

## **Town Council – March 2, 2006 @ Noon**

The Town Council met in regular session with Mayor Jones presiding.

Members present: Brooks, Emery, Gillette, Illg, & Rosenfeld  
Others present: Town Administrator Fitch & Treasurer Picinich

Mayor Jones led the meeting in the Pledge of Allegiance.

### San Juan County Land Bank

Mayor Jones opened discussion of the mutual objectives of the Town and San Juan County Land Bank. San Juan County Land Bank Director, Lincoln Bormann, introduced Land Bank representatives, Nancy Jones and Lisa Nash-Lawrence. Mr. Bormann distributed information to Council regarding said Land Bank for future review. Mr. Bormann gave a brief history of the Land Bank and its objectives. Mr. Bormann explained the process the Land Bank undertakes to fulfill their mission to preserve the character of the islands; partnerships with other organizations; purchases of land or conservation easements within Town limits; how theoretically incoming revenues are distributed back to the geographical area that generated the revenue; and other projects outside of the Town limits that benefit the entire island population. Mr. Bormann asked Council to develop a list of open space priorities within the Town for Land Bank consideration. By consensus, Council agreed to develop said list.

Discussion and inquiry followed regarding Land Bank procedures; investments; projects; Land Bank participation in the development of the Town; finding a project that would benefit Town residents; the appraisal difficulties involved with the Lynn Danaher/Ron Boe project on Argyle Avenue; and the original intent of the Land Bank's purchase of property on the corner of Argyle Avenue and Malcom Street.

### Fire District #3 Discussion

Mayor Jones opened discussion of the mutual objectives of the Town and San Juan Island Fire District #3. SJI Fire District #3 Commissioner, Bob Jarmen, was in attendance. Councilmember Rosenfeld gave a brief history of previous discussions regarding merging the Town and SJI Fire departments. Commissioner Jarmen suggested that the Town and Fire District investigate whether or not it makes financial sense to merge the two departments in some method.

Discussion followed regarding the estimated savings of said merge; how to approach the process for obtaining said information; whether or not to pursue the merge issue; studying other deciding factors beyond financial; water availability; and public safety.

Nancy Jones, 255 Harrison Street, expressed concern that Town property owners' insurance rates would increase if the fire departments merged. Mr. Jarmen mentioned discussions with a fire adjuster that estimated that both the Town and County fire insurance rates would decrease following a fire department merge.

Susan Risser, Town Firefighter and resident, observed that initially dissolving a Town department may appear to save money and free up funds to be used towards lower utility rates, but paying for fire protection may not be less expensive.

Councilmember Brooks commented that until more concrete information was established, she was unwilling to expend funds to study the benefits or disadvantages of merging the two fire departments, but would be willing to study this issue if volunteers would donate their resources.

Councilmembers Emery and Illg agreed that there was sufficient public interest to pursue a definitive answer to whether or not merging the two fire departments was advantageous or not. Councilmember Gillette disagreed and explained his view of why it was premature to consider a merge at this time.

Councilmember Rosenfeld moved and Councilmember Brooks seconded to authorize the Mayor to work with San Juan Island Fire District #3 to establish an acceptable committee to explore this issue. The motion passed 4 to 1 with Councilmember Gillette opposed.

#### Public Access

There were no public access items forthcoming.

#### Administrator's Report

At 1:18 PM, noticing additional time on the agenda, Mayor Jones asked Administrator Fitch to commence his Administrator's report. Administrator Fitch reported that the San Juan Island Chamber of Commerce will utilize Court Street to hold their annual Summer Arts Fair on the weekend of July 15 & 16.

Administrator Fitch announced that the developer of the Country Village Estates has submitted a completed application for a 25 lot subdivision off of Lampard Road and therefore Council should refrain from communications with opponents or proponents of this project. Mr. Fitch indicated that a quasi-judicial public hearing regarding this issue should be forthcoming sometime in April.

Administrator Fitch asked for a closed session to discuss union negotiations at the evening Town Council meeting. Mayor Jones agreed to said closed session.

Administrator Fitch introduced draft Resolution #1499. A resolution authorizing the Mayor to execute Change Order #2 on the Memorial Park Renovation Project contract in the amount of \$17,809.37. Administrator Fitch explained the particulars of said resolution. Following inquires, Councilmember Rosenfeld moved and Councilmember Illg seconded to adopt Resolution #1499 as stated. The motion passed unanimously.

At 1:32 PM, hearing no objection, Mayor Jones declared the meeting adjourned.

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David F. Jones, Mayor

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Kelle Wilson, Town Clerk