**LWVSJ Observer Corps\*: County Council February 28, 2023**

The Council Approved the County sending a letter to Senator Cantwell supporting a request for an **federal funds earmark for the Port of Friday Harbor to build a new 50-ton gantry at Shipyard Cove** to replace an obsolete one that must be removed for environmental clean-up.

The Council postponed a discussion on the Port Angeles **Foreign Trade Zone** pending a briefing on the issue by the PA’s Office. The Council recognized 16 years of contributions by Senior Project Engineer **Shannon Wilson** upon retirement. The Council held a public hearing and approved the conveyance of a **conservation easement** to the San Juan Preservation Trust for the **Lopez Hill Preserve Addition.** The Council Approved a purchase **of software for the Fire Marshall program** that will bring the county up to regional standards.

The Council approved a **public participation plan** for the **update of the Critical Areas Ordinance** to include a series of outreach efforts and public hearing including one jointly with the State Department of Ecology. The Planning Department hopes to integrate the process with the subsequent update of the Shoreline Management Plan, though that remains up for debate.

The Planning Department reviewed proposed changes to the Development Code to implement the new comprehensive plan. Changes include language on **Mineral** **Resource Lands, Rural Development Clusters, and zoning for schools**. A public hearing was scheduled for March 21.

The Council was briefed on the **USGS Groundwater Recharge study** currently underway. The County’s water supply is almost entirely from precipitation, but changes in timing and intensity, plus sea-level rise all may impact the balance. The **Home Fund Administrative and Finance Plan is being reviewed and updated** at its five year mark.

A public hearing was set for March 21to establish a **SJC Safety Committee for county employee health and safety** to be made up of county employees elected by their peers. Auditor Molly Foote briefed the Council on the **2022 Budget outcome.** The budget was on track and revenue exceeded expenditure which was on track. Foote also briefed the Council on the County’s **internal controls.** The Council approved an allocation of **capital funds to complete the Marie Boe building** renovation at the Fairgrounds.

Council Members will attend parts of the Agricultural Summit on March 2-4 and hold a meet/greet on Lopez Island on March 11. Council Member Fuller is on the Ferry Advisory Committee and regional transportation groups. Council Member Wolf went to Washington DC and to advocate for county needs. Council Member Minney is going to training on public records and contracts.

\*The **League of Women Voters,** a nonpartisan organization encourages informed participation in government. The Observer Corps attends and takes notes at government meetings to expand public understanding of public policy and decisions. The notes do not necessarily reflect the views of the League or its members.