

August 11, 2005

**CALL TO ORDER:** Mayor Tjeerdsma called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m., with the Pledge of Allegiance. Council Members present: Bensen, Doyle, Loving, Valentine, Straathof and Montgomery. Staff present: Police Chief Bowers, Parks & Recreation Director Cavanaugh, Planning Director Fleek, Administrative Assistant Sheahan, City Attorney Thomas, and Library Assistant Conlee.

A motion was made by **Councilors Bensen/Doyle** to excuse **Councilor Aslett** from tonight's meeting. All agreed. Motion carried.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

Councilor Valentine noted two corrections to the minutes. A motion was made by **Councilors Valentine/Doyle** to approve the corrected minutes of the July 28, 2005 Council meeting. All were in favor. Motion carried.

**AUDIT OF BILLS:**

**Councilor Straathof** presented the bills. A motion was made by **Councilors Straathof/Valentine** to approve vouchers 44138 – 44276 in the amount of \$181,582.67. All were in favor. Motion carried.

Current Expense	\$ 50,117.14
Current Expense Cumulative Reserve	2,872.47
Fire Equipment Cumulative Reserve	9,877.49
City Street	45,667.85
Library	3,950.22
Parks & Recreation	8,859.77
Cemetery Fund	67.18
Stadium Fund	5,428.49
Park & Recreation Reserve	42,868.06
Sewer Fund	9,175.08
Sewer Cumulative Reserve	2,698.92
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 181,582.67</b>

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

There were no public comments.

**OFFICER REPORTS:**

**Parks & Recreation Director Cavanaugh** reported that the city has been awarded a grant of \$281,000 to purchase property to extend Skagit River Park. If other cities awarded grant funding do not accept the funds, the City of Burlington grant amount will be increased. If that happens, the property purchase may be fully funded by this grant award. **Parks & Recreation Director Cavanaugh** will keep the Council informed as to the grant funding award.

**Parks & Recreation Director Cavanaugh** noted that a project has been underway to move the fence at the Whitmarsh Road soccer fields back about 10 feet. There have been several close calls of kids running into the street to get around behind a parked car as there is not enough room in front of the parked car. Moving the fence back and placing parking bars will create a safer walk area between the cars and fence for soccer field users.

**Parks & Recreation Director Cavanaugh** stated that discussions have been going on between City staff and other agencies regarding garbage, vandalism and under age drinking parties at the Gardner Road boat launch area. Also a portable restroom located at the site was burned. The immediate solution will be to install a manual locking metal gate. Skagit County Dike District #12 will fund the gate. City staff will assist with installation and be responsible for locking and unlocking the gate each day at daybreak and dusk. Mr. Chuck

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Bennett, Skagit County Dike District #12, noted that several cars as well as garbage have been dumped at the boat launch site (including stolen cars) and some cars have been pushed into the river (creating other hazards). The federal, state and local agencies are concerned about these events so the decision was made to install a gate that can be closed and locked. The gate will be custom made and installation will take place near the end of August. There will be a light on a pole near the gate.

**Parks & Recreation Director Cavanaugh** added that while at recent meeting in Olympia he was reminded that funding to develop the boat launch came to the City through a grant. If the boat launch area is ever shut down, the City would have to refund the grant funds.

**Parks & Recreation Director Cavanaugh** noted that vandalism is more widespread than in past years. Surveillance cameras have cut down on problems at the Water Park and the Wood Sculpture. The worst area seems to be at Rotary Park where there have been so many portable restrooms burned that the portable restroom companies will no longer place restrooms in that park. This means that the City cannot charge rent for use of the fields because there are no public restrooms available on site. The City has had to refund deposits for events planned. The cost for the burned restrooms is about \$800 each.

**Library Assistant Conlee** of the Library reported that the City Finance Department working with the Library will submit a grant application to the Secretary of State's Office for a new microfilm reader/printer. The grant maximum amount is \$5,000 and a new reader/printer costs about \$7,400. If awarded the grant, the City would have to pay the cost difference for the purchase. The current microfilm reader was purchased in 1989 and is now considered obsolete. The closest service technician must come from Seattle. The minimum charge is \$200 per call. Replacement parts may or may not be available for any repairs.

**Library Assistant Conlee** noted that the next Library Design Committee meeting is scheduled for 6:00 p.m. Tuesday August 16, 2005 in the Library Conference Room.

**Library Assistant Conlee** reported the highest circulation figures ever at 8,186 for the month of July, 2005.

#### **SPECIAL PRESENTATION:**

Mr. David Asia of Skagit County Human Services gave an overview of the new triage center scheduled to open in Burlington. He distributed a prospective regarding the Triage Center to the council. He gave a PowerPoint presentation outlining the purpose of the center and the clients they will serve. He also reviewed costs for various services to deal with persons suffering from drug, mental and/or alcohol problems. Several other professionals were at the meeting to answer questions the councilmembers had. He noted that the triage center is designed to care and treat clients suffering from drug and alcohol problems primarily through referrals from law enforcement, mental health professionals or medical professionals. The triage center is not a facility that is "in lieu of jail" or an involuntary commitment facility. Clients must qualify for admittance through a long list of criteria. He contacted businesses in several cities that are located near triage facilities in areas similar to the Burlington location on Lila Lane. He found that none of the neighboring businesses had any problems with the facility or the clients they serve. **Councilor Doyle** asked if the facility would be a "locked" facility. Mr. Asia stated that the facility would not be "locked" to keep clients inside. He noted that alcohol detox clients can not have visitors or leave the facility during their stay. Mental health patients cannot leave during the first 24 hours. Following that time period, they can leave only after a status evaluation by the mental health professionals on staff. He explained that the on-site staff persons are employees of Compass Health and are para-professionals who have completed background checks and training. Client's vital signs are constantly monitored. The available on-call staff members are professionals (psychologists, etc.). There are also two sets of County designated mental health responders who are on-call as well as chemical dependency professionals. Skagit County Human Services continually monitors the facility and the Compass Health program. **Councilor Doyle** asked how accurate the client assessments would be. Mr. Asia stated that law enforcement can provide criminal history checks and may also be familiar with the client and would be able to add additional information. **Councilor Valentine** asked about funding for this project. Mr. Asia stated the

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funding is from state and local government. Persons admitted to the facility do not pay for their stay at the facility. The twelve beds are not designated six for sobering and six for mental health; but rather the client with the greatest need will be admitted. **Councilor Doyle** asked if the city's alcohol tax support would need to be increased because of this program. Mr. Asia noted that current funding will continue the program as planned but that they will be requesting some additional support from the city in 2006 to fund an additional position. He will make that presentation to the City Council on August 25, 2005.

**Mayor Tjeerdsma** asked **Planning Director Fleek** to explain (review) the zoning in the location where the Triage Center will be located. She noted that the zoning district allows for a broad range of health care facilities (hospitals, medical clinics, veterinary clinics). She noted that the use complies with the Burlington Municipal Code.

**Mayor Tjeerdsma** noted that he will allow a few people to speak and ask questions of Mr. Asia. Ms. Valerie Tucker, a business owner on Lila Lane, asked what the hours of the facility would be. What would happen if there would be a problem and could the two staff members on duty be enough. Mr. Asia noted that two staff persons for twelve beds is double the usual ratio. He stated that violent people are screened out and not admitted to the facility. Mr. Boon Sureepisarn stated that during his six year involvement with these facilities there has been very little violence. He noted that the facilities are not usually to full capacity. **Police Chief Bowers** stated that if persons are violent, they would be taken to jail, and not to the triage facility. Mr. Guy Anderson, (Guyline Fence Construction, 205 Lila Lane) disputed the zoning code stating that he believes the C-1 zoning does not allow medical facilities. **Planning Director Fleek** restated that the zoning code does allow the planned use by this facility. **Parks & Recreation Director Cavanaugh** noted that the batting cages are in the neighborhood and serve many children. He also noted that the liquor store is located just across the street. He voiced his concern about the facility being located so close to these businesses. Ms. Shawn Wilski, The Sprint Shop 304 W. Lila Lane, voiced her concern that the Piano store (where lessons are given) and the Batting Cages are both frequented by mothers and children who might be very frightened to see clients being dropped off at the Triage center by police officers. Mr. Mitchell Tucker (Line-X Spray-on Bed Liners, 200 Lila Lane) voiced his concern regarding the price paid by the County for the building/property to be used as a triage center. He believes that his property taxes will increase because of the large price paid and when he tries to sell his property, the value will decline because of the facility located nearby. Ms. Linda Eiford, Director Skagit County Probation Services, stated that there is a great need for this type of facility. The clients cause many fewer problems for the community while in the facility rather than being out on the street. Currently there are no facilities like this for chemical and alcohol patients. The people in this facility are not violent, not sexual predators; they are ill and in need of care. Dr. Don Slack, M.D. (Emergency physician at Skagit Valley Hospital and EMS Program Director) stated that Skagit County is in crises with respect to services available for chemically addicted and mentally ill people. This crisis is affecting their ability to provide care in the emergency room to people with medical problems. It's affecting EMS because ambulances are out moving people around with mental illness. The people that will be sent to the triage center are people that show up asking for help. They are not violent, they are not threatening, they are not sexual predators. They are people that live in the community and on a good day, you might think they are OK. They often show up at the hospital ER looking for help and a place to stay; they haven't caused any problems. He is reassured by the survey of businesses in other cities done by Mr. Asia. Ms. Carol Hundahl, an agency owner who operates the same kind of facility as will be in Burlington, noted that many of the clients served are no different than our relatives, friends and neighbors – members of the community. They are people needing and wanting help and healing. Often the police officers will do the primary screening so that violent and criminal types will not be referred to the triage center. Many objections to the facility are based of fear of the unknown. Mr. Greg Leisch, Skagit Valley Monuments, 106 Lila Lane, noted that Burlington utilizes 2% of the current 6-bed facility whereas Mount Vernon uses 60% of the facility. He doesn't see why the facility should then be located in Burlington. He also noted that the zoning refers to out-patient use which would not include over-night stays by his definition. Mr. Aasia clarified that clients are usually brought to the facility by taxi or case managers and less often by police officers. A person in the audience asked if the facility accepts patients from out of the area. Mr. Asia noted that persons are accepted from outside of the county if requested (as funding is provided by the

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State); they cannot turn someone away based on where they come from. They are not allowed to deny services. Mr. Mark Kramer, 506 South Cherry, stated his disapproval of the County for the non public process in acquiring the property for this facility. He stated that the business owners on Lila Lane should not be complaining and suggesting “not in my back yard”. He stated he is proud that Burlington is taking a lead in opening this up for public comment and information. He suggested those who are not in favor, get involved in the process. He also noted his support for this facility, noting that the program will save money for the city, county and state as well as help people. Mr. Dick Jones, Administrator from Washington State Drug and Alcohol Substance Abuse Department, gave an overview of the state requirements, programs and treatment facilities for persons with drug & alcohol abuse problems.

**Mayor Tjeerdsma** thanked everyone for their comments.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

There was no unfinished business.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**YARD OF THE MONTH WINNERS FOR JULY 2005.**

**Planning Director Fleek** announced the Yard of the Month residential winners for July as: the Marsh Family, 692 Quinnt Avenue; the Butterfield family, 402 S. Pine Street; the Chavez family of 951 S. Anacortes Street; the Terrell Family of 405 Vine Street and the Jansen Family of 877 Farmington Drive. The business winners for July were the Coffee Garden Café of 133 E. Rio Vista Avenue and Shari’s Restaurant of 1520 S. Burlington Blvd.

**AGREEMENT WITH CARLETTI & ASSOCIATES FOR DESIGN OF RESTROOMS, CONCESSIONS AND COVERED SHELTER AT SKAGIT RIVER PARK.**

**Parks & Recreation Director Cavanaugh** noted that due to a clerical error, Carletti & Associates were overlooked in the initial interview process. They were later interviewed and turned in a bid substantially lower than the other firms. Carletti & Associates have now been selected for the project to design the restrooms, concessions and covered shelter at Skagit River Park. He asked that Council approve the agreement with Carletti & Associates for this project at Skagit River Park. A motion was made by **Councilors Bensen/Valentine** to approve the agreement with Carletti & Associates. All agreed. Motion carried.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION:**

The Mayor and City Council adjourned to Executive Session at 8:38 p.m. to discuss land acquisition. The Mayor and City Council returned from Executive Session at 9:01 p.m.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

A motion was made by **Councilors Doyle/Montgomery** to adjourn the meeting at 9:02 p.m. All were in favor. Motion carried.

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Richard A. Patrick  
Finance Director / City Clerk

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Roger “Gus” Tjeerdsma  
Mayor