

ORIGINAL

MARYSVILLE CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION

000138

May 1, 2006

7:00 p.m.

City Hall

CORRECTED: MINUTES	SEE 5/03/06
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CALL TO ORDER / INVOCATION / PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Dennis Kendall called the May 1, 2006 meeting of the Marysville City Council to order at 7:00 p.m. There was no invocation. Mayor Kendall led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL

Chief Administrative Officer Mary Swenson gave the roll call. The following staff and councilmembers were in attendance.

Mayor: Dennis Kendall

Council: Mayor Pro Tem Jon Nehring, Lee Phillips Carmen Rasmussen, Jeff Seibert, John Soriano, Jeff Vaughan, and Donna Wright

Staff: Mary Swenson, Chief Administrative Officer; Grant Weed, City Attorney; Sandy Langdon, Finance Director; Gloria Hirashima, Community Development Director; Paul Roberts, Public Works Director; Robert Carden, Chief of Police; Robb Lamoureux, Police Commander; John Turner, Former Chief/Interim Police Chief; Greg Corn, Fire Chief; and Laurie Hugdahl, Recording Secretary.

MPOA: Mark Thomas, Marysville Police Detective; Tracy Galusha, Dispatch Officer; James Maples, MPOA President; Derek Oates, Police Officer

Other Tom Howell, SNOPAC

Mayor Kendall thanked everyone for coming. He introduced former police chief John Turner as the Interim Police Chief until Chief Carden's replacement is hired.

COMMITTEE REPORTS – None.

PRESENTATIONS – None.

DISCUSSION ITEMS – None.

CONSENT AGENDA

- A. Approval of April 24, 2006 City Council Meeting Minutes.**
- B. Approval of May 1, 2006 City Council Work Session Minutes.**
- C. Approval of April 26, 2006 Claims.**

D. Approval of May 3, 2006 Claims.**E. Approval of May 5, 2006 Payroll.****F. Approval of Fireworks Stand Permits for Marysville Kiwanis (6 stands); Turning Point Church (1 stand); and Woodside New Life Church (1 stand).**

Councilmember Carmen Rasmussen expressed concern about children under sixteen often being in the stand even though this is prohibited by code. She felt that this was not understood clearly by the stands' operators. Chief Executive Officer Mary Swenson and Fire Chief Corn both stated that they would try to emphasize that this year.

G. Approval of 2006 Strawberry Festival Proposal.

Mayor Kendall stated that staff has met with the Strawberry Festival organizers to discuss their requirements.

H. Approval of Supplemental Agreement No. 2 ; Perteet Engineering for Improvement to 47th Avenue NE., 3rd Street, and 4th Street Intersections.

Public Works Director Paul Roberts indicated that this agreement provides for the design work portion of the improvements.

I. Approval of New Liquor License for Red Robin America's Gourmet Burgers & Spirits (16814 Twin Lakes Avenue).

There were no comments or questions regarding this item.

J. Authorize Mayor to Sign Final Plat Mylar; Suncrest Ridge PRD; PA 04-029.

There were no comments or questions regarding this item.

K. Authorize Mayor to Sign Professional Services Agreement for Design Services on the Delta Avenue Sewer Rehabilitation Project; Roth Hill Engineering Partners, LLC.

Paul Roberts stated that this is the design piece for replacing old sewer and expanding capacity.

L. Authorize the Surplus of Parks & Recreation/Cedarcrest Golf Course Equipment; Ventek Pay Station and (2) Jacobsen Mower(s).

Carmen Rasmussen asked where the funds for this would go. Sandy Langdon explained that if it was equipment from the golf course it would go back into the golf course funds, but if it was from parks it would go back into the general fund.

REVIEW BIDS

A. Auctioneering Services.

Councilmember John Soriano asked if this could be done online. Ms. Swenson explained why that would not work for this.

PUBLIC HEARINGS – None.

CURRENT BUSINESS – None.

NEW BUSINESS**A. Dispatch Services.**

Mayor Kendall stated that from the beginning of his term as Mayor he has been committed to running the City like a business and using the taxpayers' money wisely. The City went through an evaluation process with the golf course last year. This year the dispatch services are one of the areas being reviewed. Staff is seeking authorization from Council to negotiate with SNOPAC to determine if an agreement can be reached which would be beneficial to the citizens of Marysville. Mayor Kendall stated that it is his conviction that this will best serve the City and its police officers.

Mary Swenson introduced the Marysville Police Officers' Association (MPOA) representatives as well as Tom Howell with SNOPAC. She stated that they have maintained positive and professional communication with MPOA.

City's PowerPoint Presentation – City of Marysville Communication Center Analysis.

Mary Swenson presented the reasons for considering consolidation with SNOPAC. These included: continued population growth, limited funding and infrastructure needs. She reviewed the current dispatch status, noting the additional duties performed by Communication Officers that would need to be absorbed by the custody officers or records clerks. Concerns about the current dispatch situation included: understaffing; difficulty of hiring and maintaining staff; increasing equipment cost and maintenance; and uncertainty of future state and federal funding (E-911).

Finance Director Sandy Langdon discussed how the feasibility study had reviewed the current dispatch budget; evaluated the current costs without consolidation and costs with consolidation; and reviewed SNOPAC's past, current and proposed budgets.

Mary Swenson reviewed the pros and cons of consolidation. Pros included: reduced costs, increased ability of coverage; coordinated services with North Snohomish County; increased ability for best technology; and ability to provide additional funding needed for police services. Cons included: possibility of shared frequency; loss of local control of service; loss of redundancy; and disruption of employees. She emphasized the City's desire to take care of the employees, either by providing them with other jobs within the City or assisting them in transferring over to SNOPAC. Ms. Swenson noted that the options were to continue Marysville Dispatch increasing staff to meet the needs at an estimated cost for 2007 of \$1,273,000 or to go with the Mayor's recommendation to consolidate services with SNOPAC

with an estimated cost for 2007 of \$667,263. She stated there are many questions that still need to be answered, but encouraged Council to take a serious look at this, noting that a decision needs to be made quickly.

Motion made by Councilmember Nehring; seconded by Councilmember Soriano to invite the MPOA and Tom Howell to give their presentations. **Motion** passed unanimously (7-0).

James Maples, President of MPOA, thanked the city for allowing them to make a presentation and for maintaining communication with the MPOA.

Tracy Galusha, Marysville Communications Officer, stated that she had been a communications officer with the City for 11 years and is very committed to the high level of service that only a local dispatch center is able to provide to their officers. She discussed ways that they provide that high level of service on a routine basis. She explained the dispatch officers provide eyes and ears to backup the custody staff. She emphasized the importance of personalized service and familiarity with geography, landmarks and police procedures.

Derek Oates, Executive Board Member and Marysville Police Officer, stated that numerous SCSO deputies and police officers from surrounding agencies had told them that leaving the in-house dispatch center and going to a consolidated center would be a big mistake. He discussed three local agencies that had pulled out of SNOPAC to switch to another consolidated center. He said that because of the high volume of calls received at SNOPAC, the level of service was much lower than a local dispatch center. He also addressed concerns about sharing the air and questions about what would happen in the event of a catastrophic scenario.

James Maples discussed MPOA's position and overwhelming desire to keep the dispatch center. He stated that the cost savings in outsourcing the communications center would only be less than 1% of the overall city budget. He asked how the City could not afford to keep such a professional, personalized service that is committed to the citizens of Marysville, not all of Snohomish County. He addressed concerns about service, shared air, additional unknown costs and many unanswered questions. He suggested contracting with surrounding agencies such as Lake Stevens and Arlington. He also felt that there might be additional funds available through a variety of bonds, levies and sales tax revenues.

Mark Thomas, Marysville Police Detective referred to the City's PowerPoint presentation. He had the following comments:

- He referred to page 4 and pointed out that MPOA had included in their handout a much more comprehensive list of duties currently being performed by the Communications Officers.
- He agreed that the dispatch center is understaffed, but noted that they believe three additional dispatchers would be sufficient (not four as the City had stated).
- He added that they are close to closing a new contract with the dispatch center. They have several applicants available for hire once the contract is finalized.
- Regarding the "benefit" of reduced cost by moving to consolidation, this may not necessarily be true, especially when the City considers the cost of standalone air time.

He referred to the information contained in Council's packet and had the following comments:

- Regarding savings, he stated that this would be less than a ½ percent of the city's overall budget.
- Page 5 of Emergency Communication Centers Consolidation, Response to Budget Note No. 7. The second paragraph – he pointed out that, "Maintaining and improving E-911 service to the residents has to be the overriding goal," not cost alone.
- Page 8 – Issue of loss of control, importance of backup and redundancy

He then referred to the 1999 meeting minutes and noted that Chief Carden had stated that keeping the dispatch service in Marysville was the best option if we can afford it.

Mary Swenson responded to Mr. Maples' assertion that the savings to the City would be less than ½ percent. She pointed out that the number he used for the total city budget was \$95M, when actuality it should have been \$19M since this is the amount of the general fund. She indicated that the savings would be a much greater percentage than he claimed.

She referred to Mr. Erickson's comments in the 1999 minutes on page 2. *"He concluded by emphasizing the three conditions which must be met in order to make the dispatch center financially viable: retain the fire District contract; operate without significant operating budget enhancements, particularly personnel; and require no other major capital improvements . . ."* She pointed out that there have already been significant capital improvement; additionally, there is a need to increase staffing. Mayor Kendall pointed out that the Emergency Consolidated Report's focus was to consolidate all three dispatch centers into one, which is why concerns about backup and redundancy had been mentioned. Ms. Swenson stated that she concurs that it would be best to maintain the dispatch center if the City can afford it. She believes the city cannot afford it.

Tom Howell of SNOPAC discussed the history of the consolidation of emergency calls. He stated that SNOPAC is a large organization and they are prepared to address both emergency situations and non-emergency situations. Regarding backup facilities, they have a coordinated effort with SNOCOM to provide backup for each other. They also have communications vans which would be available in the event of a catastrophe. He noted that they have a good infrastructure out there. Regarding quality of service, he noted that they may spend less time with callers, but they are focused on getting emergency responders to the scene.

Council Questions:

Councilmember Jeff Seibert:

- Asked Tom Howell about his statement that Marysville could provide backup for SNOPAC. Mr. Howell clarified that he was speaking of the current situation and that SNOCOM would provide backup for SNOPAC should Marysville decide to consolidate services. SNOPAC has the ability to reconstitute at SNOCOM if there were an emergency.
- He asked at what point SNOPAC would think Marysville would need its own channel as opposed to shared air. Mary Swenson interjected that although the cost in the packet is based on shared air, the City has requested the cost of standalone air now.

Tom Howell stated that the decision would have to be a board decision and that the cost would be shared.

- He asked for Mr. Howell's opinion on Marysville joining with Arlington and Lake Stevens. Mr. Howell replied that they would need to reconstitute.
- He asked if there would be openings for Marysville employees at SNOPAC. Mr. Howell replied that there would be. He explained that there is a great deal of shared knowledge, but everyone would still need to go through training to learn SNOPAC procedures.
- He asked staff why the cost estimate in 1999 (p. 2 of the minutes) was more than it is today. Mary Swenson responded that she wasn't sure exactly what was included in the 1999 estimate. She added that Marysville is a much different City now than in 1999 and they have more bargaining power.
- He asked staff what was included in the technology costs for the City. Sandy Langdon replied that they had estimated some replacement and ongoing maintenance of current equipment.
- He asked if E-911 funds would go away if Marysville went with SNOPAC. Mr. Howell indicated that those funds would be reallocated to all the communication centers.
- He asked for clarification of the routing process of calls. Ms. Galusha explained how the dispatch center routes calls. Mr. Maples explained that Marysville currently has the capability of multiple channels, but they do not have the staffing. Mr. Oates explained how the police cars routinely scan the channels of the other jurisdictions to keep aware of situations.
- He asked the MPOA representatives, if they had to choose between adding more officers and keeping the dispatch center, which would they choose? Mr. Maples responded that they do not believe the cost savings are worth the lack of control and service. He stated that the membership believes that the dispatch center is more important right now than extra officers.

Mayor Pro Tem Jon Nehring:

- thanked everyone for coming to the work session. He asked why it doesn't make sense for Marysville to be a regional player in the dispatch business. Mary Swenson explained how the dispatch business is different than court and jail services. There would be no profit to providing regional dispatch services. She discussed how providing court and jail services may change as the City grows. Concerns about being a regional dispatch center included: the need for a bigger center and inability to count on E-911 money. She discussed the serious financial needs of roads right now. Council has decided repeatedly not to increase property taxes, but they need to determine how to balance the budget.
- He asked how the growth of the northern cities would impact SNOPAC's ability to provide services. Mr. Howell responded that they would need to look at the numbers. He noted that staffing is the biggest issue.
- He asked how this cost savings would benefit streets. Ms. Swenson explained how they would not be competing with the dispatch center for the funds.
- Mr. Nehring emphasized the importance of ensuring that individuals who wanted to remain in the City would have the option of moving to other positions.

Councilmember Carmen Rasmussen thanked all who came and especially the dispatchers. She stated that they do an excellent job.

- She asked staff if MPOA could be present at negotiations with SNOPAC. Ms. Swenson indicated that they will definitely need their assistance.
- She asked if dispatchers could retain their seniority if they went to SNOPAC. Mr. Howell was unable to answer that.
- She asked about the claims that SNOPAC was maxed out at times and callers reached a busy signal. Mr. Howell stated that there might be rare occasions when this happens, but that it was very brief. Tracy Galusha disagreed and stated that it is very common to get a busy signal at SNOPAC. She noted that on a typical busy weekend night it was not unusual to get a busy signal.
- She asked for clarification on E-911 funding. Mayor Kendall explained that because it is federal funding it is not dependable. Also, the money goes to the fire department. Chief Corn stated that two things might make the Fire Board recommend switching to SNOPAC: degradation of the city's services and expensive services. He noted that operationally, for the fire department, the services provided by the City and SNOPAC are fairly identical.
- She stated that she would be interested in looking at the feasibility of having a SNOPAC employee located in the Public Safety Building to keep a dispatcher in the City. Mr. Howell expressed concerns about not having supervisory control. He added that the console is a significant cost. She clarified that she envisioned the calls still being taken at SNOPAC, but that dispatching could occur within the City.

Councilmember Donna Wright:

- asked about the importance of local communications officers taking the calls. Tom Howell stated that they have several dispatchers from Marysville, but whether they live here or not SNOPAC has a lot of tools to assist them. Tracy Galusha emphasized that all Marysville communications officers are trained by riding along with police officers and are familiar with the geography of the City.
- She asked about the costs of upgrading facilities if they decided to keep the dispatch center. Commander Lamoureux stated that they have four work stations, but only use two.

Councilmember John Soriano:

- asked about the trend of resignations at the dispatch center. Mary Swenson responded that the new contract would increase salaries. Another issue had been rotating shifts. Jim Maples replied two officers had left because of salary reasons. The other was because of personal reasons. Mark Thomas stated that they have heard from dispatchers at other agencies who are interested in coming here if the contract is approved.
- He expressed concerns about representation on the board. MPOA indicated that they also were uncomfortable with the configuration. Mary Swenson added that they are currently discussing this with SNOPAC.

Councilmember Lee Phillips:

- emphasized that the Mayor and staff brought this to Council; it was not requested by Council.
- He asked if the 800 MHz system would benefit the City if it went with SNOPAC. Mayor Kendall explained that they would have had to buy that anyway.

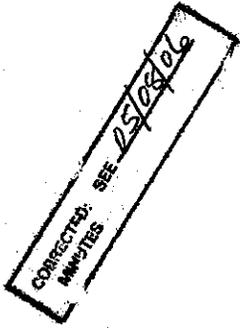
- He said he wanted to know how long it would be until they would need one frequency.
- He questioned how putting this money back into the police department would benefit roads. Ms. Swenson explained that there currently is no funding for additional communications officers and the money would have to come from reserves.
- He wondered why they were not seeing the fruits of economic development. Mayor Kendall explained that the initial investment to improve transportation infrastructure was necessary. He added that the annexation of other areas makes the transportation issues worse. He noted that the general fund money would be used for road improvements. Mary Swenson added that other departments, such as Parks, have not been adequately funded over the last several years. Mayor Kendall added that additional funding from economic development would be needed to provide services for the annexed areas.
- He asked who would watch the jails and monitor the panic button at Public Safety if they cut the dispatch center. Ms. Swenson replied that that would need to be taken into consideration with the MPOA. She noted that it might make sense to add a 24/7 records person.
- He asked about cross training at SNOPAC. Mr. Howell stated that specialized training is more important to them since they have enough staff to cover each area. He added that they are considering cross training though.

Jeff Vaughan

- asked why callers would not get a recording when they called Marysville. Mr. Thomas explained that the dispatchers have the ability to put someone on hold and take the call to determine priority.
- He asked how SNOPAC dealt with complaints. Mr. Howell explained that have not had a significant number of complaints, but that they keep a complaint log and resolve them as they come up.
- He asked MPOA how they would explain their opinion to the public that it was more important to maintain the dispatch center than to put officers on the street. Mr. Thomas said he would explain that the dispatchers have a personal connection to the City. Personalized service makes stressful times easier for citizens.

Motion made by Councilmember Seibert, seconded by Councilmember Rasmussen to extend the meeting by ½ hour until 10:00 p.m. **Motion** passed unanimously (7-0).

- Councilmember Seibert thanked everyone for being here. Regarding the jobs that dispatchers do, he referred to after-hours utility calls. He asked how those would be handled. Mary Swenson indicated that they would probably go to an answering service.
- He asked if Arlington and Lake Stevens joined with the City would they be stuck sharing a channel forever? Mr. Howell explained that there is already a significant amount of capacity available to Marysville.
- He asked if the available positions with the City had comparable salaries and benefits. Ms. Swenson explained that the benefits would be the same, but the salaries would be different. Mr. Seibert asked about SNOPAC. Mr. Howell stated that they had the same retirement system, but different health insurance.



- He clarified that MPOA felt that if the City did not hire three additional dispatchers they should shut down. Mr. Maples stated that if they lost one more it would be the breaking point to provide a safe level of service.
- He asked about Councilmember Rasmussen's suggestion to have a dispatch person remain in the City. Mr. Maples responded that it would probably not address the issues. The dispatcher would still be under the policies and procedures of SNOPAC. They would interface, but would not have the freedom to respond as they do now.
- He asked if the dispatch center would need more supervisors if more dispatch officers were added. Mr. Maples indicated that they would since the ratio is already too high.
- He asked Mr. Howell about unhappy customers who were leaving SNOPAC. Mr. Howell stated that he was not aware of any unhappy customers. He noted that the ones who have left have left for other reasons.
- He asked about the turnover at SNOPAC. Mr. Howell replied that it is 5-10% over five years. He noted that they have a lot of long-term employees.

Police Chief Robert Carden addressed the Council. He emphasized that the dispatchers do a wonderful job. He said that Marysville has become a leader in policing in the region. He said that unequivocally, consolidated centers do not give the same level of service as local dispatch centers. Having our own dispatch center provides customized service. He emphasized the importance of providing the highest level of service possible. He felt that local control was a huge issue. He stated that the officers and personnel in Marysville provide the best service in the northwest. That is the reason to keep the dispatch center if we can afford it. He added that the Chief has an obligation to make sure the officers go home safely every night. The City's police department is understaffed already, not even considering the additional growth from annexations. He discussed the many needs of the police department and noted that they cannot compromise the officers on the street. He stated that this is an extremely difficult decision, but once the dispatch center is given up they cannot go back. He urged Council to make a decision quickly.

Mayor Kendall thanked everyone for their participation.

B. Cable TV Advisory Committee Reorganization.

Mayor Kendall discussed changes to the organization of the Cable TV Advisory Committee. He explained that a citizens' advisory committee should not have a councilmember as a voting member. Councilmember Lee Phillips disagreed with this policy. Mayor Kendall stated that the councilmember should be present as an advisory representative only and the meeting should not be run by an elected official. He stated that this is the way the other committees function and he wanted to keep it consistent.

Councilmember Vaughan agreed that it is a good practice that councilmembers should not be in leadership positions on citizens' advisory committees. Councilmember Seibert also agreed that this is the way the committees have always been. He concurred with the recommendation.

C. Black Rock Cable, Inc. Franchise.

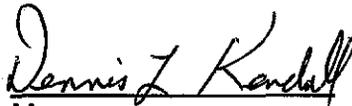
CORRECTED:
 MONITORING
 SEE 05/08/06

City Attorney Grant Weed stated that this is modeled after the City's model Franchise Agreement adopted by code. It is for a 10-year term and the City would collect 5% of gross revenue.

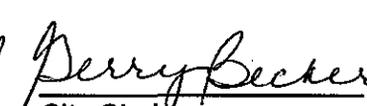
ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Kendall adjourned the meeting at 10:00 p.m.

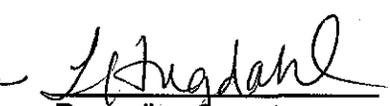
Approved this 8th day of May, 2006.



Mayor
Dennis Kendall



City Clerk
Gerry Becker



Recording Secretary
Laurie Hugdahl