

**CITY COUNCIL  
BUSINESS/STUDY SESSION MINUTES  
January 11, 2011**

The Business/Study Session of the Monroe City Council was held on January 11, 2011, in the Council Chambers at City Hall. Mayor Robert Zimmerman called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Councilpersons present: Balk, Rodriguez, Cudaback, Tuttle, Stima, Williams, and Goering.

Staff present: Brazel, Feilberg, Quenzer, Smith, Nelson, Wright, Farrell, and Martinson.

City Attorney Zach Lell was not present.

The meeting was opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mayor Zimmerman explained the changes on the agenda for that night: SS#1, the Snohomish County Tourism Promotion Area Discussion would be moved up to be the first item on the agenda. He also explained that, due to changes to the Blackrock Cable ordinance, it was being pulled from the Consent Agenda. He then clarified the action statement on the Council Legislative Committee member selection item for final action.

**Snohomish County Tourism Promotion Area Discussion**

Mayor Zimmerman introduced Amy Spain from the Snohomish County Tourism Bureau, who gave a presentation on the proposed Tourism Promotion Area (TPA). The lodging industry initiated the TPA. The advantages of establishing a TPA include helping the lodging industry to stay competitive and providing funds to develop tourist attractions in Snohomish County. She explained the proposed assessment, the makeup of the TPA Advisory Board and the process for organizations to submit applications for funding. The next step is to have Interlocal Agreements approved by the City Council of each of the qualified cities.

County Councilmember Dave Somers provided a copy of the ordinance the County Council is considering. He asked the Monroe City Council to support the TPA and assured them that East County and Monroe is important to the County on both the revenue standpoint and cultural standpoint. This portion of County will receive a fair and proportional share. He reiterated that this was initiated by the lodging industry. If Monroe decides not to participate, the ordinance will have to be redrafted and go through the process again. It's important that the East County area is included.

Debbie Emge, Economic Development Manager of Snohomish, explained the importance of the TPA and how hard it is for cities to market themselves with the current budget constraints. She encouraged council to support establishing a TPA in Snohomish County.

After discussions and questions from Council, it was determined that this topic would be discussed at a future Council meeting after a business plan and additional information was provided.

The motion was made by Councilperson Goering and seconded by Councilperson Rodriguez, to extend the Business portion of the meeting past 8:00 p.m. On vote,

Motion carried 6/1.

Councilperson Balk voted nay.

### **COMMENTS FROM CITIZENS**

Sam Wirsching, 202 N. Lewis, owner of Sam's Cats and Dogs, is concerned about Walmart coming to Monroe. He wants to be part of the solution that will mean no Walmart. He is concerned about vacant stores downtown, additional traffic preventing shoppers from coming downtown, and that the businesses in Monroe can't compete with Walmart's prices.

Sharon Damkaer, 21318 195th Avenue SE, Monroe, has lived in the High Rock area for 21 years. She noted the businesses that closed after other big retailers came to Monroe and fears losing other businesses. They do their major shopping in Monroe, and will never shop at Walmart. They will go to Duvall to shop, if Monroe grocery stores close. She saw what Walmart did to Ephrata, where downtown lost its heart.

Deborah Chase 18232 299<sup>th</sup> Avenue SE, Monroe, used to live in Kenmore, where she helped incorporate the city and served on Council and also served as Mayor. She left Kenmore because of the traffic. A superstore will bring in 8800 additional trips for a 155,000 square foot store; 12,000 more if there add-ins. US2 Route Development Plan (RDP) projected 47,000 vehicles coming through Monroe in 2030, not counting the extra vehicles that Walmart would attract. She recommends to Council that they ask for mitigation dollars from the developers, which was suggested in the RDP. The additional traffic is not in agreement with Comp Plan. This adds 3-4 times what the City envisioned in the sub-area plan.

Bidgett Edgar, 412 Anderson Lake, Gold Bar, comes through Monroe every day. Getting to work isn't bad; however, getting home is dreadful. All three highways will bottleneck with the added traffic. She asked Council to please reconsider.

Sheraden Kimball 15071 177<sup>th</sup> Avenue SE, Monroe, is concerned about jobs. She disagrees that this will open up jobs for Monroe. Walmart employees sued for wage and hour abuse in the past. They could do that in Monroe, too. Monroe doesn't have much recreation; Monroe needs indoor space and now it's being used for Walmart. She does not want Walmart taking over the town. She suggested that Council look at the Facebook page *No Walmart In Monroe*.

Rosie Tatel, 14969 174<sup>th</sup> Ave SE, Monroe, stated that, if Walmart comes to town, they are moving. If there is more traffic here, people will shop elsewhere. If each person in Monroe contributed \$500 to a fund, the City could be debt free. She listed how much money stays in the community with chain stores compared to local stores. She asked that Council address the traffic problems before Walmart comes in. Work with people who don't want this and come up with a solution. Bring in businesses that will keep people in town during the Fair.

Sheryl Owens, 17744 157<sup>th</sup> Street SE, was born and raised here, and returned after 18 years. She is concerned about traffic on Chain Lake Road, North Kelsey, and Highway

2. She shops in Snohomish, due to Monroe traffic and knows people who go to Eastern Washington via US90, in order to avoid Highway 2 traffic. Walmart will contribute to loss of residents and jobs. Building a large box, such as Walmart, is not good. She asked Council to please reconsider.

Diane Elliott 15550 174<sup>th</sup> Avenue SE, Monroe, is aware the City needs the money. If there is another alternative, would it be acceptable to Council? What happened to the family fun center that had been planned for North Kelsey? She suggested something like that or a Grey Wolf Lodge. She also suggested having people come to Monroe on the railroad. She pointed out that Leavenworth was reinvented. She stated that she has statistics that Walmart is a magnet for pedophiles and also brings in crime. She doesn't want to sell her house and move. She came from Kirkland because of their traffic. She asked Council to reconsider.

Greg Cole, 634 Terrace Street, Monroe, also has a house on North Kelsey that they are working on. He has worked for Walmart and knows both sides. He came to the meeting because of the philosophy that Walmart has. They are killer sharks. There will be a loss of business and diversity; less competition, less variety, and more products from China. Walmart has a keen interest in China and wants more stores there. He stated that Walmart offers lower benefits and lower wages; and they reassign people to avoid paying overtime. They will look for ways to get out of paying mitigation fees. They don't care about families; they want you any time and don't care about the family. For every person who makes it at Walmart, there are 1000 people who quit. Let Monroe be without a Walmart and keep smaller businesses.

Dave Haste 14516 63<sup>rd</sup> Dr. SE, Snohomish, has been with Albertsons for 30 years and just finished negotiating with the union and trying to get decent wages and benefits for the employees. He stated that 75% of his associates live in Monroe. Albertsons' management doesn't manipulate hours to avoid overtime. It's bad to have a big box store come in that doesn't pay competitive wages. People working at Walmart won't be able to buy houses. He is proud of Albertsons' team and what they were able to do for their employees.

Theresa Willard, 27115 Old Owen Road, Monroe, had asked in a previous meeting, whether that property had been marketed by a realtor. She wants to see that property properly marketed.

Mayor Zimmerman explained that the City hadn't used a real estate consultant for the Sabey transaction. It was a proposal that had come to the City in April 2009.

Ms. Willard explained that she had looked at the City Web site and went on to quote from some of the Council members' Web site biography statements. She asked Council to say "No" to the site plan; perhaps we can still make good things happen in Monroe. Walmart is a step in the wrong direction.

Mayor Zimmerman explained that there would be a five-minute break.

MEETING RECESSED FOR A FIVE-MINUTE BREAK: 9:01 p.m.  
MEETING RECONVENED INTO REGULAR SESSION: 9:06 p.m.

## **BUSINESS & ACTION ITEMS**

### **CONSENT AGENDA**

Consent Agenda #2 (ILA with Blackrock Cable) was pulled from the Consent Agenda.

The motion was made by Councilperson Goering and seconded by Councilperson Cudaback, to approve Consent Agenda #1. On vote,

Motion carried 7/0.

After discussion, the motion was made by Councilperson Stima and seconded by Councilperson Rodriguez, to adopt the Ordinance of the City of Monroe, Washington, granting a nonexclusive cable franchise to Black Rock Cable, Inc. for a period of ten (10) years; setting forth the terms and conditions of said franchise; providing for severability; and establishing an effective date, as read into the record by City Administrator Brazel. On vote,

Motion carried 7/0

Items approved: 1) Release Retainage Public Works/West Columbia Street Sidewalk Phase II-CDBG Grant; 2) Ordinance/Cable Franchise with Blackrock Cable/2nd & Final Reading.

### **FINAL ACTION**

#### **Authorize the Mayor to Sign the City Administrator Contract**

The motion was made by Councilperson Goering seconded by Councilperson Rodriguez to authorize the Mayor to sign the Professional Services Agreement for the City Administrator, and, in Section 7B *Termination Pay*, to strike the sentence "On each successive anniversary date of Administrator's employment as City Administrator, one additional month shall be added...to a maximum of six (6) months".

After discussion, a friendly amendment was also made by Councilperson Rodriguez, to change Paragraph 4 to clarify that the Administrator shall move to Step J as shown in the City's pay matrix, Pay Grade 200, at such time as all other non-represented employees receive step increases and shall thereafter be considered for future salary adjustments, all in accordance with the salary increase schedule for other non-represented City employees.

Human Resource Manager Smith further explained that City Attorney Lell had suggested that the "Provided for" language in Paragraph 7B should be added back into the contract. That language would allow City Administrator Brazel to remain with the City of Monroe in another position, should it be mutually agreed upon. Such action would save the City costs of vacation, sick leave pay out, and severance pay.

After further discussion an additional friendly amendment was made by Councilperson Williams, to reinstate the "provided for" language in Paragraph 7B *Termination Pay*, which states "PROVIDED, however, that in lieu of Termination Pay, Insurance Coverage and Leave Accumulation Pay under this section, the parties may mutually agree in writing that Administrator may instead be assigned to an alternative employment position

with the City at a salary and benefit rate consistent with applicable salary range of said alternative position. If Administrator is assigned to an alternative employment position with the City pursuant to this subsection, Administrator shall retain his accumulated vacation leave and sick leave". The friendly amendment was accepted by Councilpersons Goering and Rodriguez.

The motion was on the floor to authorize the Mayor to sign the City Administrator contract, with friendly amendments as agreed upon. On vote,  
Motion carried 7/0.

### **Select 2011 Council Legislative Committee Members**

Mayor Zimmerman reviewed the Council Legislative Committees. He also stated that Snohomish County Tomorrow wants to know who will be their representative on the Advisory Council.

After discussion, the motion was made by Councilperson Stima and seconded by Councilperson Rodriguez, to appoint Councilperson Goering as representative to the Snohomish County Tomorrow Advisory Council. The friendly amendment to appoint Councilperson Cudaback as the alternate was accepted by Councilpersons Stima and Rodriguez. On vote,

Motion carried 7/0.

After discussion, the motion was made by Councilperson Balk and seconded by Councilperson Goering, to approve Councilpersons Goering, Stima, and Williams for the Legislative Affairs Committee. On Vote,

Motion carried 7/0.

The motion was made by Councilperson Goering and seconded by Councilperson Balk to approve Councilpersons Goering, Balk, and Rodriguez for the Transportation and Planning Committee. On Vote,

Motion carried 7/0.

The motion was made by Councilperson Balk and seconded by Councilperson Cudaback to approve Councilpersons Balk, Cudaback, and Williams for the Finance and Human Resources Committee. On vote,

Motion carried 7/0.

The motion was made by Councilperson Goering and seconded by Councilperson Cudaback to approve Councilpersons Rodriguez, Tuttle, and Stima for the Public Works, Parks & Recreation, and Public Safety Committee. On vote,

Motion carried 7/0.

### **Select Council Representative to Joint Board/French Creek Flood Control District**

City Administrator Brazel explained that there is language in the Agreement to have three members from the City on the Joint Board. The Board meetings are specifically regarding their budget. If Councilmembers don't wish to be on the Board, they can designate staff members for the Board positions.

The motion was made by Councilperson Goering and seconded by Councilperson Cudaback, to appoint Councilperson Stima for the French Creek Flood Control District Joint Board.

The friendly amendment was made by Councilperson Balk to appoint the City Administrator and Operations Director as the other two members for the Joint Board and Councilperson Balk as an alternate. The friendly amendment was accepted. On vote,

Motion carried 7/0.

### **STUDY SESSION ITEMS**

#### **Introduction to Northeast Monroe Annexation (AN2010-01)**

Associate Planner Wright gave a brief overview, explaining that the Interlocal Agreement has been approved, the annexation was adopted by the City, and they are waiting for ratification. He explained the map showing the existing land use; there are approximately 60 acres with five dwelling units and an assessed value of \$3,780,700. If Council is prepared to initiate the resolution, he will bring it to Council in February.

Council consensus was to go forward with the resolution.

#### **Metropolitan Park District Discussion**

Mayor Zimmerman explained that, due to the inclement weather and the need to shorten the meeting, this item would be brought back for discussion another time.

#### **Finance Manager/Director Reclassification**

Human Resources Manager Smith explained that the understanding was that Council wanted to move toward a Finance Director position. She suggested reclassifying Finance Manager Dianne Nelson to that position, since she is fully qualified to do that job. She explained the differences between the finance manager classification and the finance director classification. In taking over budgeting, there would be an increased level of responsibility and accountability.

City Administrator Brazel explained that they were taking proactive steps to rebuild the organization, and that HR Manager Smith is updating job descriptions and aligning people where they need to be.

Mayor Zimmerman explained that during the interview process, they hired Ms. Nelson with the thought in mind that she would eventually be put into the finance director position.

The motion was made by Councilperson Balk and seconded by Councilperson Cudaback, to extend the meeting past 10:00 p.m. On vote,

Motion carried 7/0.

After discussion, it was agreed that this item would be brought back for final action.

## **Department Reports**

Chief Quenzer explained that he had indicated in his report that there were awards that had been given out. Also, the SERT team had served warrants this morning, with everything going according to plan.

Parks and Recreation Director Farrell explained that there is \$21,000 estimated flood damages to Borlin Park and Sky River Park. They have submitted the estimate to FEMA, but the City will still have to pay for materials.

HR Manager Smith explained the 360 degree feedback tool for evaluations of employees and explained the process. She has discussed with the Mayor what type of feedback should be asked for. They currently have a performance evaluation tool, which can be used as a starting point. It will be loaded into the survey monkey, and participant information will be anonymous.

City Administrator Brazel explained that there isn't currently a process in place for reviews. He had implemented one in Public Works, and they plan to implement a process in City Hall, as well.

### **Draft Agenda/January 18, 2011 Council Business Meeting**

City Administrator Brazel presented the extended agenda.

Councilperson Rodriguez reminded Council that they still needed to discuss having a public hearing on the red light cameras issue. Mayor Zimmerman explained that there is a legal opinion that needs to be discussed in Executive session.

Councilperson Balk stated he would like a discussion with Council on what they adopted for the changed wage steps on employees and how it will affect negotiations. He would like to have the steps be the same for union and non-union employees. He would also like to consider changing Council Rules and Procedures about the 10:00 p.m. rule.

City Administrator Brazel stated that City Attorney Lell would be at the meeting next week to go over rules and procedures. Communication Guidelines will be also be presented.

Mayor Zimmerman asked about using January 25<sup>th</sup> for the joint meeting with the Chamber of Commerce and DREAM. Councilperson Rodriguez stated that she prefers to keep the 4<sup>th</sup> meeting open, as Council agreed to in the past.

City Administrator Brazel stated that there was a need to establish Council goals and objectives early in the year on which to base the 2012 budget. He will check with other cities and formulate some options to present to Council.

Mayor Zimmerman stated that Council goals and objectives are important for union negotiations, too.

There being no further business, the motion was made by Councilperson Rodriguez and seconded by Councilperson Goering, to adjourn the meeting. On vote,

Motion carried 7/0.

MEETING ADJOURNED: 10:20 p.m.

  
Eadye Martinson, Deputy City Clerk

  
Robert G. Zimmerman, Mayor