

CALL TO ORDER:
January 19, 2021

Mayor Lucas called the regular meeting of the Steilacoom Town Council to order at 6:30 p.m. virtually on Zoom.

ROLL CALL:

In attendance were Mayor Lucas, Councilmembers Neal, Henderson, Crumley, Franklin and Smith. Staff members in attendance were Town Administrator Loveless, Attorney Hoffman, Public Safety Director Yabe, Town Planner Fortner, and Administrative Assistants Bollman and Gibelyou.

Mayor Lucas led the attendees in the Pledge of Allegiance.

CONSENT CALENDAR:

Councilmember Smith moved and **Councilmember Henderson** seconded to approve the following items on the consent calendar:

1. Minutes of January 5, 2021
2. Approval of Payroll Checks #115189- #115194 in the amount of \$249,882.62
3. Approval of Claims Checks #115199 - #115256 in the amount of \$290,479.44
4. 2nd Continuance of Final Plat Norberg Estates Phase II (AB 3046)

Yes: All

AUDIENCE INPUT:

Non-Agenda Items

- Rebecca Morris sent an email extending her appreciation of postal clerk Arnie and the Public Works administration.
- Craig Hanna - 306 Lafayette Street, Steilacoom. He wished to discuss the council’s past decision to change the permissible square footage of accessory dwellings, with a desire to obtain a possible exception due to him beginning to build his garage under the prior requirements.
- Rick Clark - 2322 Oak Drive, Steilacoom. He wished to share a few things about the Farrell’s Marsh beaver. He has greatly enjoyed watching the beaver and other creatures there. He noted the dam seems to be sturdy and holding despite heavy rains and higher waters. While he understands the Town’s plans to remove the dam and beavers, he would like to see the Town find a way to coexist with the beaver family as other communities have managed.
- Jennifer Cozart - 702 Short Street, Steilacoom. In response to Rick, she also had commentary on the Farrell’s March beavers. She is sympathetic to the Town’s concern over liability but wonders if the dam is removed and flooding occurs if homeowners will hold the town responsible for removing the dam. She also wished to offer the idea of pond levelers as a potential solution that will not call for the removal of the beavers and inform people of an opportunity to learn about beavers from a beaver specialist.
- Kathi Weight – Steilacoom School Superintendent. She updated us on the first day of kindergarteners being back in school. She reports it was seamless and magical, and is looking forward to bringing back all of their students very soon. Anderson Island has started all their students again in K-3.

Town Administrator Loveless delivered the staff report and answered questions from the Council.

NEW ITEMS:

Pierce County Connection Fee Increase (AB 3050) (Ordinance #1637)
Yes: All

Councilmember Franklin moved and **Councilmember Neal** seconded to adopt number 1637 amending section 13.32.030 (g) of the Steilacoom Municipal Code.

REPORTS:

Mayor

Mayor Lucas reported the following:

- Update on vaccine distribution: Those with the military can get information through the Madigan Foundation or on the Madigan Facebook page. It is recommended by County Executive Bruce Dammeier that all who are interested in vaccine eligibility first go through WA Phase Finder online. They expect it will take 1-2 months to vaccinate the next eligible group of people.
- He informed everyone of what causes wide-spread power outages in Town and what the solutions are. From the time power goes off, the Town may expect to wait about 2 hours for its return. He encourages people to rest assured that the Town will restore power as quickly as possible.
- He will provide information on the history of accessory dwellings to Council and Mr. Hanna.

Administrator

Town Administrator Loveless reported the following:

- He appreciates Mayor Lucas’s confidence in the Town’s work crews. He specifies that it will take a minimum of 2 hours to return power to most people after an outage. For a minority of people it may take longer.
- He highlighted that school started and we are assessing the impacts of the hybrid model on our childcare program. The school has been very supportive.
- The school website has a great communication matrix explaining when different grades may be back in school.
- Weather Update: Next Sunday and Monday might see wintery mix potential. The Town will be prepared.
- He updated Council on COVID-19 vaccination and testing. He estimates that it is going to take 6-9 months to see the majority of people vaccinated. Currently Pierce County is in Revised Phase 1. He expects we will be there for some time. The Town is assessing the impacts the pandemic may have on summer events. There is approximately a 2-month window before the Town makes a go-no-go decision. The farmers’ market has a waiver and will most likely be held again.

Attorney

Attorney Hoffman reported no new litigation.

Public Safety

Chief Yabe reported the following:

- Oral boards were completed last week. We have a lateral applicant and several entry level candidates that look very promising.
- Regarding COVID-19 vaccines, officers who were interested in receiving the vaccines have had the final booster shot made available to them.
- Many thanks to Public Works for their late-night response for the windstorm. Public Safety had minimal responses related to the storm.
- Officer Justin Hamrick has been selected as our new detective. Our current detective, Sgt Bailey will begin training Officer Hamrick next month.
- We are in contact with the school district regarding their phased return of students and we are coordinating the return to school of our school resource officer, who also happens to be Officer Hamrick.
- The Public Safety Building suffered an incident of vandalism last week. The damage was minimal and repairs are in-progress. We have a person of interest regarding the damage, but we do not believe the incident was motivated by any of our greater national political climate.
- We are in contact with both state and federal intelligence agencies regarding assessment of any threats related to Inauguration Day. While there are a number of national and statewide demonstrations expected, we have no suspicion of any events specifically within Steilacoom or our neighboring communities. Still, departments throughout our region are increasing available resources in preparation for the unexpected.
- Finally, officers are currently authorized to wear mourning bands in honor of Kalispel Tribal Police Officer Jay Hughes. Officer Hughes passed away on January 6, 2021 after suffering a medical emergency while making an arrest.

Council

Councilmember Neal reported the following:

- He is thankful for Mayor Lucas's lesson on Steilacoom's electric grid.
- He warns that while he knows discussion of Farrell's Marsh takes place on Facebook, it is not an official communication platform for the Town. Citizens should be aware of this.
- He sent a copy of the Pierce County Regional Council report to Town Council. He summarized how legislature will work this session and what they will be emphasizing.
- He encourages people to be flexible and patient in regard to vaccine distribution and our return to normal. Things will change. He hopes those eligible for the vaccine will take advantage of it.

Councilmember Franklin had no comments.

Councilmember Henderson reported the following:

- She thanked Councilmember Neal for sharing updates on the legislature.
- Congratulations to Officer Hamrick for making detective.
- Announcement: There are two upcoming trainings on noxious weeds for those who are interested.
- She appreciates the members of the work party who came to help clean up after windstorm on Wednesday. 10 came to Sunnyside Beach and continued on at the Community Center. She is looking to make such parties happen more frequently.
- She notes that the best predictor of future behavior past behavior. In the EMS fire report for this year, 2020, 2019, and 2018 had a similar number of calls, averaging just over 500 a year.
- In the last council meeting, she brought up making the land use map and zoning map the same. She would still like to see this considered.
- She appreciates comments on the beavers in Farrell's Marsh. She has spoken with two wildlife specialists and thinks pond levelers are a great idea.

Councilmember Crumley reported the following:

- He would also like to offer acclaim to Postmaster Arnie, as well as Topside Bar & Grill.
- He is sympathetic to Town resident Hanna's cause and wants to make sure he gets a response. He recalls there was a reason as to why they changed the square footage requirements.

Councilmember Smith reported the following:

- Cars are still not pulling all the way into parking spaces at Saltar's Point. He would like to know if a decision about signage has been made.
- He is disappointed in the government's distribution of the COVID-19 vaccine but is resolved to wait patiently.

ADJOURNMENT:

The January 19, 2021 regular meeting of the Steilacoom Town Council adjourned at 7:20 p.m.

STUDY SESSION:

A study session to discuss the sale of the old shop site to SHSD, the modification of the Animal Control Regulations (AB 3049), and the Inspector and Code Compliance Officer position was convened at 7:21 p.m. and adjourned at 8:22 p.m.

January 19, 2021

Steilacoom Town Council Minutes

Town Administrator

Mayor