The Council agreed that the agenda would be adjusted as needed; Citizen of the Year and “Parking Lot” issues would be moved up to fill empty time slots.

2011 OBJECTIVES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

City Manager Conrad reviewed the progress and outcomes of the following issues from the 2011 Planning Session:

- Pool Planning
- Town Center Transit Oriented Development
- Development Impact Fees
- Sewer Lake Line Project
- Transportation Issues: R8A, Tolling, I-90 Ramps, Island Crest Way Corridor
- Underage Drinking
- Solid Waste Services on Snow Days
- Island Crest Park Ball Field Turf
- Development Code Improvements
- Definition of Senior Citizen for Community Center Uses
- Financial Issues: Sewer Lake Line Project Savings, Town Center TOD study, LEOFF 1 Long-Term Care and Volunteer Fireman’s Pension Fund
- North Star Property
- Electric Vehicle Charging Stations

City Manager Conrad reviewed the Council’s 2011 work plan which details the planned, unplanned and actual agenda items completed. He noted that it was a modest work load in 2011, and that all items placed on the work program had been addressed and completed.

The Council took a break for a private dinner.

The Council resumed the public meeting.

SOUTH END FIRE STATION

City Manager Conrad introduced the discussion by announcing that the City received eleven responses to the south end fire station architectural and engineering services RFQ that was due today. He stated that the goal for Council’s conversation was to decide if and when the City would go to the voters for a bond issue to fund the fire station rebuild.

Fire Chief Chris Tubbs provided a history of the south end fire station. In 1991, a study was done that determined that both Island fire stations need to be replaced. In 1999, the north end station was replaced, but no plan was set for the south end station. A programmatic study was done that reviewed the functions that occur in the station and it was determined that there were structural and seismic issues at the south end station.

Councilmember Cero and Deputy Mayor Grausz expressed their concern with the proposed size of the fire station. Chief Tubbs noted that the size of current facility does not accommodate today’s standards for fire stations. City Manager Conrad stated that the design process will define the project by researching the service needs and a building size will emerge.

Deputy Mayor Grausz asked about whether the south end station needs to have both fire and medical aid services. City Manager Conrad responded that fire service is based on the whole island, not on a north-south basis. Chief Tubbs responded that having fire service at both the north and south stations gives the Fire Department the ability to provide better services to the entire Island.

Following discussion, Mayor Bassett asked if there is support to move forward with the design of the south end fire station this year. There was consensus from the Council.
Deputy Mayor Grausz stated that this project is exactly what the City should go to the voters for. He asked what the options would be with full funding, 60% funding or 50% funding. Finance Director Chip Corder provided information to the Council about possible voted debt scenarios or a Levy Lid Lift or Bond Levy. He noted that with a levy lid lift, the yes vote must be 50% to pass and that with a bond levy it passes with 60% yes vote. Also a levy lid lift must be paid off in 9 years and a bond levy pay can be set to 10, 20, or 30 years. He also noted that it is a great bidding environment right now and a good time to go out for debt.

The Council then discussed the timing for going to the voters for a levy. Council determined that staff should move at a pace to make a decision on design for the station in June, which would allow for the levy to possibly be on the November, 2012 ballot.

The Council again discussed the size of the building. City Manager Conrad advised against setting a limit and stated that staff will come back with the ramifications for a functional station based upon the Island’s needs. Following further discussion the Council did not provide direction on building size, but did ask that staff be sensitive to the issue during the design process.

Agreements & Direction:
There was consensus to move forward with the design of the south end fire station this year at a pace to make a decision on design for the station (with sensitivity to building size) in June, which would allow for the levy to possibly be on the November, 2012 ballot.

COUNCIL OPERATIONS

The staff and Council engaged in a dialogue about interactions between council and staff, particularly during Council meetings. The following points were made:

Staff:

- Encourage Council to think about delivery of question. Instead of accusing or stating staff is wrong. Put staff on defense rather than giving information.
- Try to avoid “gotcha questions” of staff.
- It is uncomfortable getting legal questions asked during the meeting for political purposes. Try not to set staff up – make them look stupid.
- Staff is there to give facts. It is important to put less senior staff in front of the Council for professional growth. Try not to “beat them up” so much.
- If Councilmembers want to give “constructive” feedback to staff, please do so before or after Council meetings.
- Council should provide supportive feedback during the Council meeting when a staff person has done a good job.

Council:

- The Mayor should be more forceful in moving the meeting along.
- Councilmembers should not make long speeches and repeat themselves during discussion and debate.
- Assume council members have read the agenda materials. Presentations should be short. Staff should not simply repeat written information during their presentations.
- Staff should give Council option to not have a presentation.

Facilitator Rhonda Hilyer summarized that the dialogue was helpful and illustrated a lot of different styles. No one style is going to win the day, but it is helpful to recognize that diversity is good. The Mayor is being given more of a platform to run the meeting, maintain diversity. The Council and Directors should try to mentor newer and younger staff.

ADJOURNMENT

The Mayor adjourned the planning session for the day at 9:41 p.m.
Agreements & Direction:
The Council agreed to have Deputy Mayor Grausz and City Manager Conrad work with Youth Theatre Northwest to research opportunities for relocation.

PIONEER PARK OPEN SPACE ACQUISITION OPPORTUNITY

Parks and Recreation Director Bruce Fletcher provided information about the possibilities for acquisition and/or use of the North Star property and its costs. The Council discussed the King County Conservation Futures matching grant of $500K. The North Star property is a 3.4 acre tract which produces a rough estimated land value of $2.2 million. Mr. Fletcher also explained that Parks Natural Resource Coordinator Paul West had attempted to negotiate a 25 foot conservation easement but was unsuccessful.

The Council and Mr. Fletcher discussed possible uses for the property including trail access and tie-ins to Pioneer Park as well as how this acquisition fits into the City’s financial priorities. The Council agreed that continuing to talk to the property owners about long term preservation and potential trail use was a good idea.

Agreements & Direction:
The Council agreed to have staff continue to communicate with the North Star property owners.

OTHER COUNCIL TOPICS - “PARKING LOT”

- PEAK Agreements – Status Report
  City Manager Conrad noted that the development agreements associated with the PEAK project need closer monitoring to hold up the commitments that have been made to the neighborhood.

  Agreements & Direction:
  The Council agreed to have Kirsten Taylor monitor the various agreements and permits connected to the PEAK project and bring a status report on compliance.

- MI-TV Video Policy
  Mayor Bassett asked the Council if MI-TV (Channel 21) should broadcast other materials and meetings. City Manager Conrad noted that in the past the Council has not gone further with MI-TV policies due to budgetary issues.

  Agreements & Direction:
  The Council agreed, that as a first step, to have staff look into offering MISD the option of airing recordings of their meetings on MI-TV or using Council Chambers to broadcast meetings (and pay costs associated with staff time and cable operators).

2012 WORK PLAN

As a result of discussions during the planning session, City Manager Conrad added new tasks to the work plan for 2012. The year’s work areas include:

- 2013-2014 Biennial Budget
- I-90 (WSDOT/Sound Transit briefings and mitigation for mobility loss)
- Town Center (TOD Project partnership opportunities and City offices as project component)
- Sustainability Update (2012 work program and sustainability task force updates)
- Shoreline Master Program adoption
- Mary Wayte Pool - Interlocal Agreement with MISD
- South Fire Station - Design & Planning
- Town Center Economic Development - City/Chamber Partnership
- Youth and Family Services Emergency Assistance Program
- Plastic Bag Ban Ordinance Review (3rd/4th quarter)