

## Langley City Council Meeting Minutes

May 16, 2011

Mayor Samuelson called the meeting to order at 5:30 PM. Present were City Council Members Robert Gilman, Fran Abel, Rene Neff, Bob Waterman and Hal Seligson. Also present were Attorney Grant Weed; and Director of Finance/City Clerk, Debbie Mahler and approximately citizens. The flag salute was led by Council Member Neff.

**MOTION:** To approve the Consent Agenda. Motion - Waterman, 2<sup>nd</sup> - Gilman. Motion carried unanimously after several questions were asked and answered concerning the claims warrants.

### CONSENT AGENDA

- a. Council Meeting Minutes – April 26, May 2 & 3, 2011
- b. Claims Warrants Nos. 27844-27881 in the amount of \$37,946.36
- c. Payroll Warrants # 27774-27798 (4/15/11) in the amount of \$39,374.95 and # 27818-27839 (04/30/11) in the amount of \$38,698.98
- d. Approval of Agenda.

### MAYOR'S REPORT

a. May Planting party – Nancy Rowan explained that the primroses and daffodils that were planted earlier downtown looked great during March thru the present, but now need deadheading, cutting back and replanting. Donations of time and money and plants are needed. Saturday morning will be a planting party. Another planting party will take place in June.

b. *Langley Library.* Vicky Welfare, Librarian reported that the library will have new hours next month. They will open at ten AM instead of eleven. Re-carpeting will take place sometime in August and the library will be closed for a couple weeks. Journaling classes will be held soon and historical pictures are up for historical preservation month.

### CITIZEN COMMENTS

Sharon Lundahl stated that she strongly opposes a change to Council-Manager form of government and thinks it is less democratic and more expensive.

## NEW BUSINESS

**MOTION:** To authorize the Mayor to sign a Whidbey Telecom WI-FI hotspot agreement. Motion - Waterman, 2<sup>nd</sup> - Seligson. Motion carried unanimously. Hotspot coverage would be from the boat harbor up First Street to Sixth Street including the entire downtown core. George Henny, CEO of Whidbey Telecom thanked the Mayor for his support on this issue.

**MOTION:** To authorize the Mayor to sign an interlocal agreement between Island County, Oak Harbor, Coupeville and Langley that establishes an Affordable Housing Advisory Board. Motion – Gilman, 2<sup>nd</sup> – Abel. Motion carried with all in favor.

*First quarter financial report.* Debbie Mahler gave Council a financial report on the first quarter. Revenues for real estate, building and permits were all down and the expenses in the first quarter were large. A small draw on the general fund loan was necessary to keep the fund on track. April revenues are improving and property tax will be received shortly. Debbie answered questions from the Council.

*Petition for election to reorganize City government.* The petition was certified and is now scheduled for the November ballot. If the city Council passes a resolution to that effect, it can be placed on the primary ballot in August. Councilman Waterman stated his opinion that the timing of this is bad and does not give people enough time to research it and make a decision. He feels if it is to go forward it should go on the August ballot instead of November when we will also be voting for a Mayor and Council Members. Other members agreed that for budgeting purposes and possible transition issues, the August ballot would be better. Rene also felt that having the change of government and a vote for a Mayor on the same ballot would be very confusing for the voters.

Kay Lagerquist asked how many votes would be needed to pass the change issue. It would be a simple majority of the voters. Thomas Gill asked what happens to the Mayoral candidates if the vote is approved. Do they lose their filing fee? Grant will research that issue. Kathleen Waters asked the Council and Mayor for a facilitated town hall type meeting on this issue to get the facts and information out. Mayor Samuelson said that there would be a series of meetings by the City. Michael Noblet former Mayor and Councilmember of Bothell stated that if the ballot is approved for a change in government, the Council will need as much time as possible to find and hire a city manager, so the best time to put it on the ballot is August. Discussion on this issue ensued for some time.

**MOTION:** To place the change of government petition on the August primary ballot. Motion – Seligson, 2<sup>nd</sup> – Gilman. Motion carried unanimously. A resolution will be needed and will be on the agenda at the scheduled workshop on May 23<sup>rd</sup>.

State law gives Council authority to appoint up to three member committees to write pro and con statements for the voters pamphlet.

**MOTION:** To form pro and con committees for the change of government ballot issue. Motion – Waterman, 2<sup>nd</sup> – Gilman. Motion carried with all in favor. Names will be gathered and the members appointed at the June 6<sup>th</sup> Council meeting.

*Mayoral salary discussion.* Councilman Seligson stated that he has concerns with the present ordinance that places the Mayor's salary at a lower level until a plan of administration has been brought forth within ninety days of inauguration. Therefore, anyone who runs for the position does not know at what level of salary and benefits he or she will make. Council member Neff agreed that the present ordinance needs to be revised. Fran Abel stated that the way the Mayor runs the city has always been flexible; some have had an assistant, some not, etc. She thinks the salary should be set and if they think it needs to be raised later, it can be. Grant Weed stated that state law prescribes the general responsibilities of the office of Mayor and Council's have the authority to decide if the position is full or part time and to set the compensation.

Thomas Gill feels that the salary ordinance as is, bases the mayor's salary on approval of the Council who can reject the higher salary even if a plan is approved. Vance Tillman stated that if the Council can set pay for a Mayor at a full time rate and then the individual decides to work only part time; the pay could not be reduced. Tiny Tillman stated that whether the Mayor is full or part time should be a part of the candidates' process. Kathleen Waters hoped that the "plan of administration" portion of the ordinance is removed. She feels the ordinance should be simple and clear and set a single salary. Janet Ploof feels it should be simpler for the voters also. Tiny Tillman does not feel that it is good to take the power away from the voters and give it to three council members. Dave Gignac sees our current form of government as slower and more expressive of the constituency. Kay Laguerquist feels the current form of government has given the city good budget management, good connections with other jurisdictions, given

us a more polished look and a more connected team spirit. It's not broken, why are we trying to fix it - she asked. Kay also stated that part of what makes Langley so beautiful is its simplicity; it should remain that way. Vance Tillman asked if there is a written job description for the Mayor. The position is statutory and prescribed by state law. Council decided to adopt a new Mayoral salary ordinance adopting a set level of salary and benefits. This will be voted on at the next regular meeting.

**MOTION:** To adjourn the meeting at 8:45 PM. Motion - Waterman, 2<sup>nd</sup> – Seligson. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Debbie L. Mahler, Director of Finance/City Clerk