

#1- C0137-24

Legislative Affairs & Election Committee
September 9, 2024

The Committee on Legislative Affairs & Elections met on Monday, September 9, 2024 at 6pm in the City Council Chambers.

The meeting was recorded by ECTV and can be viewed on the City of Everett website.

Members present were Councilor Michael Marchese, presiding, Councilors Stephanie Smith, Katy Rogers and Stephanie Martins.

The Committee considered an Ordinance offered by Councilor Katy Rogers: An Ordinance requiring playing fields in Everett to use environmentally sustainable organic grass.

David Flood, Legislative Research Specialist provided the Committee with an updated copy of the proposed Ordinance on the subject matter and suggested that the phrase “used in public spaces” be inserted in Section 17-140. Councilor Rogers, the Sponsor, noted that she had added a provision under Section 17-141 that would allow alternative environmentally sustainable turf if permission granted by the City Council. She stated that the intent is not to dig up current fields now but only upon the expiration of the natural lifespan of the current synthetic turf. Councilor Smith remarked that she liked the durability the synthetic turf offers the City and would recommend that the City keep synthetic turf as synthetic turf and keep grass turf as grass turf. Councilor Smith informed the Committee that she spoke to the Director of Parks and was told that the man hours would be substantial if synthetic turf was replaced with grass. Councilor Martins asked what the advantage of replacing synthetic turf with grass and Council Rogers mentioned heat stress, injuries and environmental concerns as the major issues related to artificial surfaces on playing fields and the need to replace with organic grass. Councilor Smith suggested removing City Council permission from Section 17-141 since she felt that members of the City Council were not experts in making these types of decisions. Councilor Rogers indicated that she was willing to make some amendments to Ordinance that would also include adding Director of Park Department. The Committee recommended that the matter be granted further time so that the Sponsor could meet with Mr. Flood to finalize the inclusion of amendments mentioned as well as to meet with the City Solicitor and Director of Parks to determine if any further changes are needed.

The Committee voted: to grant further time.

Respectfully Submitted,

John W. Burley
Clerk of Committees

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Members present were Councilor Michael Marchese, presiding, Councilors Stephanie Smith, Katy Rogers and Stephanie Martins.

The Committee considered an Order offered by Councilor Robert Van Campen, as President: An order requesting the confirmation of the re-appointment of Erik Swanson to the position of Director of Engineering for a term ending January 5, 2026.

Erik Swanson, Director of Engineering and Mayors Chief of Staff Erin Deveney were also present.

Councilor Martins asked Mr. Swanson if he could explain his role as Director of Engineering. Mr. Swanson informed the Committee that this was his first municipality he has worked in and that he works from 8am to 5pm Monday thru Thursday and is available by cell when not in the office. He noted that his role has expanded where he now assists other departments with City projects and checks in with other various projects and sites throughout the City. Councilor Martins inquired if he has a checklist when visiting these projects to insure that all meets city requirements and he informed the Committee that he was working on a permanent tracking system. He also informed the Committee that he was trying to reshape the duties within his office. Councilor Martins asked if he is responsible in addressing contractor equipment being left behind after work done and he responded yes but mentioned that he works with MASSDOT who is ultimately responsible for the oversight of street work. He explained that his office does its best it can to insure that the confines of the contracts of all construction projects are met. Councilor Smith pointed out to Ms. Deveney that the current version of the Administrative Code only allows for a Director of Engineering if they are also appointed as the Executive Director of Public Works. She asked Ms. Deveney if the Administration would like to take back and resubmit and Ms. Deveney responded that they would be happy to take back and look so they can determine the appropriate orders to resubmit for the appointment and Administrative Code.

The Committee voted: to report back to the City Council with a recommendation to refer to the Administration so that the appropriate orders could for the appointment and Administrative Code can be resubmitted.

Respectfully Submitted,

John W. Burley
Clerk of Committees

#3- C0258-24

Legislative Affairs & Election Committee
September 9, 2024

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Members present were Councilor Michael Marchese, presiding, Councilors Stephanie Smith, Katy Rogers and Stephanie Martins.

The Committee considered an Order offered by Councilor Robert Van Campen, as President: An order requesting the confirmation of the re-appointment of Bernard J Devereux to the position of City Assessor for a three year term ending January 30, 2027.

Bernard J Devereux, City Assessor was also present.

Councilor Smith asked Mr. Devereux to explain his role and Mr. Devereux provided an overview of the work his office does on exemptions and appeals and how they work on capturing new growth and development. He explained how his office develops analysis on rents and how values are adjusting yearly with major revaluation occurring every five years. He assured Councilor Smith that he works collaboratively with the Building Department and is constantly updating property values.

The Committee voted: to report back to the City Council with a recommendation for Favorable action.

Respectfully Submitted,

John W. Burley
Clerk of Committees

#4- C0259-24

Legislative Affairs & Election Committee
September 9, 2024

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Members present were Councilor Michael Marchese, presiding, Councilors Stephanie Smith, Katy Rogers and Stephanie Martins.

The Committee considered an Ordinance offered by Councilor Katy Rogers: An Ordinance pertaining to trees in the City of Everett.

David St. Louis, Arborist, was also present.

David Flood, Legislative Research Specialist provided the Committee with a reformatted version of the Tree Ordinance submitted by Councilor Rogers, but noted that the Ordinance still needed a preamble. Councilor Rogers remarked that the Ordinance provides opportunities for the City to invest in its urban tree canopy. Councilor Smith asked Mr. St. Louis if this Ordinance would result in any costs to the City and Mr. St. Louis responded that it shouldn't. The Committee recommended that the Sponsor meet with Mr. Flood to address the need for a preamble as well as to finalize a fine schedule and suggested that the Ordinance be provided to the City Solicitor for her review and comments prior to it being presented at the next meeting.

The Committee voted: to grant further time.

Respectfully Submitted,

John W. Burley
Clerk of Committees