

**Snohomish City Council Meeting Minutes
January 4, 2022**

1. **CALL TO ORDER:** Mayor Redmon called the Snohomish City Council regular meeting to order at 6:00 p.m., Tuesday, January 4, 2022.

COUNCILMEMBERS/MAYOR PRESENT

Lea Anne Burke
David Flynn
Karen Guzak
Judith Kuleta
Tom Merrill
Felix Neals
Donna Ray
Linda Redmon, Mayor

STAFF PRESENT

Emily Guildner, City Attorney
Scott James, Finance Director
Rob Palmer, Police Chief
Rebekah Park, HR Manager/Clerk
Glen Pickus, Planning Director
Wendy Poischbeg, Economic Development and
Communications Manager
Steve Schuller, City Administrator and Utility
General Manager
Brandi Whitson, City Clerk

NOTE: Due to the COVID-19 declared federal, state and local emergency, and pursuant to Governor Inslee's Proclamations 20-05 and 20-28, the Snohomish City Council held its meeting via remote participation.

2. **APPROVE AGENDA** contents and order.

MOTION by Guzak, second by Merrill to approve the agenda as presented. Motion passed unanimously (7-0).

3. **APPROVE MINUTES** of the December 7, 2021 regular meeting.

MOTION by Ray, second by Merrill to approve the minutes of the December 7, 2021 regular meeting. Motion passed unanimously (7-0).

4. **CITIZEN COMMENTS:**

Ival Salyer, Susan Sellers, Milt Grover, and Jeanne Andrews each commented on pedestrian safety and parking issues on Terrace Avenue and the construction work at Walsh Hills.

Terry Lippincott thanked City crews for their work during the recent snow, and urged commenters to be respectful and pertinent to City business.

M. Richardson thanked Council for serving and suggested renaming "Citizen Comments" to "Community Comments."

Morgan Davis remarked on the PROS plan revisions and proposed the City shop yard be converted to a neighborhood park.

John Lorenz commented that improper disposal of masks was a health safety concern.

Debby Lippincott thanked Council for serving and for the Mayor's opening comments.

5. **ACTION ITEMS:**

- a. **APPOINT** Council President

Mr. Schuller described the format previously used to elect a City Council President, who would also act as Mayor Pro Tem. Mayor Redmon opened the floor for nominations.

Councilmember Kuleta nominated Councilmember Merrill, seconded by Councilmember Guzak. Councilmember Merrill accepted the nomination.

Councilmember Burke nominated Councilmember Ray, seconded by Councilmember Neals. Councilmember Ray declined the nomination.

No further nominations were received.

Citizen Comments: None

Citizen Comments: Closed

MOTION by Guzak, second by Ray to appoint Councilmember Merrill as Council President to serve a two-year term, expiring the first Council meeting in January 2024. The motion passed unanimously (7-0).

b. **SELECT** Mayor-Council Liaisons to Board and Commissions and External Agencies

Mr. Schuller described the City Boards and Commissions as well as external agencies to which the City Council appoints liaisons and representatives. After discussion by the Council, four groups were added and the following assignments were proposed:

Board/Commission

Planning Commission
Design Review Board
Parks and Recreation Board
Public Safety Commission
Economic Development Committee
Youth Council

Mayor/Councilmember Liaison

Kuleta, Burke
Guzak, Flynn
Ray, Burke
Ray
Neals, Merrill, Flynn
Kuleta, Redmon

External Agencies

Snohomish Chamber of Commerce
Historic Downtown Snohomish
Community Transit Board
Snohomish County Tomorrow
Snohomish Health District
Alliance for Housing Affordability
Snohomish School Board
Snohomish for Equity
Green Snohomish
Snohomish Community Leadership Forum

Neals, Flynn
Neals, Burke (alternate)
Merrill
Merrill, Guzak (alternate), Redmon
Kuleta
Guzak, Redmon (alternate)
Guzak, Flynn (alternate)
Kuleta, Burke (alternate)
Guzak, Burke
Ray, Redmon

Citizen Comments:

Morgan Davis supported Councilmember Ray for the Public Safety Commission. **John Lorenz** questioned legality of Councilmember involvement with non-profit groups.

Citizen Comments: Closed

In response to citizen questions, Ms. Guildner explained that the liaison position was merely to report information back to the Council; that they were not acting as members of the various groups. The City was part of numerous private-public partnerships, but she would review the code.

MOTION by Guzak, second by Flynn to APPOINT the Council liaisons to the Boards and Commissions and external agencies as listed. The motion passed unanimously (7-0).

7. **DISCUSSION ITEMS:**

a. **REVIEW** Council Rules and Procedures

Ms. Guildner provided background on the draft resolution, stating every two years the procedures should be reviewed and updated if needed. She outlined current procedures and described those affected by the emergency regulations in place due to the pandemic. Proposals that could take effect immediately included moving Consent Items to the beginning of the agenda, including approving minutes as a Consent Item, and reducing comment time on Discussion and Action Items from three minutes to one. Other changes were meant as preemptory for when the emergency was removed, such as allowing Councilmembers three remote attendances for any reason, and limiting citizen comments to in-person attendees only.

Ms. Guildner explained that in legal terms, “citizen” meant resident of the area, but could be changed to “community” or “public” comments, if the Council chose.

Councilmember Guzak clarified that the proposed changes included incorporating approval of the minutes to the Consent Items. Ms. Guildner confirmed that was the proposal.

Citizen Comments:

Merritt Weese, Morgan Davis, M. Richardson, John Lorenz, and Karen Crowley all opposed reducing comments from three minutes to one minute.

Citizen Comments: Closed

Councilmember Neals remarked that generally, the spirit of what people brought to comments was well served by the time provided, and aspects could be changed later if necessary.

Councilmember Burke felt using staff time efficiently and effectively was important, but also appreciated community involvement and providing them opportunities to do so. She stated public speaking was not easy for many, and felt one minute was too restrictive.

Council President Merrill supported remote access for Councilmembers when necessary, but cautioned against abusing the benefit. He felt hybrid meetings did not always work and suggested the process be tested and established before enacted. He enjoyed the increased community participation and supported working with technology to provide remote access and comments. He supported moving the Consent Items, and agreed with Councilmember Burke that reducing the comment time could be too restrictive.

Council generally concurred with Council President Merrill's comments. Ms. Guildner stated she would rework the resolution, including changing wording from "Citizen" to "Public" comments, and leaving the comment time at three minutes. She also clarified that proposed changes were to address what was currently available to the City, and ensure that any changes met OPMA regulations. The proposals were not intended to be permanent, but to create an established procedure to work from.

Councilmember Ray questioned if the City had access to technology that could provide for remote access or hybrid meetings in the future. Ms. Guildner replied technology was not the only issue, as OPMA regulations regarding remote access may change after the emergency proclamation ends; many of those regulations were suspended under the emergency. The City had to be prepared for any potential changes.

Mr. Schuller mentioned the School District may upgrade their technology that the City could use, as well as still having an opportunity to try the Snohomish Carnegie as a meeting location.

b. **REVIEW** City Priorities

Mr. Schuller provided a slideshow outlining City revenues, expenses, services, and topics for discussion. The information was intended to help Council in early preparation of the 2023-2024 budget.

Councilmember Ray queried reviewing Council goals annually and potentially using subcommittees to help focus action. Councilmember Kuleta concurred, and inquired about utilizing workshops for the in-depth discussions.

Councilmember Burke asked about the Strategic Plan, and Council President Merrill inquired on its connection with the Comprehensive Plan. Mr. Schuller replied reviewing the Comprehensive Plan was required by law, and review of the Strategic Plan could be done at the same time to ensure the plans complemented each other.

Mayor Redmon questioned legislative actions and subsequent impacts on the Comprehensive Plan. Mr. Schuller responded there could be more work required, such as regarding climate change.

Councilmember Ray reiterated the importance of developing documents in relation to the goals and to keep moving forward.

Citizen Comments:

Morgan Davis commented on Midtown District development and suggested the City purchase the County shop yard.

John Lorenz remarked on the non-partisan responsibilities of the Mayor and Council, and suggested reaching out to veteran, religious, and other groups for their input.

Citizen Comments: Closed

At 8:49 p.m., **MOTION** by Neals, second by Flynn, to extend the meeting. Motion passed unanimously (7-0).

MOTION TO AMEND previous motion by Neals, second by Flynn to extend the meeting until 9:30 p.m. Motion passed unanimously (7-0).

Council discussed:

- Addressing infrastructure appropriately in relation to density/zoning changes.
- Decision on southern UGA.
- Funding through local improvement districts, for example, to address the Terrace Avenue concerns.
- Utilizing workshops, without time constraints, for Council's education and informational purposes.
- Encouraging community involvement.
- Engaging with Boards and Commissions through workshops.
- Addressing environmental issues when reviewing housing, infrastructure, and public safety concerns.

Mr. Schuller explained incorporating these topics into the agenda planner when reviewing it with Mayor Redmon and Council President Merrill.

8. **CONSENT ITEM: AUTHORIZE** payment of claim warrants #76048 through #76123 in the amount of \$451,984.99 issued since the last regular meeting.

MOTION by Guzak, second by Burke to PASS the Consent Items. Motion passed unanimously (7-0).

9. **OTHER BUSINESS/INFORMATION ITEMS:**

Councilmember Guzak requested funding sources be included as part of the infrastructure discussion scheduled for the next Council meeting.

Mayor Redmon explained the Park and Recreation Board was pursuing Tree City USA status for Snohomish, for which a tree inventory was needed. Staff found a grant to assist with that endeavor, but the deadline was March 4 and required matching funds. She asked if Council was supportive of staff pursuing the grant. Council agreed. Councilmember Ray questioned if the inventory could help with understanding tree canopy and its importance to environmental sustainability. Mayor Redmon replied it could. Councilmember Burke shared County and state resources available for trees and urban forestry.

10. **COUNCILMEMBER COMMENTS/LIAISON REPORTS**

Councilmember Ray explained the Public Safety Commission completed its first report to the City Council and appreciated feedback received. They are working on Neighborhood Watch programs, disaster preparedness, and community outreach. The Council will see the Averill Field Master Plan the Park Board approved. She requested feedback from Council regarding potential expansion of the Park Board's role to include green spaces and environmental initiatives.

Councilmembers Kuleta and Neals shared comments on being kind.

Councilmember Flynn thanked staff for the meeting and presentations. He looked forward to serving the community.

Councilmember Burke echoed Councilmember Flynn's comments, and was eager for productive discussions.

Councilmember Guzak was pleased to serve and help the community move forward on goals in a non-partisan way; to focus on service, not politics. She urged people to educate themselves on COVID and to take care of each other.

11. **COUNCIL PRESIDENT'S ITEMS/REPORTS:** Council President Merrill expressed his gratitude to be chosen as Council President. He supported increased communication and collaboration between boards and commissions
12. **CITY ADMINISTRATOR'S COMMENTS:** None.
13. **MAYOR'S COMMENTS:** Mayor Redmon thanked the public for the privilege to serve as Mayor, and thanked City staff for a smooth transition and their commitment to serving the City. She looked forward to working with the new Council. Her number one priority was open communication, and seeking ways to make government transparent and accessible. She welcomed input.
14. **ADJOURN:** There being no objection, the meeting adjourned at 9:15 p.m.

APPROVED this 18th day of January, 2022.

CITY OF SNOHOMISH

ATTEST:

Linda Redmon, Mayor

Brandi Whitson, City Clerk