

TOWN OF COUPEVILLE
Regular Council Meeting
April 14, 2026
6:00pm

CALL TO ORDER

At 6:00pm, Mayor Hughes called the meeting to order and led the Council in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

PRESENT

Mayor Molly Hughes, Councilmembers Jenny Bright, Rick Walti, Kristo Allred, Evan Henrich, and Jackie Henderson

STAFF PRESENT

Public Works Director Joe Grogan, Community Planning Director Josh Pitts, Clerk-Treasurer Corine Jackson, and Deputy Clerk Chris Jolly

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The agenda of the April 14, 2026 Regular Meeting was approved as submitted.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of the March 24, 2026 Regular Meeting were approved as submitted.

MAYOR'S REPORT

- Mayor Hughes participated in the interview process for the new Island County Tourism Manager position. This is a new position that came out of the Tourism Board reorganization. The manager will be an employee of Island County. An offer has been made, but they are waiting on confirmation of acceptance.
- Mayor Hughes reported that a new Reserve Manager has been hired for the Ebey's Landing National Historical Reserve. Alix Roos, who was the first Executive Director of the Friends of Ebey's was selected for the position.
- Mayor Hughes and Public Works Director Grogan have been working on grants to help fund two projects – ADA crosswalk pads, and a sewer line extension up Parker Rd. The Town did not get the grant for the ADA crosswalk pads, and they are still waiting to hear about the grants for the sewer line extension.
- Mayor Hughes attended the Coupeville public meeting about the new jail. Sheriff Felici ran the meeting, and since it wasn't a full room, everyone got a chance to speak and give valuable feedback.
- Mayor Hughes attended the latest stakeholder meeting with the School District to look at site plans for a new elementary school. The group agreed that there were problems with all the plans they looked at – safety being the biggest concern, so the architects will come back with another round of ideas.

- Mayor Hughes informed the Councilmembers that because Coupeville has fewer than 2,000 registered voters, they do not have to file a personal financial F-1 report.
- Before the next meeting, the Coupeville Farmers Market will have its first market of the season on April 18. That same day, in the evening, Paul Revere will ride through Town and stop at the Museum for a short educational program about Paul Revere's famous ride. The Town will be planting a Christmas Tree on Earth Day, April 22, in Cook's Corner park.
- Mayor Hughes thanked the volunteers who worked in heavy rains to help make the Town's Spring Cleanup Day a big success.

PRESENTATION

Melinda Erickson, and Brian Linson of BL Landscapes, gave a presentation to Council about their plans for beautifying the Johnson Lot and making a Volunteer Park to commemorate volunteers from various Central Whidbey organizations.

AUDIENCE INPUT

- Lynn Hyde addressed the Council to express concerns about the process for deciding who gets to present ideas and plans for the Johnson Lot. Historic Whidbey has an interest in the Johnson Lot due to its historic connection to the Haller House. Hyde claims she has tried to communicate with the Coupeville Festival Association with no luck.
- Don Drawbeck addressed the Council with concerns about extinguishing the MOA. Agrees that there are some good arguments for extinguishing the agreement, but they bought into the MOA and do not want it extinguished.
- Will Lyle addressed the Council with concerns about extinguishing the MOA. Lyle claimed there would only be one beneficiary to extinguishing the MOA and that it would dramatically change the character of the neighborhood. He reminded the Council that Coupeville is not obligated to change or extinguish the MOA.
- Community Planning Director Pitts read comments from Katherine Madrone Moulton, who feels that walkability and green space are the most important focus of future development in Coupeville. Moulton also has concerns about new homes being second homes instead of primary residents.

NEW BUSINESS

Navy O&M Contract

Action: A motion was made by Councilmember Walti, seconded by Councilmember Henderson, to authorize the Mayor to sign Cooperative Agreement #N44255-26-2-0001 with the US Department of the Navy for the operation and maintenance of the water treatment plant in the amount of \$725,859.75. The motion passed unanimously.

Penn Cove Water Festival Street Closures

Action: A motion was made by Councilmember Henderson, seconded by Councilmember Henrich, to approve the street closures for the 2026 Penn Cove Water Festival. The motion passed unanimously.

Memorial Day Parade Street Closures

Action: A motion was made by Councilmember Hednerson, seconded by Councilmember Allred, to approve the street closures for the annual Memorial Day parade and Remembrance Ceremony on May 23, 2026. The motion passed unanimously.

Planning Commission Appointment

Action: A motion was made by Councilmember Henrich, seconded by Councilmember Henderson, to reappoint Michelle Cook to the Coupeville Planning Commission for a term ending March 31, 2030. The motion passed unanimously.

March A/P and Payroll

Action: A motion was made by Councilmember Allred, seconded by Councilmember Walti, to approve March 2026 Payroll EFT Transactions for a total of \$120,898.55, and March 2026 A/P Transactions and EFT payments #11681-#11739 for a total of \$280,918.77. The motion passed unanimously.

COUNCIL REPORTS**Councilmember Henderson**

Councilmember Henderson reported that she attended the ribbon cutting ceremony for the new 81 unit affordable housing complex in Oak Harbor. The new housing complex is the result of a multiagency collaboration.

Councilmember Henrich

Councilmember Henrich reported that on April 21 Skagit Valley College is holding a public Court of Appeals event where you can go and watch oral arguments and see how law and justice is practiced.

DISCUSSION**Memorandum of Agreement**

Community Planning Director Pitts led a discussion with the Council about whether to keep the MOA intact, unchanged, or extinguish the MOA altogether. Pitts explained the pros and cons of both options, and explained some of the legal advice given by the Town's Attorney. Councilmembers expressed concerns with both options, and with the possibility of more high-density residential.

AUDIENCE INPUT

- Will Lyle addressed the Council again to ask that the MOA remain intact and unchanged.
- Jeanette Golbranson addressed the Council to ask how credits get moved from one area to another. Golbranson was told that no more development credits existed in her part of the neighborhood, but two new homes have recently been built there.
- Robby Drawbeck addressed the Council with concerns about walkability in the MOA area, especially with more vehicles parked on the road. Drawbeck questions whether the

upzoning is a good idea and says there is no guarantee under either plan that affordable housing will actually be built.

- Susan Asplin addressed the Council and believes two conversations are being had at once. Asplin argued that keeping the MOA intact forces the developers to build within guidelines of the agreement, while extinguishing the MOA would allow developers to do whatever they want.
- Kim Bepler addressed the Council to say that she feels development is being vilified, and that she and her family (the developers) do not intend to build a lot of high density. Bepler says they intend to provide smaller, more affordable homes, and to continue developing the neighborhood they way they have since 2004.
- Ricardo Reyes addressed the Council to say that some of the concerns raised by the Council during the discussion, such as building height, is already addressed in other codes and that the developers still have to align with Coupeville's building regulations. Reyes suggested that the Town's Building Official and the CWIFR Fire Chief should weigh in on the conversation. Reyes worries about people no being able to build on empty parcels if the housing credits are all used.

ADJOURNMENT

At 8:50pm, Mayor Hughes adjourned the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

MAYOR



Deputy Clerk Chris Jolly



Molly Hughes