

## **CITY OF SULTAN COUNCIL MEETING – May 26, 2022**

Mayor Wiita called the regular meeting to order at approximately 7:00 p.m. He acknowledged this was a joint meeting with the planning board. The meeting was a hybrid with attendees both in person at City Hall Council Chambers and via Zoom Internet Conference Service. Mayor Wiita called roll and the following were in attendance:

Councilmembers: Morgan, Aldrich, Dearborn, Hund, Neigel, Sivewright, and Beeler. It was noted that Councilmember Beeler joined the meeting at approximately 7:03 p.m. right after public comment.

Planning Board: Peterson, Keyes, Weideman, and Cyr. It was noted that Planning Board member Weideman joined the meeting during the boardmember comments.

Planning Board Absent: Rockwell.

Staff: City Administrator Ibershof, Community Development Director Galuska, and Planning Assistant Donk

### **CHANGES/ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA**

Administrator Ibershof confirmed there would be no executive session this evening. The Mayor confirmed the agenda was not posted with one noticed, and therefore the agenda was approved as presented.

### **COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC**

Tom Green, 132<sup>nd</sup> Street SE: Expressed his interest in building a convenience store and coffee shop on his property but explained his issue that the current zoning doesn't allow for this type of usage.

### **COUNCILMEMBER AND BOARDMEMBER COMMENTS**

Morgan: Battle of the Badges was a success. He explained this is the annual softball game between the police and fire departments that raises funds for the Sultan Education Foundation to be awarded to scholarship recipients in the upcoming year. Looking forward to the upcoming Memorial Day Weekend honoring those who gave the ultimate sacrifice for our country.

Sivewright: Appreciated the turnout at the Snohomish County Cities Dinner last week which was a great networking event.

Beeler: Acknowledged the great community and appreciated the relationships with the Sultan School District and Snohomish County Fire District 5. Hopes to find that to be a more consistent message across the country with the recent school shooting in the news on the minds and hearts of citizens.

### **MAYOR COMMENTS**

Mayor Wiita participated in the Culmbach Dam exercise yesterday that included over 100 representatives from local jurisdictions. This exercise simulated a break of the dam and what leaders should do. This is done on a regular basis to focus on emergency preparedness and ways to improve and better plan for potential emergency response. Storefront Studio Project final open house on Friday, June 3<sup>rd</sup> from 3:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. at Compass Financial and will have the feedback received so far to show the impact of how this has changed the project to date. Also on June 3<sup>rd</sup>, Senate Transportation Committee Chair Marko Liias would be present in Sultan to meet with Mayor Wiita and City Administrator Ibershof to update Liias work being done by the City regarding US 2 improvements.

### **CITY ADMINISTRATOR COMMENTS**

Administrator Ibershof explained that the first technical meeting regarding US 2 was completed earlier this week, next week will host a regional group meetings, with the following week to include a local community group meeting. He acknowledged the various agencies and entities that have been present and represented at the meetings. He encouraged citizens to participate in the survey to provide their input on US 2 improvements. Provided an update on the parking lot being installed behind City Hall with anticipated work to be completed in 6-8 weeks. Provided boardmembers with an update on ARPA funds progress to date as provided in the staff report.

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### **STAFF REPORTS**

Written reports on file for Public Works, Planning, as well as a Council ARPA update.

### **CONSENT AGENDA**

On a motion by Councilmember Morgan, seconded by Councilmember Aldrich, the following consent agenda items as amended were approved with motion passing 7-0.

- 1) Voucher Approval thru May 26, 2022, accounts payable vouchers in the amount of \$62,971.16, and payroll #9, Premium COVID pay, and benefits #9 in the amount of \$165,450.18, and bond payments in the amount of \$188,741.93 all to be drawn and paid on the proper accounts.

### **ACTION ITEMS**

#### **AB22-39\_Siren Relocation at the WWTP (Federal Signal)**

Administrator Ibershof explained that to accommodate the upgrades that will be completed at the plant later this year, it has been determined that the siren needs to be relocated to accommodate these upgrades. On a motion by Councilmember Morgan, seconded by Councilmember Aldrich, council authorized the Mayor to sign the quote with Federal Signal to relocate the siren at the Waste Water Treatment Plant for an amount not to exceed \$15,000.00 without prior council approval; Motion passed 7-0.

#### **AB22-42\_Resolution 22-06\_Personnel Policy Update**

Administrator Ibershof explained initially staff was to present a motion to approve Resolution 22-06 updating the personnel policy to change the allowed minimum age of an employee or volunteer to operate a city vehicle after discussion with the Mayor. Staff is recommending not to take action on this item at this time. Mayor Wiita further explained this was being presented as the city struggled to find seasonal help, however, in the timeframe between publication of the packet and the actual meeting there has been a lot more interested generated in the seasonal position, therefore, this change to the personnel policy was no longer needed at this time. Mayor Wiita then called to confirm if anyone wished to make a motion to generate discussion. Hearing none, the Mayor moved on to the next item on the agenda.

### **DISCUSSION**

#### **AB22-40\_Housing Action Plan and Comprehensive Plan Update (Joint Discussion w/Planning Board)**

Mayor Wiita explained the purpose of the joint meeting with the Planning Board was to review the first draft of the Housing Action Plan and have an early discussion on issues and goals for future development. He acknowledged the role the planning board plays regarding planning and land use matters within the city.

Community Development Director Galuska provided an overview of the comprehensive plan which was last updated in 2011. He explained the next update of this plan needs to be completed the end of 2024. Staff is seeking direction and ideas that boardmembers are interested in staff to pursue during this process. He provided the required and optional elements of the comprehensive plan; as well as where the city is at in the update process to include the growth targets projected and distributed by the Office of Financial Management. He provided the growth numbers as they were then spread throughout the county versus the growth numbers predicted and assigned to the city through 2024. He then confirmed that the city does have the capacity for the growth targets assigned to the city. In response to the growth number predictions, the city hired Blueline Inc to analyze the current and future housing needs of the city to assist the planning board and council as they work through the comprehensive plan update and review issues beyond the number of units set by the Growth Management Act.

Chase Killebrew and Caitlin Hepworth, Planners with Blueline Inc. then provided the background information of what the plan entails, and work to date that led to the presentation of the draft findings of the Housing Action Plan to include the major findings of the draft plan as follows:

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Housing Needed to Accommodate Future Growth: The city will need to average about 54 new units annually to meet the 2044 Growth Target. The average in the last decade was 23.4 but the number has skyrocketed in the last three years. There is adequate capacity with the current zoning to accommodate this growth.

Housing Diversity: The city will need to provide smaller units as well as units that are affordable to lower income portions of the population. New units being added are mostly single-family residences so efforts may be needed to encourage development of alternatives.

Housing Affordability: Housing costs are outpacing wage growth. More needs to be done to keep housing affordable, especially for low-income households and seniors.

They finished the presentation with a review of the timeline confirming that the needs assessment would move into the public participation phase continuing through September 2022, with the plan to include strategies, policies, and an action plan with final council adoption predicted by June 2023. The floor was opened up to councilmembers and boardmembers for questions and discussion.

Discussion and questions about the housing plan as presented followed, including but not limited to the next steps to include review of drastic housing and income changes from 2019 to the present, homeowner to renter stats in comparison to surrounding areas, consideration of barriers to potential homeownership, number of years it might take someone on average to save for the downpayment required for homeownership, as well as pros and cons of housing needs lacking for specific age targets and the impact.

Community Development Director Galuska then turned the conversation towards the comprehensive plan update as discussion turned towards the multi-family housing needs identified. He shared his insight on how growth occurs and the developers that come based on the demographics in association as a city grows. Galuska provided experience input from his work at other cities such as Lake Stevens.

Galuska suggested the first review in preparation for the comprehensive plan update is to focus on more planning towards multi-family housing and recommends a project focusing on identifying zones in the city appropriate for apartments, middle housing, as well as mixed use areas.

The second idea Galuska suggested is to review properties and whether they are zoned appropriately for the type of growth needed and possibly changing the identification of properties to allow for other zoning needs.

Discussion turned to, but not limited to the following:

- Accessory dwellings and if the code is open to that type of dwelling. Galuska confirmed code is not currently limiting in that arena, but agreed there is more the code can do to address this topic.
- Reviewing possibilities to make it easier for owners to split lots and assist those interested in wanting to help family members, but also wants to consider but also wants to consider the potential ramifications there could be while helping our local community grow.
- Impacts of the pandemic and how the region is experiencing home buyers that can now work from home and don't have to account for the commute to a physical building.
- Consequences if the city didn't meet the requirements of the Growth Management Act to include funding from Puget Sound Regional Council where a majority of our transportation projects receive funding. Mayor confirmed that this only occurs if the city takes deliberate actions to prevent growth.
- Shifting perspectives around the terminology "low income housing" and what the truly means in today's economy as well as the policy shifts needed to implement the changes suggested.
- Property taxes and the impact that has on homeowners.


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- Background and input from those council and boardmembers involved in the 2011 comprehensive plan update.
- Review of significant shift in demographics within the city and how to prepare for and or preserve the demographics within the community; as well as defining what each demographic wants or needs regarding housing. Galuska provided suggested studies and public input questions that could be performed to identify this during the process.
- Suggestion of putting a face on the different housing types when discussing affordable housing and further explanation for the public on what that means.

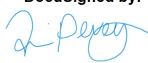
Galuska reminded council and boardmembers that as ideas arise, feel free to send those thoughts to the Community Development Department for review as they move through the process. Mayor Wiita then thanked the Council and Planning Board members for their participation in the discussion.

**ADJOURNMENT**

On a motion by Councilmember Morgan, seconded by Councilmember Aldrich, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:30 p.m. The Zoom meeting connection was disconnected shortly thereafter.

  
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Russell Wiita, Mayor

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Tami J. Pevey, City Clerk