

Snohomish City Council Meeting Minutes

February 19, 2019

1. **CALL TO ORDER:** Mayor Kartak called the Snohomish City Council regular meeting to order at 6:05 p.m., Tuesday, February 19, 2019, in the Snohomish School District Resource Service Center, George Gilbertson Boardroom, 1601 Avenue D, Snohomish, Washington.

COUNCILMEMBERS/MAYOR PRESENT

Larry Countryman
Steve Dana
Karen Guzak
Tom Merrill
Linda Redmon
Jason Sanders
Lynn Schilaty
John T. Kartak, Mayor

STAFF PRESENT

Pat Adams, HR Manager/City Clerk
Debbie Burton, Finance Director
Emily Guildner, City Attorney
Richard Niebusch, Community Outreach Officer
Wendy Poischbeg, Economic Development Mgr.
Keith Rogers, Police Chief
Steve Schuller, City Administrator

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

MOTION by Guzak, second by Schilaty to approve the agenda as presented. The motion passed unanimously (7-0).

3. **APPROVE MINUTES** of the February 5, 2019 regular meeting.

MOTION by Redmon, second by Countryman to approve the minutes of the regular meeting. The motion passed unanimously (7-0).

4. **CITIZEN COMMENTS** on items not on the Agenda

Mayor Kartak welcomed the citizens and City of Sultan Mayor John Seehuus to the Council meeting. He discussed the procedures for providing citizen comment.

Melody Clemans, 313 Avenue D, thanked City Engineer Yoshihiro Monzaki for the flashing beacon at Avenue D and Sixth Street. She would like the Mayor and staff to reconsider the 9:30 a.m. start time for the *State of the City* meeting being held at the Senior Center. She would prefer an evening meeting.

Morgan Davis, 206 Avenue I, does not support the parks naming process. He read an email written by Lya Badgley to Denise Johns dated December 20, 2018. He supports the naming of the 20-acre park as *Julia's Landing*.

Citizen Comments: Closed

5. **PRESENTATION** – 2019 State of the Streets - The Coming Technology-Driven Disruption

City Administrator Steve Schuller stated during the next five years, most automotive executives and technology professionals are forecasting the start of the transition to an autonomous, connected and electric transportation future. Although full transformation of the new paradigm will not occur for at least two decades, the City must start planning now for this coming technology-driven disruption.

Mr. Schuller indicated the impacts will be felt in many areas both inside and outside transportation. He noted tonight's brief presentation will start the conversation of how the City can prepare for the changes ahead, which will have significant impacts on our daily

lives, the success or failure of businesses in the near-future, and on local governments' operations and revenues.

Some of the key areas to be impacted by this disruption include:

- Land Use
- Parking
- City Design
- Transit
- Traffic Congestion
- Traffic Safety
- Law Enforcement
- City Revenues
- E-Commerce
- Automotive Retail Sales
- Street Design
- Pavement Preservation

Mr. Schuller discussed potential impacts in the above referenced areas, and encouraged the Council to begin thinking about these impacts, and how it will affect the City and its residents. As future Council discussions and decisions are made, consideration should be given to these areas.

Councilmember Schilaty asked about pavement preservation and whether there will be more or less impacts on City streets, with the use of autonomous vehicles. Mr. Schuller anticipates additional impacts on pavement surfaces, due to expected increases and continuous use of autonomous vehicles. The resulting wear and tear on the roadways may be significant.

Councilmember Dana spoke to E-Commerce. For example, in the future, if a citizen shops at Amazon, the City will receive the sales tax no matter if the citizen purchases it at a store in Seattle or San Francisco. Mr. Schuller agreed and commented there are concerns citizens within the County may choose to shop less at the City's retail stores, resulting in the County receiving those sales tax revenues instead of the City. An additional concern is the expected decrease in vehicle sales.

Councilmember Guzak commented there may be purchases of large fleets of autonomous vehicles, and with that the need for tires, engines and electrical charging stations.

Councilmember Sanders is excited about the future. He noted the utility world has changed dramatically over the past ten years. As the Council makes decisions related to the City's future infrastructure, consideration to these issues needs to be carefully deliberated.

Councilmember Redmon stated in Mr. Schuller's presentation, it was mentioned there may not be an impact on utilities, parks or events. She agreed with Councilmember Guzak, the City will need substantially more electric charging stations throughout the City. She noted parks and events may be impacted. For example, the upcoming Easter Parade. She asked what would be in the parade in the future, and if parking is not a limitation on First Street, then the City can expand and accommodate additional activities. These type of events will be impacted. She appreciated the presentation.

Councilmember Schilaty asked how planners are considering future impacts related to parking. Mr. Schuller stated these discussions are already occurring, especially in the heavily populated areas.

6. **ACTION ITEM** - Plastic Bag Ban – ADOPT Ordinance 2360

Economic Development and Communications Manager Wendy Poischbeg stated the purpose of this action item is for the City Council to discuss adoption of proposed Ordinance 2360, amending the Snohomish Municipal Code banning single-use plastic bag distribution, and requiring retailers to charge consumers for paper bags at point of sale.

Ms. Poischbeg explained at the December 4, 2018 City Council meeting, Council directed staff to proceed with drafting an ordinance based on the most popular bag management system implemented by twenty-seven (27) other Western Washington cities. This bag management program bans single-use plastic bags and requires retailers to charge consumers for paper bags at the point of sale. The City Council also directed staff to evaluate the issues surrounding single-use plastic bags, their impact on the environment, and to provide a report of potential options for Snohomish policy makers.

Ms. Poischbeg noted the following next steps:

- The ban will not be made effective until a grace period of nearly ten months has elapsed, so that retailers can use up their bag inventories, develop implementation and compliance strategies and train employees.
- The grace period will also give the City of Snohomish the opportunity to provide education and outreach to its residents, distribute reusable bags, and contact and visit its businesses to provide assistance in helping to achieve compliance.

Councilmember Sanders thanked Ms. Poischbeg for her work. In proposed Ordinance 2360, he questioned 8.21.030 – Exemptions, F., which indicates the Mayor or designee may, in his or her sole discretion, approve an exemption request, in whole or in part, with or without conditions. Ms. Poischbeg indicated the intent of this language was for retailers who may have an excessive inventory of plastic bags to provide them with additional time to exhaust their inventory. Councilmember Sanders would like additional clarifying language.

Councilmember Sanders stated he forwarded a video from Lopez Island to the City Council and Youth Council. He would like to expand the ban on plastics to include other plastics, such as Styrofoam and plastic utensils. He recommended Ms. Poischbeg coordinate with the Youth Council as a resource to promote and drive this concept.

Councilmember Merrill inquired about the merchants' attitude toward requiring a charge of ten cents to shoppers requesting paper bags. Ms. Poischbeg responded she received no negative feedback regarding the fee. In fact, the merchants were grateful a fee would be implemented so they would receive some compensation. The City opted for the ten cent fee versus the five cent fee, so the merchants would receive an appropriate offset and to also be in alignment with the state's regulations, if they are adopted.

Councilmember Merrill clarified the City is requiring merchants charge a fee, as opposed to offering it as an option for merchants to decide whether or not to charge the fee.

Ms. Poischbeg stated the intent is to encourage consumers to bring their own bags and the fee provides an incentive to do so.

Councilmember Sanders indicated Lopez Island had an approach which included having bins outside of retail locations directing patrons to "*Take a Bag, Leave a Bag.*" Mayor Kartak is concerned with contamination related to public bag sharing.

Citizen Comments:

In Support of Ordinance 2360:

Heather Trim, Executive Director, Zero Waste Washington
Donna Ray, 728 Mill Avenue
Alice Armstrong, 324 Avenue F
Judith Kuleta, 711 Ford
Emily Collins, 18416 93rd Street SE
Jeanine SanClemente, 22007 E Lost Lake Road

Councilmember Sanders indicated he was contacted by both **Ms. Badgley** and **Ms. Richardson** who support the ban.

In Opposition to Ordinance 2360:

Morgan Davis, 206 Avenue I
Gail Brenchley, 8921 35th Drive SE

Citizen Comments: Closed

Mayor Kartak stated there are five countries primarily contributing to the vast amount of plastics being deposited into the oceans. Sri Lanka is a small country, and it deposits more plastics into the ocean from land than the United States of America. The United States of America is comparable to the size of all the countries in the continent of Europe. He referenced a study from the Environmental Protection Agency of Denmark and its conclusions are the same as the United Kingdom Environmental Agency. The report is SC 030148. In the study, high density polyethylene bags (t-shirt bags), starch polymer, biopolymer blends, low density polyethylene, non-woven polypropylene, paper and cotton bags were reviewed. It was calculated how many times each type of bag would have to be used to reduce its global warming potential to below that of conventional t-shirt bags where some 40% were reused as kitchen sink bin liners. Finally, the bags were compared for other impacts; resource depletion, acidification, eutrophication, human toxicity, fresh water aquatic, ecotoxicity, marine aquatic ecotoxicity, terrestrial ecotoxicity and photochemical oxidation – which causes smog. It was determined the t-shirt bags are far better for the environment than any of the other bags researched, and less impactful concerning their global warming potential. This study provides a clear impact assessment for each type of bag analyzed. He explained the production and extraction of cotton are ten times worse than all the measured impacts of the next worst bag among all they studied.

Mayor Kartak further stated Washington State, which has far more resources to properly study this issue and is also currently working on plastic bag legislation, his recommendation would be to postpone adopting Ordinance 2360.

Councilmember Merrill stated he found the studies referred to by Mayor Kartak as not compelling, because they omitted overall petroleum production and its impacts. There is another study, which indicates we should be substantially reducing the amount of petroleum and its related omissions. The current projection of growth is there will be a 25% increase in the use of petroleum over the next 25 years. This is contrary to the direction we need to be heading to reduce hydrocarbon emissions into the atmosphere and global warming. He supports Ordinance 2360.

Councilmember Guzak supports Ordinance 2360 wholeheartedly. She appreciates Mayor Kartak's research. However, her research has determined the continued use of petroleum products to make plastic bags is a terrible waste. This ordinance helps to change people's attitudes about plastics use. This is a good first step. Further, the City has the support from its local merchants and grocers, as well as the garbage utility. She

is proud to be the 28th city in the state to take this issue on. It's progressive and enlightened.

Councilmember Sanders doesn't want to confuse issues around greenhouse gases and the environmental impacts related to plastic bags and the use of plastics. There are many other considerations for greenhouse gases that are being researched. This is about removing plastics from our environmental waters. When you research how plastics degrade and how they affect the ecosystem, enter the food chain and contaminate the landfills, this takes steps to address these issues. He favors looking beyond single use plastic bags, and would like to also address Styrofoam and plastic utensils. The vast majority of the community members he has spoken with support a ban on all single use plastics. He supports Ordinance 2360.

Councilmember Schilaty would like thought to also be given to alternatives to plastic bags and what the alternative reusable bags are made out of. This is all a part of the education process. Starting this process is important and long overdue. She supports Ordinance 2360.

MOTION by Guzak, second by Redmon that the City Council **ADOPT** Ordinance 2360, banning reusable bags; adding a new Chapter 8.21 to the Snohomish Municipal Code entitled "Reusable Bags"; and amending SMC Section 1.01.080(A) providing for severability and effective date.

Councilmember Countryman stated he does not support the Ordinance.

Councilmember Dana supports the Ordinance. The citizens of this community support this action. If there are unintended consequences, the Council will respond to them as they occur.

Mayor Kartak stated whatever Council decides, he will sign. It is not his decision to make. He is not emotionally attached to his opinions in this matter. However, he does not support the ordinance at this time, as there is insufficient research.

Councilmember Merrill stated he is not aware if paper bags are better than plastic bags. What he does know, is by adopting this ordinance, it will place pressure on the material sciences side of this issue, so that materials are replaced with improved biodegradable materials. He supports Ordinance 2360 as a move toward better materials in the future.

VOTE ON THE MOTION: The motion passed (6-1), with Countryman voting nay.

7. **CONSENT ITEM - AUTHORIZE** payment of claim warrants #70403 through #70468 in the amount of \$442,549.28 issued since the last regular meeting.

MOTION by Guzak, second by Schilaty to pass the Consent Item. The motion passed unanimously (7-0).

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

Councilmember Redmon stated the entire City Council has received comments from citizens concerned about the effects of closing the Maple Avenue Fire Station, and although the City Council does not have authority over the operations of the Fire District, the City is in the process of a land swap with the Fire District which would result in the Maple Avenue Fire Station being closed down. The citizens are concerned about response times and how the sale of the most active fire station in the district might impact the outcome of critical calls. The Council moved forward with the decision to start the land swap process with no

community input. She wants to ensure the community is heard. She would like to hold a public forum, possibly in conjunction with the Fire District's Board of Commissioners, to allow the community to speak to the Council regarding their thoughts before the land use agreement is finalized. City Administrator Schuller responded it may be helpful prior to any discussions to have the appraisal information available. Councilmember Redmon agreed.

Councilmember Redmon stated she is liaison to the Park and Recreation Board and Public Safety Commission. She explained there is a lack of clarity within their charters. She would like to schedule joint council workshops with each group to review and re-write their charters, or be given the authority as the Council liaison to assist the groups in re-writing their charters and bring them before the Council for final approval.

Councilmember Schilaty supports joint council workshops with each board and commission, with the intent of reviewing their charters. The boards and commissions are invaluable resources. She would like to schedule this based on staff availability, and firstly with the boards and commissions struggling with their missions. She supports additional communication with the boards and commissions.

Councilmember Guzak suggests the Council liaisons work with their boards and commissions to draft their charter language and then have a discussion for review at a joint council workshop.

Councilmember Dana stated the re-writing of the boards and commissions' charters should be under the Council's initiative. He believes the Council should develop their charters. He would like clarification on the process. He believes the Council should be directing the boards and commissions' missions and charters.

Councilmember Merrill thinks if the boards and commissions need guidance on their mission, the Council should be providing this guidance and direction based on the Council's priorities.

City Administrator Schuller suggested that the Council liaisons work with their board or commission to amend the applicable ordinances (charters) and provide the drafts to the assigned staff representative to prepare for Council review.

9. COUNCILMEMBER COMMENTS/LIAISON REPORTS:

Councilmember Schilaty thanked the City Streets Division for all their hard work keeping the streets cleared during the recent winter snow event.

Councilmember Guzak also thanked the City's Street Division and maintenance staff for their work on keeping the City streets clear.

Councilmember Merrill commented ordinances have a punitive tone and are uninviting. He suggested as the City rolls out the plastic bag ban, that staff and Council keep in mind the presentation they observed from Lopez Island, which invites people in to participate in the process. He supports an inviting approach.

Councilmember Dana noticed a fleet of street sweepers in the City, including the City's new sweeper. He thanked the Streets Department for cleaning up the sand from the storm. He indicated Ms. Poischbeg did a great job tonight and delivered a professional presentation. He looks forward to working with her in the future.

10. COUNCIL PRESIDENT'S ITEMS/REPORTS:

Council President Sanders recognized and expressed his appreciation to Ms. Poischbeg for her outstanding achievements in promoting Snohomish. She is doing a great job.

11. **CITY ADMINISTRATOR’S COMMENTS:** None

12. **MAYOR’S COMMENTS:**

Mayor Kartak stated the “*State of the City*” presentation will be held on Thursday, February 21 at 9:30 a.m. at the Senior Center. He will be scheduling additional meetings to engage the community at different times and locations. He noted, Ms. Poischbeg has coordinated an event entitled, *Snohomish Business Network: SOLOpreneur*, which will have a meetup at 6:00 p.m., February 21 at the Center Public House, 115 Avenue A. Registration is required on the City’s website.

13. **ADJOURN** at 7:43 p.m.

APPROVED this 5th day of March 2019

CITY OF SNOHOMISH

ATTEST:

John T. Kartak, Mayor

Pat Adams, City Clerk