

CITY OF STANWOOD
City Council Special Workshop Meeting
Thursday, October 22, 2020 – 5:15 p.m.
Zoom Online Meeting & Telephone
MINUTES

1. Welcome

Mayor Elizabeth Callaghan called the meeting to order at 5:15 p.m.

Deputy Clerk Sara Robinson called the roll with the following Councilmembers present: Rob Johnson, Diane White, Darren Robb, Timothy Pearce, Steve Shepro, Sid Roberts and Judy Williams. The meeting was quorate.

Also present: Interim Finance Director Wendy Dowhower, Fire Chief John Cermak, Police Chief Rob Martin, City Administrator Jennifer Ferguson and Deputy Clerk Sara Robinson.

2. 2021-2022 Biennial Budget Follow up –

City Administrator, Jennifer Ferguson presented the proposed 2021-2022 Biennial Budget. A copy of the questions received from the councilmembers is attached. Ferguson reviewed the property tax information and explained the 1% levy amount. Council appreciates the additional time and explanation of the budget documents. The Civic Campus project was discussed and noted that it is reflected in budget at its current state as it is paused for now for many reasons.

3. Adjourn

Mayor Elizabeth Callaghan adjourned the meeting at 6:45 pm.

CITY OF STANWOOD

ATTEST:

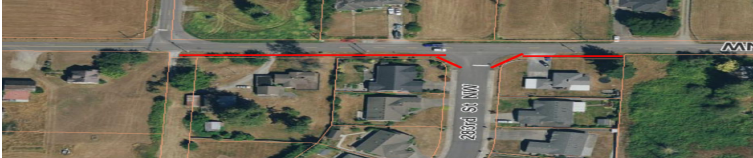

Elizabeth Callaghan
Elizabeth Callaghan (Nov 23, 2020 18:53 PST)
Elizabeth Callaghan, Mayor


Elizabeth Callaghan
Jennifer Ferguson (Nov 23, 2020 18:55 PST)
Jennifer Ferguson, City Clerk

City of Stanwood
2021-2022 Budget Deliberations

Budget Questions	Asked By	Budget Page Reference	Response
Could you provide a compelling reason to vote YES for the property tax levy, especially when many people are struggling? I was told that exercising the right to impose this levy can be tabled and revisited in 2021 when we could propose a 2% increase. Is this true? What would the levy amount be for 2021 if not increased the 1%?	Shepro; Robb	Page 14, 22	The City is limited to a 1% increase in property tax. This equates to a \$17,000 increase from last year. The Council may choose to "bank" it's tax capacity and increase taxes in a future year; however may be limited to other statutory limits for tax increases and does not allow for minor consistent increases to provide for the cost of activities such as parks and street maintenance. For example, the cost allocation for a new park maintenance position and PW supervisory positions is over \$50,000. \$17,000 covers only 34% of this much needed staffing resource. Another cost would be the annual increases for public safety and law enforcement services with the County that increase about \$200,000 each year. Note the council should still increase the levy for new construction which is \$67,000 and begin capturing levy from new residential value. Consistent increases minimize larger increases in future years.
Could you provide more specifics as to what the \$4.5 million Park & Trail Bond Proceeds are intended for? Are they intended to be strictly used on infrastructure only?	Shepro	Page 31	Park and trail improvements covered under the \$4.5 million bond include the Port Susan Trail, Ovenell and Downtown park. Debt funds should only be used for capital investment and the city must find other sources to support the on-going operation and maintenace of the park facilities. The Stanwood Legislative agenda for 2021 will support a new funding source for parks, such as park benefit districts - a sales tax funded, voter approved source to pay these types of debt obligations, instead of reliance on the general fund
The 106th Bypass is not a project I am familiar with. I could not find where it has ever been discussed by the Planning Commission. It appears that it would mainly benefit people driving from Camano Island to destinations to the north of Stanwood. I understand the need for a roundabout at Ovenell, but why is the bypass needed and why are we asking Stanwood residents to pay for this new road? Ovenell looks to be several years away from being an actual park. Is this the right time to be allocating money to this project?	Shepro	Page 31, A6, A8, A1	City staff has been working with WSDOT and Island County on options to improve traffic flow along SR 532 while ensuring that local access into and out of the downtown core can be maintained. This started with the \$10,000 grant provided by WSDOT and accepted by the City Council in 2019. WSDOT has provided technical analysis of different traffic improvement scenarios to help inform future traffic and CIP decisions. This project has not yet been forwarded for public debate; staff has been waiting on the WSDOT traffic analysis prior to starting the public process. We only want to forward improvement options to the public that provide a noticable benefit to the community and improve traffic flow along SR 532. The public process on improvement options is anticipated to start in 2021 and is included in the up coming years work plan. Improving intersections on SR532 is a high priority and benefits Stanwood residents and noted in the community survey responses in 2019. WSDOT was not originally supportive of a roundabout for just Ovenell park access but this new road adds to the justification for it and eliminates congestion on the state route and on 102nd Ave, which is a major source of traffic complaints from city residents. Funding for transporation improvements (bond issuances) is planned to use TBD sales tax dollars which are paid for by not only Stanwood residents but Camano Island residents and other visitors to our area. Ovenell Park improvement projects is included in the 6-year CIP
You implied that there would be money in this budget to improve 80th Avenue. I could not find any money for 80th in this 2-year budget proposal. Is it there somewhere?	Shepro	Page 19 and A4	The allocation is for professional services to study the 80th Avenue and 64th Avenue corridors are in the General Fund Community Development Department page 19. Issues that have been raised on these two corridors include traffic volumes and speed. The purpose of the study is gather data and understand what types of improvements might help with both circulation and pedestrian / neighborhood comfort. While the standard widening projects are included in the 6-year CIP, page A4 and estimated to start in 2023 as the funding sources for this improvement is to be paid for by development, the study may identifiy other improvements which will be included in the 2024 Comprehensive Plan update. Should the city pay for the improvements then debt would need to be issued to complete sooner than anticipated development
I would like to know more about the decision to place a downtown park across from the railroad tracks. I don't recall either the PTAC or the Planning Commission discussing this. I question the location of placing a park next to the very noisy Burlington tracks, our how people would be expected to "rest and relax" at this location.	Shepro	A12	Per the PROS plan, a downtown or urban plaza gathering place is identified. For many years, the City has made attempts to acquire the property to improve and create a gathering and gateway area to the eastside downtown and this space will enhance the potential for development of a towncenter concept on the eastside. The 2020 budget included \$30,000 to explore the opportunities to add an urban park in the downtown core. A brownfield clean up grant from the WA Department of Commerce came available which enabled the city to revisit the option to purchase the site. The project aligns with the City Beautification Action Program by providing additional public space for festivals and other city events. A westside park would also be sought out as part of the town center concept and gathering space as well
Stanwood is top heavy with parks in the floodplain. This budget is proposing to spend approx. \$4,000,000 on these downtown parks and only \$400,000 for one park (Church Creek) on the hill. Since 90% of the population lives on the hill, people are asking for a park in NE Stanwood now. I would appreciate a discussion about how to rectify this imbalance.	Shepro	A11	Past City Councils and PTAC; along with community survey responses prioritize existing parks over new. Should the Civic Campus project change, there may be opportunity to expand Church Creek park south onto the property the city currently owns by constructing a smaller facility for police department; so the dollar equivalency would begin to even out the allocations on existing parks. Per the PROS plan a park should be considered around 280th and 300th. Any new undeveloped parkland would compete with the existing parks for completion. The upcoming 2024 Comprehesnive Plan update (which starts in 2021) provides an opportunity to start the conversation about park space allocation. Dicussions should include: type of park, general location, uses, and update to the CIP. In addition, the distribution of parks throughout the city should be discussed as current policy is that subdivisions provide their own private park space. If the City wants public parks, we may want to reconsider current policy and instead of developers building private parks have some type of payment in lieu fee which the city can then use to purchase land.

City of Stanwood
2021-2022 Budget Deliberations

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One of the City's stated goals is to make Heritage a "tournament ready" park. The two new baseball/softball fields will not be enough to make Heritage tournament ready. And, this budget does not include money to achieve the tournament ready goal. In fact, the Capital Budget for Heritage (pg. A15) does not project any money for this goal through 2025. Do we need to re-assign some priorities?	Shepro	A15	Funding for the Heritage Park field improvements are in 2020 which follows the PROS plan to improve existing properties first prior to building facilities or purchasing new parklands. The 6-year CIP focuses on finishing construction of the Heritage Park ballfield improvement project as well as other Heritage Park improvements, Hamilton Park, and needed improvements to Church Creek Park. Future planning for Ovenell has been added, but this is the Council's policy if they'd like to focus on additional planning and improvements to Heritage Park or Ovenell. Staff actively pursues grant funds for this park and all parks to be developed, which drives down the cost the city must allocate to park improvements and in the proposed budget uses debt proceeds as a source .
At the August 13th Workshop, the majority of Councilmembers expressed a strong interest in creating a Parks Department or in hiring a Parks Director or both. I believe Mayor Callaghan has also talked about making this a priority. There appears to be no money in this budget to do either of these things, unless this is what the \$4.5 million bond debt is intended for. Let's discuss this in more depth	Shepro	Page 19	The allocation is for professional services to undertake a feasibility study on recreation programming. The goal is to determine what to offer and then determine what staffing is necessary. To hire staff and set up a department without a menu of recreation programming to be offered may be premature. Park and recreation expenditures are typically not fully covered by user fees. Parks planning is handled within Community Development and parks maintenance is handled within Public Works. There is no current Recreation department. To combine all three into a parks and recreation department may create duplicate efforts for two main disciplines of a new department. Staff highly recommends the feasibility study on recreation and what we would program.
What is our debt capacity? Provide more analysis on the debt required for projects	Robb	Page 30	Overall debt capacity is based on percentage of Assessed Valuation (AV) with 2021 AV over \$1.37 billion, our capacity for non-voted debt is 1.5% and overall capacity is 2.5% of AV. The City can issue up to \$33 million. Staff will review the proposed debt issuances during the budget worksession
What measures are there to support hiring an Economic Development Manager	Johnson	Page 19	The econ dev manager will support business retention for existing businesses by providing technical services and resources for successful business. 2. Recruitment efforts such as market studies for what types of businesses are attracted to the community. 3. Sales tax revenues generated by a new business would be determined by knowing what type of business and difficult to measure as the annual sales would be unknown 4. measure such as increases in sales tax, decreases in the number of vacant commercial spaces, satisfaction surveys of existing businesses, number of new business attracted to the community, number and type of new jobs brought to the community, analytics on Discover Stanwood Camano website. Note this position is planned to shift our tourism initiatives mostly in-house
I see in the budget a .5 FTE for a code enforcement officer. I'm happy about that and hope that person can be hired sooner than later.	Roberts	Page 19	The staff position is planned for 2022 after an assessment to determine whether we contract or hire internally for this level of service
There has been some discussion about a “scrub” of the municipal code in 2021-2022. That is badly needed in my opinion. Many archaic terms and some substantive discussion that the council should have about changes. Rather than using staff time for that, I would like to see some monies in the budget allocated for legal work regarding that endeavor. Council could weight in on the content but it should be drafted by legal professionals.	Roberts	Page 17	Staff is planning to assess the amount of SMC amendments are necessary. An RFP would be in order for soliciting consultants to provide codification services. Once the scope is known, the City Council may consider a budget amendment to accommodate for this project. Note: projects that are conducted by professional service agreements do not mean that staff does not devote time to oversight and keeping the project on track. Work plan capacity always needs to be a consideration but can be modified by saying "what shall we delay or not do" so that we can focus sufficiently on other workload. A full code scrub is recommended by staff, but is a major undertaking. The 2021/2022 work plan includes majors updates to the Comprehensive Plan. Some code edits can be done with this work effort, but a major code revision should follow the Comp Plan update.
At the top of Candle Ridge II, as 283 rd connects to 80th Ave NW, a critical piece of sidewalk was never constructed by the developer. It is a long story, but the work was bonded and funds were deposited with the city to do that work. However, the funds were returned to the developer. The developer subsequently went out of business. The Issue: Those sidewalks will never be constructed by a developer of any property or development on 80 th . Takeaway: These sidewalks would provide a critical connection to foot traffic off 80th and that will increase as Schmidt plat and Chandler get constructed. The request: I would like to see the city construct that piece of sidewalk in fund 103. Many residents have asked about it. Note: all right-a-way has been dedicated. Without city involvement, that will always be a piece of sidewalk missing. This piece would connect to future developer extensions	Roberts	A27	 This project may be added to the capital budget. Funding may be possible through TBD dollars. An assessment would be needed and budget amendment after Council consideration. This project can be looked at with the 80th & 64th Avenue study which is included in the Community Development Departments 2021 work plan. Future CIP projects will come from the 80th Avenue study.