluff side of the waterfront and then have any who develop set aside funds for a public elevator.

STAFF REPORTS

Community Planning – Michael Davolio reported the owners of the Doghouse property have had an appraisal done of their property and the property the city has that they would like to swap. Michael recommends the City accept the appraisal and move forward with the land swap.

MOTION: To approve the land exchange proposal of the Kleiners. Motion – Sundberg, 2nd – Allen. Motion carried unanimously.

Michael reported that the charette meeting for the waterfront conveyance will be set for April 14th, 6:30 to 9 PM. Ursula Roosen-Runge will facilitate the meeting. The Planning Advisory Board members will moderate at the roundtables. People who come to the meeting will be able to vote on their choice of conveyance and the final staff report will take that poll into consideration. The Planning Advisory Board will review this at their meeting on April 21st and then a recommendation will be brought to council.

Public Works – Stan Berryman reported that the library railings are going to be de-rusted and painted soon and we went out to bid for the heatless duct pump. The city received only one bid for \$18,000. The city has a grant for 4,500 and the Sno-Isle foundation will pick up the rest of the cost. Public works has been experiencing trouble with water tank overflow, pump failure and the telephone line alert communication system, involving replacing transducers and more. Stan also explained the 4th street sewer claim – one house ended up to be the last and only house on an abandoned sewer main that had backup problems. The homeowner filed a claim against the city for costs. It is now in the hands of our insurance carrier.

Police – Chief Marks reported that one of our officers has resigned his position. We still have a current lateral officer list from the last civil service process. Chief Marks has started the process to appoint the next applicant on the list and if the background check and other pre-requisites are met, he intends to appoint him and ask for confirmation at the next council meeting.

Finance – Debbie Mahler reported that Cheryl Knighton is going to begin working in an upstairs office three days per week for a majority of the day. She will be working on establishing and maintaining an electronics records management system. She has been scheduled for several trainings on the subject and has been researching the issue. Currently, the City does not have a system for managing electronic records. When a request for public records comes in, often searches of both personal computers and network files must be done. Each employee has their own methods for saving and naming records with no consistency. This can be extremely difficult and time consuming. Cheryl will set up a uniform system for everyone to use and make searches

much easier. Cheryl will also do more cross training on accounts payable and other financial issues and be doing more clerical support for other departments. While she is working upstairs, Bob Herzberg will cover the front desk. This will start on April 1st and will be an additional \$11,536 in salary and benefits. This was accounted for in the 2015 budget. Debbie also distributed monthly financial reports and graphs for February.

MOTION: To accept the staffing change as outlined. Motion – Allen, 2nd - Black. The motion was unanimously approved.

MAYOR’S REPORT

Mayor McCarthy reported that Planning for the 3-31-15 quarterly economic development workshop and luncheon “Road to Revenue” is progressing well. The June Economic Development Workshop will focus on the Arts.

New chairs for the audience and temporary tables for meetings in the council chambers have been purchased. Two new tables are being made by Kim Hoelting. The old tables are warped and falling apart and the chairs very old and hard. The room will also be repainted. The Clipper Vacations have cancelled their March 21/22 and April 18/19 planned sailings to Langley.

The Homes and Shelter Conference at Whidbey Institute will take place on 3-19, 20, and 21. Mayor McCarthy will attend Thursday and Friday of this week. He will also be speaking at the fire service awards banquet. Mayor McCarthy also attended the Rite Aid opening in Freeland last Saturday afternoon. He will be meeting with Helen Price Johnson on 3-26-15 to give her an update on what is going on in the city.

There will be a meeting of the Port, City, and Island Transit in April to discuss the harbor access and other matters. The Mayor attended the Chamber of Commerce Meeting on March 11th and has written a thank you to Marc Easterly who is retiring from the Chamber. On April 9, the Mayor and two council members will attend a Roberts Rules of Order meeting in Coupeville.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

MOTION: To adopt Ordinance No. 1012 setting the salary for the Mayor’s office. Motion - Allen, 2nd - Neff. Motion was unanimously approved.

NEW BUSINESS

MOTION: To waive the first reading, and adopt Ordinance No. 2013 amending Ordinance 900 and Langley Municipal Code Chapter 2.34 regarding Uniform Policies for Boards and Commissions. Motion - Allen, 2nd - Gill. Motion carried with all in favor.

MOTION: To bring to a first reading, a Resolution declaring the “Firehouse Building” surplus to the City’s needs. Motion - Neff, 2nd - Allen. Motion passed without opposition.

COUNCIL REPORTS

Rene announced the Cemetery Board meets tomorrow and the WOW (Women of Whidbey) had 2 great performances at WICA. Robin Black reported that Leadership Snohomish County had their last meeting here in Langley. Mayor McCarthy spoke at the meeting. She has one more training through them and she is done for the year. Jim Sundberg reported that the Port received many requests for port funding (7) and approved all of them for a total of \$18,123. New Island Transit partial restoration of service starts April 7th. Thomas Gill reported that the Library Board had a very productive meeting on the role of the board and how it interfaces with the city/Sno-ise, etc. Bruce Allen reported that the Island wide Tourism committee will have their next meeting at the Inn at Langley.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:05 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Debbie L. Mahler, Finance Director/Clerk

Funicular Lessons from Dana Point – Another Viewpoint

Full disclosure – City Councilwoman Robin Black is my wife, I have only been in this community for 2+ years, and I am a licensed Main Street Langley Golf Cart Driver – so whatever gets decided about the conveyance from the marina to town, I probably get to be involved in some way.

It has been repeatedly stated by the Mayor, the Council, and the City Planner that there has been no decision on the issue of a conveyance. As I understand, it has not yet even been determined if there should be a role for the City in bringing tourists and visitors up to town. Further, no method of conveyance has been selected. The discussion of conveyance – should the City provide it and in what form will be the subject of the upcoming Charrette.

In the Charrette process a detailed and thorough needs assessment will be conducted – in the open, possible solutions will be generated and discussed – in the open, and the final outcome will be presented and vetted – in the open.

Despite the fact that no selection has been made, and given that the upcoming Charrette is the place to bring concerns and issues – a certain portion of the community has seemed to fixate on the effort to make sure that a Funicular is not one of the outcomes.

I have no basis to understand why they should be so against this mode of transport. Maybe they have never ridden on one. I have, in Switzerland, Italy, LA, and on the shores of Lake Michigan. They were all safe and practical ways of moving people and goods up steep inclines.

As to the Dana Point example cited by Sharon Emerson in her letter to the Council and in a letter to the South Whidbey Record, I have no direct experience with it. However, given the previous “facts” reported about the speculation of a similar device in Langley that have proven to be untrue, I decided to check out the basis of the Dana Point Funicular “failure”. I have to admire Sharon’s determined research on this issue as other than the City’s resolution about the need to replace their existing car at a price of approximately \$750K there was not much to be found by me.

So, as is my way, and out of curiosity, I called Dana Point and spoke to Mike Rose who is the Facilities Manager with direct responsibility for the Funicular. He advised that they were indeed moving forward with the replacement of the car. I asked him why the original car had its early failure. He stated that it had failed for two reasons. They underestimated the use it would get. It has become such a popular attraction that it makes upward of 150 round trips a day on weekends in the summer – it never stops for more than 5 secs. on the landing and a one way trip takes 3 min. The second reason that the car deteriorated was that surfers (damn lazy surfers

according to him) entered the car all day long still dripping sand and water. The original car was constructed out of painted aluminum and couldn't stand up to being constantly exposed to salty grit. The new car will be out of stainless steel. The track and other elements of the system are working just fine. Their car design is very high-end and includes electrical leveling and air conditioning. That is why it is so expensive.

He told me that this new car should be more suitable to the extreme environment that their application works in. He also stated that the manufacturer – Crosslink – had installed a car in San Francisco, operating in an environment similar to our – conveying dry passengers from the marina up a bluff. He reported that it is operating with no problems.

There is a lot of other information and experience that he can share with the City that can help us avoid his painful and expensive lessons learned if a Funicular is the actual conveyance method that selected by the Charrette process. The City should be grateful to Sharon for bringing this possibly helpful resource to light.

In closing, the Funicular does not really seem to be purely issue of contention but, in reality a proxy in the argument about what Langley is, and should be in the future.

Someone else's failure should not prevent us from exploring new ideas – if that were true, we would be arguing about where to put the hitching posts, water troughs and how to dispose of the horse manure from our carriages.

Respectfully, Tim Callison
2nd St Langley, WA,