



Meeting Location:
Council Chambers
216 Prospect Street
Port Orchard, WA 98366

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City Council Minutes

Work Study Session of Tuesday, March 17, 2026

Roll Call was taken by the City Clerk as follows:

Present: John Morrissey, Mayor Pro-tem, Position No. 2
Jay Rosapepe, Councilmember, Position At-Large
Shirah Dedman, Councilmember, Position No. 6
Mark Trenary, Councilmember, Position No. 1
Eric Worden, Councilmember, Position No. 4
Heidi Fenton, Councilmember, Position No. 5
Robert Putaansuu, Mayor

Absent: Scott Diener, Councilmember, Position No. 3

Staff present: IT Manager Dunham, Community Development Director Bond, City Clerk Wallace, Deputy City Clerk Floyd and Communications Specialist Hansen.

Staff present via Zoom: City Attorney Archer and Community Development Director Bond.

Audio/visual was successful.

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Putaansuu called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

2. DISCUSSION ITEMS

Mayor Putaansuu explained if there is enough time, two items will be added to the agenda for discussion: tents, and the downtown grant program.

A. AI Policy

IT Manager Dunam, provided a presentation 'A.I. Committee, Establishing a Framework for Responsible AI Usage' which included the Purpose of the AI Committee, Why AI Policy Matters for Port Orchard, Alignment with City Goals and Ethical Standards, Committee Inception, the AI Committee Membership, Policy Development Timeline, Policy Objectives, Core Principles, Usage Guidelines: Human-in-the-Loop, Data Security and Privacy, Acquisition and Compliance, Addressing Feedback, AI Review Framework, and Implementation and Support.

Additional discussion was held which included education, relation to public records requests, implementation, vendors, and that Councilmembers would not be subject to the policy.

Council Direction: Allow Councilmembers a couple more weeks to review and understand the policy with possible adoption during the first meeting in April.

B. Naming Rights and Philanthropic Giving

Mayor Putaansuu provided an update on Kitsap Community Foundation applying for a grant and no capacity to do a fundraising campaign.

Jason Driver, Executive Director of Kitsap Regional Library, spoke about donor intent and transparency. They are aligned in wanting to see the community events center built as the library will have a critical space. They are applying for a state grant for part of their funding requirements and securing donations through the Kitsap Regional Library Foundation.

Additional discussion was held which included contribution from Public Facilities District, staffing ability, paying an outside vendor to do the work, going out for an RFP [Request for Proposal], sponsorships, and making sure to align with the library on donorships.

Council direction: Staff to advertise an RFP for Fundraising Campaign Consulting Services.

C. NEW: Cost for Inspection of Tents

Community Development Director Bond said in spring of 2025, the City's fee resolution was amended. One of the amended fees had to do with permits for membrane structures. These are large tents for special events. Under the building code they do require a permit, and the tents have a pretty high wind load so there is a risk if you have windstorms the tents could pick up and leave. We want to inspect those and make sure that they are assembled in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions and that they are anchored properly. When we have special events, it's a requirement that you get these permits. The fee has always been \$0 but there was a technology fee. Staff is sometimes having to do inspections after hours. It is about 2 to 3 hours for plan review and inspection time, so, we established a fee per tent, somewhere in the mid-\$200 range [\$225].

We have an event planned that is proposing to put up two tents. They feel like getting charged twice for tents that are being set up at the same time was unreasonable or an unfair fee.

The Finance Committee talked about revising the structure so that if somebody is having an event with multiple tents, they would pay a flat fee for the first tent, and then a smaller fee for any additional tents, provided they're installed at the same time and permitted at the same time.

We plan to bring a fee resolution revision to Council next week where we're amending the membrane tent structure permit fee.

Discussion was held which included the current and proposed fees, inspection and plan reviews, and technology fee.

Council direction: Staff to move forward with the proposed changes and bring them to the next Council meeting for adoption.

D. NEW: Lodging Tax Funding

Councilmember Morrissey explained a request has been made to reopen lodging tax funding. This organization was not awarded any money because their application was not submitted on time. He is inclined to not reopen as there is no budget to reallocate. We can't rescind the contracts that have already been awarded.

Council direction: Not reopen for lodging tax funding.

E. NEW: Consent Agenda Approval Process

Mayor Putaansuu asked the Council to contact him in advance if they would like to move an item from the Consent Agenda to Business Items as the approval of the Consent Agenda has gotten a little clunky.

City Attorney Archer noted staff does what the Council tells us to do. So if Council gives staff rules about what goes on Consent and what doesn't, we follow those rules. We're not trying to advocate for a lack of transparency in any way, we are simply doing what Council has told staff.

Discussion was held which included asking the Mayor or department head for clarification on items, item transparency, and types of items listed under Consent.

Council direction: No direction given to staff.

F. NEW: Grant Program for Downtown Improvements

City Attorney Archer explained she and Community Development Director Bond met with the Development Director of the City of Auburn about their Facade Improvement Grant Program. The program started from a declaration of an emergency from the Mayor's office issued as to the condition and safety of the downtown core. If we start with a similar declaration, it gives us some leverage to avoid gifting challenges. We also focus on the benefits to the public of the program, and that's how we establish that this is for a valid program, or for a valid public purpose.

The City of Auburn's program focuses on the restoration of the facades of their historic and unique buildings in their downtown core. They grant approximately \$100,000 per year for this program, and it is a rolling, first-come, first-served grant application process. They utilize a matching program for theirs, and these funds shall only be used for facade improvements that are of a certain nature. Commercial property owners or business leases with written authorization of the property owner meet the eligibility requirements. Buildings with more than 25 full-time employees, or that are primarily residential do not meet the criteria, and newly constructed buildings do not meet the criteria. You need to be one of the historic older buildings.

As to their matching and the actual award structure, they have 3 categories. The first category is grants-seeking money for improvements of \$5,000 or less. These are things that do not require building permitting, such as painting, some decorative lighting, signage, and awnings.

If you get that first category of a grant, you have no matching obligation, other than you're expected to do everything within that \$5,000, so there's some volunteer labor likely expected. The second category is improvements above \$5,000, but under \$50,000. They will require professional design services, and will have a graduated matching contribution. These are usually capturing window, door, storefront upgrades, and masonry work. This does require a match, and it is a sliding scale. Typically it is 30% owner, 70% grant funding, up to \$30,000. That's where the \$30,000 comes from. As it goes up to that \$50,000 field between 30 and 50, the match increases to 50% owner, 50% city. The third category are for improvements that are at \$50,000 and would be full facade restoration, significant structural or electrical work, and significant historic restoration.

This is reimbursement-based, receipt are submitted rather than getting the funding up front.

Discussion was held which included timelines, inflation or increases in costs associated with construction, using a tiered approach, flexibility, small improvements, and first come, first served process.

Council direction: Staff to prepare a policy, consistent with the City of Auburn’s policy, for a Downtown Revitalization Policy, and to submit to the Finance Committee for initial review.

G. Town Hall Meeting Format

Mayor Putaansuu said the third location has been finalized and will be held at the Christian Life Center in September. To recap, the first town hall will be held at McCormick Woods [April 9] and the second town hall at Gathered by Josephine’s[June 4].

Discussion was held which included meeting format, topics, the Mayor Pro-tem will facilitate the meeting, less formality than a regular Council meeting, question and answer session, breakouts, and State of the City address.

Council direction: No direction given to staff.

3. GOOD OF THE ORDER

In response to Councilmember Rosapepe, Mayor Putaansuu stated the City has no concerns about its fuel budget.

4. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 8:51 p.m. No action was taken.

Signed by:
Brandy Wallace
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Brandy Wallace, MMC, City Clerk

Signed by:
Rob Putaansuu
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Robert Putaansuu, Mayor

