



MONROE CITY COUNCIL

Regular Study Session Meeting
Tuesday, July 20, 2021 7:00 P.M.
Zoom Online Meeting Platform

Mayor
Geoffrey Thomas

Councilmembers
*Heather Fulcher, Mayor Pro Tem;
Patsy Cudaback; Kevin Hanford;
Jason Gamble, Jeff Rasmussen;
Ed Davis, & Kirk Scarboro*

MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER

The City Council meeting was held both in person and virtually via Zoom. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and Proclamation 20-28 issued by Governor Jay Inslee, public meetings must still be accessible via remote means.

Mayor Thomas called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Councilmembers present:

Fulcher (via Zoom), Cudaback, Hanford at 7:03 p.m. (via Zoom), Davis (via Zoom), Gamble (via Zoom), and Scarboro. Councilmember Rasmussen was excused.

Staff present:

Knight, Hasart, Swanson, Warthan, Jolley, Farrell, Feilberg, Roberts, Criswell, Peterson, Gardner, Huebner, Stickles, and Christian

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Councilmember Fulcher.

PRESENTATION

Mayor Thomas introduced Chief Kevin O'Brien with the Snohomish Regional Fire and Rescue who presented information about the Fire District as provided in the meeting materials. Chief O'Brien also provided copies of the District's 2020 Annual Report (on file in the City Clerk's office).

Councilmember Cudaback requested clarification regarding turn out times during COVID and inquired about travel times and when it would trigger the need for a new station. Fire staff responded.

Councilmember Scarboro asked about the District's experience recently with fireworks during Independence Day. The Fire Marshall responded.

Councilmember Cudaback asked if the District included fire safety as part of the education plan, inquired about heat wave calls, and asked about heat related education. Fire staff responded and provided some details.

Councilmember Cudaback inquired about potential sources of revenue for the District other than levies. Chief O'Brien the District has researched service charges but didn't feel that was viable at this time.

Councilmember Hanford thanked the Fire District for responding to and providing assistance to his family recently. He was very appreciative for their help and professionalism.

Mayor Thomas expressed his appreciation for all the District does and for recently partnering with the City during the heat wave.



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PUBLIC COMMENTS – there were no public comments.

COUNCILMEMBER REPORTS

Councilmember Hanford stated he was looking forward to the grand opening of the Lake Tye All Weather Fields.

STAFF/DEPARTMENT REPORTS

Mr. Feilberg provided an Emergency Management update (attachment 1). Councilmember Cudaback requested statistics on new case counts—are they among the vaccinated or unvaccinated. Staff responded most new cases are among the unvaccinated.

MAYOR/ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

Ms. Hasart reviewed the extended agenda included in the packet materials. Councilmember Hanford stated he will be absent on August 17 and August 24, 2021. Councilmember Scarboro will be absent on September 14, 2021. Councilmember Cudaback will be absent on July 27, 2021. Mayor Thomas will be absent on August 31, 2021.

Mayor Thomas highlighted the Monroe This Week edition included in the packet and shared he issued a proclamation declaring July 19-24, 2021 as Speed Week at the Evergreen Speedway.

Mayor Thomas shared he met with members of our Latinx community at Saint Mary's this last Friday. This is the first of what will be a recurring meeting to discuss from their perspective about events in Monroe and challenges faced by the Latinx community.

DISCUSSION

- 9.1. Blueberry Lane Stormwater Improvements Project Update – Mr. Peterson and Mr. Gardner provided an update on the project and reviewed the materials provided in the meeting packet.

Councilmember Cudaback asked if anything archeological was found on the site. Staff responded yes and plans are in place to work with archeologists to mitigate project impacts as the project moves forward.

Mayor Thomas stated this is a priority project to get done and appreciates the update this evening.

- 9.2. 2021 Fireworks Discussion – Ms. Knight reviewed the information provided in the meeting materials and stated it was a pleasure to work with Chief O'Brien and his team.

Councilmember Scarboro inquired if there were other cities that suspended fireworks by emergency order? Staff responded. Councilmember Scarboro referred to a comment stating fireworks are not a patriotic right and asked if anyone has stated it is. Staff responded they are not aware of any.

Councilmember Cudaback stated over her twelve years on Council, this discussion come up every year. Was not in favor of a ban before but her thinking has changed over the years. Shared her research about details on how to show patriotism which does not include setting off fireworks. Councilmember Cudaback feels it is time to ban fireworks and look for alternative ways to celebrate



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Independence Day. Safety issues should be enough to enact the ban. Calls for service should not dictate our actions. Doing nothing is not an option anymore but we have time to discuss the matter.

Councilmember Gamble agreed we discuss this every year but understands why there are those that enjoy fireworks. He would consider an event but feels there will still be those that will express concerns. Councilmember Gamble likes using data points to help make decisions but allows that density is an issue as was the recent heat wave. He is unsure how he should act on this issue, especially in a year when many options were taken from people. He is open to looking at options but feels there is time to discuss this issue.

Councilmember Hanford concurs with Councilmember Gamble's statements. His neighborhood enjoys fireworks and feels cities that ban them still experience fireworks issues. Can support an event if there is a way to fund it but feels that there will still be groups that will object based on environmental issues. We cannot please everyone as some will want fireworks while other want them banned. Has reviewed the emails received this year. Councilmember Hanford feels that if there were fires nearby, the Mayor already has authority to declare an emergency and enact a ban. Sees that other cities had officials such as a Fire Marshall that can make recommendations to the Mayor but that it is then the Mayor's call. Feels if there really is danger, the Mayor has authority to act. Councilmember Hanford feels we cannot base our decision on the hottest year ever. We do our job every year when we review the data and feels we are being responsible.

Councilmember Fulcher feels the timing of the Imagine Monroe survey out at the same time as a major heat wave was interesting. Yes, we should discuss this issue further but this should not be placed on the Mayor to determine the need for a ban. The Council should act.

Councilmember Davis stated that overall, he is not in favor of a ban. He has never personally seen issues or problems. He has seen more comments this year but still sees people using fireworks. We are discussing one day but we continue to scale back allowable times. What we have done in the past has changed attitudes. The heat wave this year was an anomaly and Councilmember Davis feels people did take that into consideration. There were no issues in his neighborhood and he does not see an argument that would cause him to ban fireworks. Councilmember Davis agrees Councilmember Hanford made a good point that the Mayor can declare a ban in an emergency but he is against a general ban. Councilmember Davis is open to further discussion if Council chooses.

Mayor Thomas reiterated from the discussion there are four Councilmembers that are open to further discussion but there is no direction to bring a ban forward at this time.

Councilmember Scarboro understands other Councilmember viewpoints but feels there are two aspects for a ban—safety and the effect on veterans. There is also the effect on animals. How many issues does it take before we stop the problem. Councilmember Scarboro referenced the example of action being taken preemptively regarding rocks thrown on Interstate 5; they did not wait for a death to happen. We can ban fireworks in the City limits; people will go elsewhere. The City can have an event. Councilmember Scarboro stated that he feels he is a patriotic as anyone else and he understand what price was paid for patriotism. We as humans can think and change. Animal do not have any input on this issue even though they are disturbed by the fireworks. Councilmember Scarboro would like people to consider more than just patriotism for justifying using fireworks. As we discuss this further, maybe we need to limit the time period more.



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Councilmember Gamble expressed appreciation for Councilmember Scarboro's comments and his service. Councilmember Gamble doesn't take Councilmember Scarboro's comments lightly as he has a Vietnam veteran that lives on his property that shares some of the same sentiments as Councilmember Scarboro but that this veteran is the first to say that fireworks should not stop just because they disturb him. Councilmember Gamble has spoken to veterans that are on both sides of this issue; we will not be able to please everyone. The reservation sells fireworks and people will buy them. Feels that firework sales within the City would be safer and would support local non-profits. Cities that have bans still have a lot of call. What are we gaining with a ban. It would punish the law-abiding citizens and that is his struggle on this issue. Councilmember Gamble does like the idea of a community event but there is a lot of planning and funding associated with it. But a ban would punish those that follow the rules. Councilmember Scarboro stated he struggles with this issue also. Councilmember Gamble stated he does appreciate the discussion.

Councilmember Cudaback stated she too appreciates the discussion. Each year different Councilmembers sees this issue differently and it helps to hear these opinions each year. There was a house that burned down a few years ago which she continues to consider. We do not have the data from the Fire District on this issue and she would like to see that. Councilmember Cudaback stated that just because something did not happen this year does not make it safe and not an emergency. We have had things happen before because of fireworks and she shared past examples. She believes people are law abiding but fireworks are legal right now and people do not just buy them in town. Councilmember Cudaback stated that the safety issue overrules the fun aspect. One house burning is enough for her. She does not know what it takes to say this is not worth the risk. But she appreciates the discussion and everyone's opinions on this matter.

Councilmember Gamble appreciates her comments but his struggle is that we can still have houses burn down even if the City bans fireworks. There is an enforcement piece on this also and there needs to be a linkage there.

Councilmember Cudaback acknowledged there does not appear to be consensus to ban fireworks for 2023 but feels there should be something in the City's ordinances to allow us to take action in emergency situations. Councilmember Cudaback appreciated Councilmember Fulcher's comment that this does not just fall to the Mayor; there should be something in the ordinances that can direct the Mayor if action is needed.

Mayor Thomas inquired if staff should bring something on emergency parameters back to the Council for consideration. There was not consensus to bring this issue back to the Council.

Councilmember Hanford feels that if there is truly imminent danger, the Mayor already has the authority. But he is not comfortable to allow a ban just because we may think something may happen.

Mayor Thomas shared what he learned on researching this issue prior to July 4th. There are two types of emergencies—imminent versus preemptive. Mayor Thomas discussed the differences between the two. He understands what we are discussing is possibly having guidelines for preemptive emergency bans. We do not have this at this time. Mayor Thomas also express he felt there is a statewide issue regarding fireworks in that there is no uniform regulations governing all properties. The state needs to provide better direction. Mayor Thomas appreciates the discussion about this issue and recognizes this is a complex issue. He requested that as Councilmember discuss this issue with constituents, please let them know that the City does not allow the Mayor to make the same decisions as other cities regarding fireworks. Mayor Thomas also shared that he agrees that this should not be the decision of



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just one person, such as the Mayor. There needs to be some prescriptive standards before these decisions are made. He has heard mixed messages on this topic but he would like some direction from Council on this issue. As there are two Councilmembers that would like to have this issue regarding prescriptive standards to consider be brought back for discussion, this item will be scheduled for a future meeting.

Councilmember Hanford inquired if this should go to Legislative Committee first. Mayor Thomas clarified that the discussion would be for the whole Council so that the issue can be narrowed before going to committee. Mayor Thomas reiterated the discussion request is for what is being done in Snohomish County and other cities that allowed their chief executive or Mayor to enact a ban. Mayor Thomas inquired if the Council would prefer to have this brought to the Legislative Committee first or to the entire body. Consensus was to bring this back to the entire body.

Mayor Thomas inquired of the members of the P3 Council Committee if they would be willing to change the start time of the July 27th scheduled meeting from 6:00 pm to 5:30 pm due to the number of items scheduled on the agenda. There was no objection from the committee members in attendance.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Mayor Thomas noted the need for an executive session and provided the following information:

The City Council will convene an executive session for the purposes of discussing property acquisition pursuant to RCW 42.30.110(1)(b) for 7 minutes. The Mayor will notify the Interim City Clerk (Ms. Hasart) if the executive session has been extended and the Interim City Clerk will notify the public. Council is anticipated to take action following the executive session. For purposes of the executive session, the Council will leave the current, publicly accessible Zoom meeting and will join a new Zoom meeting for which the dial-in information has been separately provided to the Council Members.

The Council meeting was recessed to executive session at 8:55 p.m. for 7 minutes.

At 9:02 p.m. the executive session was extended to 9:05 p.m.

At 9:05 p.m. the executive session was extended to 9:08 p.m.

The executive session ended at 9:07 p.m.

The Council meeting reconvened to regular session at 9:08 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Councilmember Gamble moved to adjourn the meeting. Councilmember Hanford seconded. Motion passed 6-0.

MEETING ADJOURNED: 9:09 p.m.


Geoffrey Thomas, Mayor

Geoffrey Thomas, Mayor

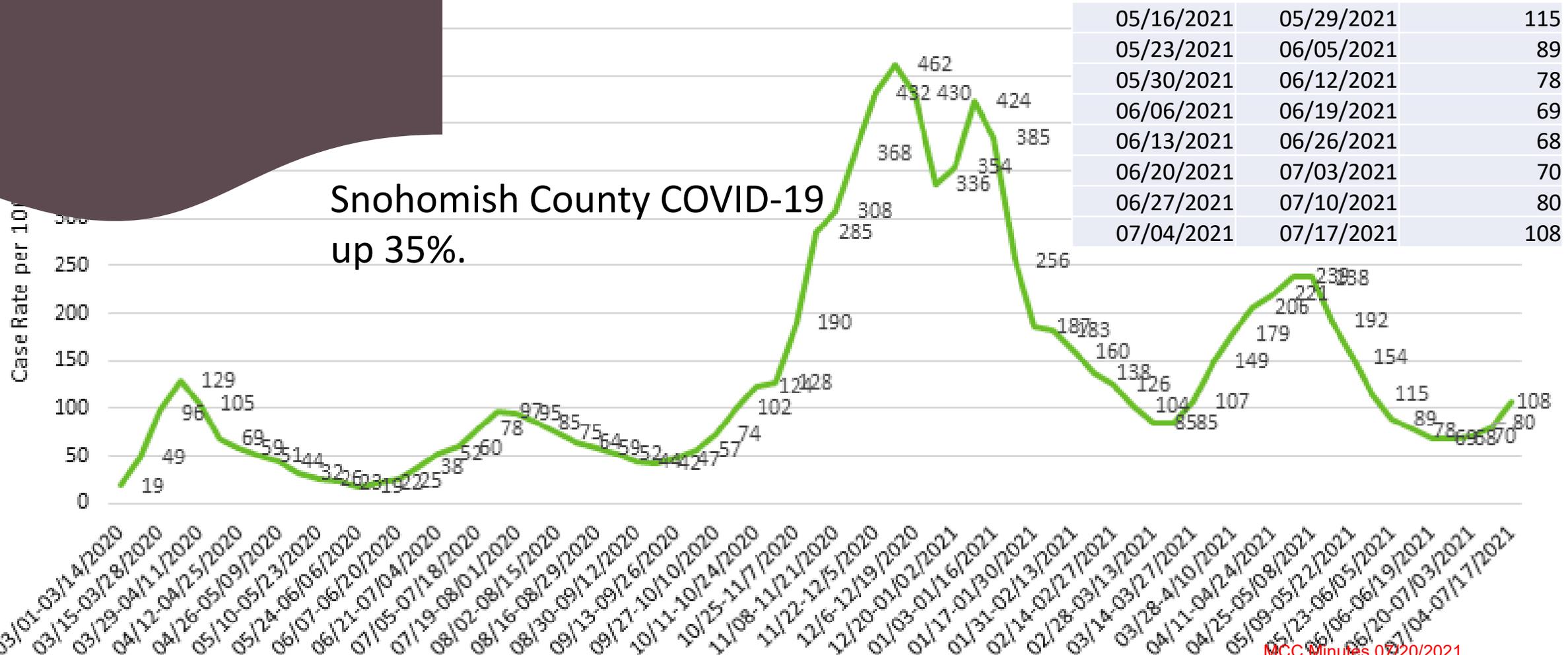


Rebecca R. Hasart, Interim City Clerk

COVID-19 Case Rate

SNO

Case Rate per 100,000 for 2-week Rolling Period (Updated Mondays)



Vaccination Progress

As of July 8, 2021

Total Doses Administered: **874,677**

Completed Vaccinations: **425,701**

Percent of Snohomish County
who have initiated vaccination: **66%**

Percent of Snohomish County
Completely Vaccinated: **60%**

Based on Percentage of
Snohomish County Residents Aged 12+

www.snohd.org/covidvaccine or bit.ly/snocovaccine



Vaccination Progress

As of July 15, 2021

Total Doses Administered: **884,279**

Completed Vaccinations: **431,864**

Percent of Snohomish County
who have initiated vaccination: **67%**

Percent of Snohomish County
Completely Vaccinated: **61%**

Based on Percentage of
Snohomish County Residents Aged 12+

www.snohd.org/covidvaccine or bit.ly/snocovaccine



MCC Minutes 07-20-2021

Final Audit Report

2021-08-11

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