

**Snohomish City Council Meeting Minutes  
January 5, 2021**

1. **CALL TO ORDER:** Mayor Kartak called the Snohomish City Council regular meeting to order at 6:00 p.m., Tuesday, January 5, 2021.

**COUNCILMEMBERS/MAYOR PRESENT**

Larry Countryman  
Steve Dana  
Judith Kuleta  
Tom Merrill  
Felix Neals  
Donna Ray  
Linda Redmon  
John T. Kartak, Mayor

**STAFF PRESENT**

Emily Guildner, City Attorney's Office  
Yoshihiro Monzaki, City Engineer  
Robert Palmer, Police Chief  
Glen Pickus, Planning Director  
Steve Schuller, City Administrator and Utility  
General Manager  
Brandi Whitson, Deputy 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. **INTRODUCTORY REMARKS BY MAYOR JOHN T. KARTAK.** Mayor Kartak provided a statement regarding the necessity to conduct the remote meeting due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
3. **APPROVE AGENDA** contents and order.

Mayor Kartak requested a motion to add an Action Item to the agenda, as new agenda item 7, to approve the purchase of a new Case 721XT loader.

**MOTION** by Ray, second by Countryman to add Action Item 7 and approve the agenda as amended. Motion passed unanimously (7-0).

4. **APPROVE MINUTES** of the December 15, 2020 regular meeting.

**MOTION** by Countryman, second by Ray to approve the minutes of the December 15, 2020 regular meeting. Motion passed unanimously (7-0).

5. **PRESENTATIONS:**

- a. Legislative Update - County Councilmember Sam Low, District 5

Councilmember Low provided information on Snohomish County Council legislative priorities, regional transportation projects, and an overview of the County's budget for 2021. Key points included:

- utilizing designated crisis responders and embedded social workers with law enforcement.
- increasing jail fees to cities to help recoup actual County costs.
- widening of SR9, including a new Snohomish River bridge.
- reconfiguration of the US2/SR9 interchange.

- b. Department of Ecology Outstanding Performance Award: Snohomish Wastewater Treatment Plant

Mayor Kartak read a letter received from the Washington State Department of Ecology congratulating the Snohomish Wastewater Treatment Plant and staff Duane Leach, Karen Allen and Frank Schorsch, for continued high performance of the facility.

- c. Proclamation in Support of Law Enforcement

Mayor Kartak read a proclamation supporting Snohomish law enforcement services.

- 6. **CITIZEN COMMENTS.** Mayor Kartak welcomed the citizens to the meeting and discussed the procedures for providing citizen comment.

Citizen Comments:

The following citizens voiced concerns regarding the Walsh Hills Development and safety impacts on Terrace Avenue:

**Penelope Guntermann**  
**Mike Caldwell**  
**Edward Chin**  
**Ival Salyer**

**Jeanne Andrews**  
**Susan Sellers**  
**Milton Grover**  
**Faith Lykken**

**Terry Lippincott** commented on the “strong mayor” form of government.

**Morgan Davis** commented on campaign signs and the Avenue A gazebo.

**Tabita Baty** spoke to Snohomish for Equity

**John Lorenz** commented on Walsh Hills developer reports and the Avenue A gazebo.

City Comments: Closed

- 7. **ACTION ITEM: APPROVE** the purchase of a new Case 721XT loader (*Added to agenda at beginning of meeting*)

Mr. Schuller explained the Case 621G wheel loader purchased in March 1996 was in need of replacement. The loader is used daily by City Public Works staff for alley work, street maintenance, utility repairs, and is a major piece of equipment for snow and ice removal.

Repairing the loader would cost approximately \$70,000. The price of the new Case 721XT loader with accessories is \$171,511.01. The trade-in value for the Case 621G loader and accessories is \$26,250.00, bringing the total purchase price to \$159,060.73. Funding will come from the Capital Equipment Replacement budget line. 75% General fund and 25% Utility fund.

Councilmember Ray questioned the need for replacement rather than repair. Mr. Schuller explained the loader had several issues, and additional repairs could still be needed. The loader was essential to respond to environmental events, and if the machine broke while in service it could take days to repair, leaving City crews without one. A new machine would be more reliable.

Councilmember Dana inquired about the City’s equipment replacement fund. Mr. Schuller advised not all equipment was specifically identified for replacement, but the City had enough funds to cover the purchase at this time.

Council President Redmon asked about the typical lifespan for the equipment. Mr. Sculler replied lifespan was dependent on several factors, including type and frequency of use.

Councilmember Kuleta queried the development of an equipment replacement plan, especially for large-cost items. Mr. Schuller advised about \$226,000 was currently budgeted for equipment replacement.

Councilmember Ray questioned if there would be enough funding left over to replace other equipment. Mr. Schuller indicated there would be.

Citizen Comments:

**Morgan Davis** objected to the purchase.

**John Lorenz** questioned equipment maintenance.

City Comments: Closed

Councilmember Neals questioned the impact of not approving the purchase. Mr. Schuller explained the City currently had a loader on loan for trial purposes, and would rent the machine for approximately \$10,000 per month.

The Council discussed its preference to have a full equipment schedule so it could better ascertain the risk of using funds towards the loader and ensuring other equipment could be replaced if needed.

Councilmember Dana cautioned the Council to consider a decision as soon as possible so the City did not spend money towards rent that could be better spent on repair of the current machine or put towards the purchase price of a new machine.

At Council's direction, Mr. Schuller indicated he would have staff review Council's questions and provide more information at the next Council meeting.

**8. DISUCSSION ITEM: Law Enforcement Multi-Year Agreement - Process Outline**

Mr. Schuller introduced the topic and background of the agreement between the City and the Snohomish County Sheriff's Office (SCSO), due for renewal at the end of 2021.

Overall, the cost of law enforcement has increased about 4% each year, yet the City was able to adjust other areas of its budget to keep a flat 2% growth rate overall. Other factors affecting the City's budget for law enforcement include jail fees, court-appointed attorney fees, 911 dispatch fees, and SCSO personnel. Other topics, such as police reform, may come up during discussions, but the focus of the agreement for renewal covers only personnel (20 FTEs).

Staff requested Council consider certain points going into negotiations, including:

- Rank of Police Chief
- School Resource Officer - City's role in provisions
- Annual cost increase - assumed vs actual
- Full cost recovery

Mr. Schuller presented a proposed schedule to ensure community engagement through the process, utilizing social media and town halls.

Councilmember Dana questioned scheduling a workshop for Council to discuss the financial details of the contract with City staff and Chief Palmer. Mr. Schuller indicated that could be arranged.

Council President Redmon inquired about the City's participation in bargaining. Mr. Schuller answered that would be addressed during the negotiations.

Citizen Comments:

**Morgan Davis** favored utilizing social workers.

**Debby Lippincott** appreciated citizens being included in the discussions.

**John Lorenz** commented on police reform.

City Comments: Closed.

Councilmember Merrill inquired about the source of the 3% increase each year, as well as how that compares to cities that maintain their own police force.

Councilmember Dana suggested the collective bargaining agreements drove much of the cost and increases.

**MOTION** by Ray, second by Countryman at 8:50 p.m. to extend the meeting to 9:30 p.m. Motion passed unanimously (7-0)

Council President Redmon commented on concerns with ensuring funding for law enforcement services at an annual 3% increase despite unknown revenue sources and an uncertain economic future.

Councilmember Ray stated the City should keep longevity in mind, as retention of officers is beneficial for the community. She also considered potential staffing of an embedded social worker or designated crisis responder as part of the contract.

Councilmember Kuleta inquired how effective utilizing crisis responders has been, and if any improvements were seen when using services rather than arrests.

Councilmember Neals suggested competency rather than rank could be considered.

Councilmember Dana commented many of these questions were asked before the City initiated its contact with SCSO. He stated the County controls who they hire and who they assign to Snohomish, although the Police Chief does have a say.

Councilmember Ray believed the City was paying for a service with the contract, and should have a say in in some areas. She agreed with Councilmember Neals.

Councilmember Neals clarified an understanding that each party had its own considerations, but it would be helpful to understand the criteria used in the selection process.

Council President Redmon mentioned the School Resource Officer, and whether that should be managed between the School District and County.

Councilmember Ray indicated revisions to the Public Safety Commission were nearly complete and hoped to have a full commission to participate in the town halls.

9. **CONSENT ITEMS:**

- a. **CONFIRM** Snohomish County Board of Health Representative Nomination - Linda Redmon
- b. **AUTHORIZE** the Mayor to Execute the Relinquishment of the Pilchuck River Dam Fish Ladder Access and Construction Easement
- c. **AUTHORIZE** payment of claim warrants #74143 through #74290 in the amount of \$792,626.72, and payroll warrants #70140 through #74299 in the amount of \$445,323.88 issued since the last regular meeting

**MOTION** by Countryman, second by Merrill to **PASS** the Consent Items. The motion passed unanimously (7-0).

10. **OTHER BUSINESS/INFORMATION ITEMS:** None.

11. **COUNCILMEMBER COMMENTS:**

Councilmember Merrill reported Community Transit's new CEO will start January 11, 2021.

Councilmember Neals exclaimed the latest *Coffee with a Councilmember* went well.

Councilmember Kuleta urged people to reach out if they needed support during the pandemic, referencing resources posted on the City's website. She also talked of roles during the Council meeting.

Councilmember Ray announced a revised mission for the Public Safety Commission was nearly complete.

12. **COUNCIL PRESIDENT'S ITEMS/REPORTS:** Council President Redmon thanked all for their support of her continuing as the City's representative to the Board of Health. She reminded all of Snohomish County's Economic Alliance's yearly kickoff , as well as the upcoming Hearing Examiner's meeting for the Walsh Hill development.

13. **CITY ADMINISTRATOR'S COMMENTS:** Mr. Schuller reminded Council there was a workshop at 5 p.m. before the next regular meeting on January 19.

14. **MAYOR'S COMMENTS:** Mayor Kartak remarked on the following:

- A tree would likely be removed on Terrace Avenue, improving intersection visibility.
- Roles of the Mayor and Council during the Council meetings.
- Campaign signs on private property are up to the property owner to remove.
- Independent traffic and environmental studies are required of all developments, and are the responsibility of the developer and/or property owner to obtain.
- Appreciation for the quick response by Snohomish Police officers to a recent alleged shoplifting incident on First Street.
- *Coffee with the Mayor* at the Snohomish Station Starbucks on Friday, January 8.

15. **ADJOURN:** The meeting adjourned at 9:18 p.m.

APPROVED this 19th day of January, 2021.

CITY OF SNOHOMISH

ATTEST:

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John T. Kartak, Mayor

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Brandi Whitson, Deputy City Clerk