

City Council
March 14, 2023

Mayor Burkett called the regularly scheduled meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

Upon roll call the following members were present: Smith, Rose, Burbank, Green, Arsanto, Sundstrom, and Anderson

Also present were: City Administrator Brunell, Director of Parks & Recreation Snodgrass, Police Chief Alfano, Public Works Director Banks, Assistant Police Chief Northam, Fire Chief Skogen, Finance Assistant II Loye and Senior Center Program Coordinator Mickelson.

Mayor Burkett asked if there were any other additions, deletions, or changes to the agenda.

Council member Smith moved to approve the agenda as presented. Council member Arsanto seconded the motion. Motion carried.

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

Gus Sanderson – Shay Estates, Buckley, WA 98321

Gus read a letter from his wife who was unable to make the meeting. He stated that the City will be in a deficit, as the Finance Director Hines stated prior to this meeting and this pickleball would ruin our community. Shay Estates is a residential development, and all 15 residential homes would not like to see a commercial building in the middle of a residential area. Not in favor of the pickle ball court.

Steve Bergerson – Shay Estates, Buckley, WA 98321

Steve wanted to thank the council for the transparency regarding the new pickleball court. In the February meeting it was stated by Finance Director Hines that the City of Buckley will be in a deficit. As a senior citizen on a fixed income, I don't want my taxes to go up and even though it's a free building it will cost the city to maintain this building. The City needs to continue working on the current projects, and recover from the current financial situation we are in. Also, DSHS property is a no as it is close to my property.

Edward Hector –

Edward Hector stated that he is a retired Chief Executor for the biggest pickleball company. When he first got involved with pickleball 9 years ago there was roughly a million people playing pickleball around the United States and the most recent report there is roughly 8.9 million people around the United States that plays which is more than the amount of people that play football. I worked with many municipalities and projects who have implemented a building like the one you are looking at now. This

facility would attract lots of players, which would attract more people in the city to generate revenue for the City of Buckley.

Cathy Dahlquist –

Cathy stated that she is in support of the pickleball court. Cathy has the privilege to donate this facility to the City. When talked to all the businesses on Main St. all businesses were in favor of this facility, but two businesses wanted to make sure it wasn't going to be located on 410 and that they wanted to be assured the City of Buckley can afford to maintain this project when it was completed.

Gordon Hosmel –

Gordon stated that he is 79 years old and plays pickleball everyday in Bonney Lake. He is the pickleball club president with over 330 members who are always looking for an indoor place to play in the local area and an indoor facility would be a privilege to the pickleball community.

Julie Goetz – Ryan Estates

Julie stated she is with the Ryan Estates home association and lives in Ryan Estates which is right behind the Miller Park lot which is the proposed location for this facility. The association is concerned about all the extra traffic this would bring to their neighborhood and concerned about the influx of crimes that would come to this facility. Does the City have the appropriate budget to maintain this facility and all the issues that would come with this facility. They are not against pickleball they just don't want it in the Miller Park location and affect their quiet neighborhood.

Dana Gates – Enumclaw

Dana stated that she is the individual who started Enumclaw Pickleball Club 4 years ago so that she could play. The group has now grown to over 300 members from Enumclaw, Buckley, Auburn, Kent, Maple Valley, Bonney Lake, Sumner, Covington and many other neighboring cities. The group is very limited where they can meet to play and this facility with an indoor 12 court facility would be a great addition to the City of Buckley and help bring more business to the businesses in town. Dana also stated that her father Earl Hill who was a past Mayor and council member who could not attend so she read his letter in favor of this facility.

Holly Reuben – Enumclaw

Holly stated that she is a community member and a pickleball player who started playing a few years ago and her job is to try to get people to play. This is a sport that people of all ages can play.

Scott Reuben – Enumclaw

Scott stated that he fully supports this project. He started playing with the Enumclaw Pickleball group a few years ago and plays at least 3-4 days a week and is a great sport for all ages to play. Scott hailed his time to Steve Banarow.

Steve Banarow – Enumclaw

Steve is a personal trainer and has been involved in the fitness realm in the Buckley area. He works with young children, the elderly and athletes. When he talks to his clients about what they like about working out they all mentioned they like the social aspect of being around other people. A lot of his clients love to play Pickleball because it is a sport that individuals of all ages can play, and all different levels can play together. This indoor facility would meet the needs of many individuals in this area.

Sheri Kurfurst – 181 Elsa St. Buckley, WA 98321

Sheri stated she has lived here on Elsa St. for 43 years and was asked to talk because she has a lot of years here and knows a lot of people. Sheri retired 5 years ago, and she started playing pickleball and she said it's the greatest thing. She has met so many great people with this sport and has even played in Arizona and met people she doesn't even know, and she is able to play with all different ages and her granddaughter is always asking her to play pickleball. The people saying they don't want this in their neighborhoods and community, I haven't wanted change in my neighborhood either, but it has. This would be a facility for all ages including kids.

Karen Boc – Enumclaw

Karen stated that she grew up in Enumclaw, moved away and came back to the Enumclaw area. A big group of individuals in the room have become my friends because of this sport. I didn't know anyone until I started playing pickleball. It is a great place to meet friends and connect with people. It is a wonderful activity and encourages this facility to come to Buckley.

John Rienzo – Enumclaw

John stated that he lives in Enumclaw and wants the citizens of Buckley to know that we are here to work with everyone to make this facility work. John retired a few years ago and this sport has got me connected with people who I can make connections with and its friendships that have grown into more than just playing a sport they love. I'm also able to play with my grandkids.

Karla Wagner – Buckley

Karla stated that a friend reached out and they needed another player for their game of pickleball which she told them she doesn't play pickleball. She ended up going and playing and now she is hooked and is playing as much as she can, and she drives up to an hour to play indoors and there is nowhere in the area that has an indoor facility to play. This is such a great community of players and would be great for the growth of Buckley.

Jim Arsanto – Buckley

Jim stated to Earl Hill that he apologizes they aren't on the same track on this but being a past Mayor and City Administrator, you will understand where I'm coming from. I do

support pickleball, but my concern comes from a financial standpoint coming from someone who has submitted over 20 budgets to the City of Buckley council. There are questions that still have not been answered yet specifically pertaining to contracts, traffic impact studies and pedestrian access, all the other studies and engineering costs. Again, I'm not against pickleball but the council needs to ask more questions.

Mark Berryhill – Buckley

Mark stated that he has lived in Buckley so long that when he first moved in the Miller Park was the Miller Farm. When they put it up for sale we asked if the city would purchase the farm to make it into a park. Once the city got the property this was going to be a neighborhood park and we are still patiently waiting for this to be completed. There have been many different proposals for things to come into the park that have not taken place because this is supposed to be a park and that is what the Millers were told as well. I'm not against pickleball but the Miller Park location is not the spot for this facility.

Jack Keith – Enumclaw

Jack stated that he has been playing pickleball with all these people for about a year. I'm for this facility and it would bring lots of people to Buckley.

Connie Bender – Buckley

Connie stated that this is great, and she is glad people have found something they can do. This really comes down to money. We are trying to balance a budget now and it isn't the time to do this. I could see down the road having this happen, but Miller Park is supposed to be a neighborhood park and we need a park down there and we need to spend money on the current project which is making this into a park.

Lisa Torin – Bonney Lake

Lisa stated that she moved here two years ago from Minnesota and picked up playing pickleball two years ago as well. The city that we moved from was close to the same size as Buckley but has now grown. With growth we need places for the youth, and this would be a great facility for the youth.

Peter Hudheho – Ravensdale

Peter stated that he is a pickleball instructor. Peter can't weigh in on the financial aspect, but this hobby is a place to meet friends. I have coached 80+ adults as well as young kids. The amount of love that is in this game is shocking and it would be a great part of the Buckley community.

Ken Welsch – Enumclaw

Ken stated he has lived in Enumclaw for 30 years and comes to Buckley 5 days a week and goes to the NW Fitness and watched Buckley grow the last 30 years while driving through. I think this would be a great addition to the Buckley community and would love to see Buckley support this facility.

Lori McDonald – Enumclaw

Lori stated that she is for the facility. She has played pickleball but not hooked yet. This is a gift, and this will bring money to Buckley because this facility can host tournaments which will help the restaurants, hotels and Airbnb's.

Aileen Armstrong – Enumclaw

Aileen stated that she is in support of the pickleball facility and would like to give her time to Edward.

Edward Hector -

Edward stated that he is a snowbird now, but his last job was with pickleball. What this helped me understand is that pickleball is a multigenerational sport. Pickleball players are used to a pay to play model if the facility is of quality. The players want a hard court with good nets. This facility would build the City of Buckley's revenue over the years ahead.

Molly Klemko – Shay Estates

Molly stated that she lives in Shay Estate and wanted to thank the city for going about this project in the way they are as some projects haven't been like this in the past. I'm not against pickleball. I don't think the council has enough detailed information to make a decision on this project. I hear it's going to bring in revenue but as a taxpayer that isn't a guarantee. Another concern is we have projects that have been in the works specifically the Miller Park project that has not been started yet and we don't know what the operating costs are going to be for these projects.

Erica Witgow – Buckley

Erica stated she is not against pickleball but would like to address the locations. I would like to encourage the city to look closer at the 410 property. It has already been discussed about the Miller Park property, so I don't need to go into that again. With the number of people that this facility would attract I'm concerned about the safety and the traffic. If this is really going to be a facility for the whole community including the youth, then it needs to be in a safe walking location. A facility this large needs to accommodate all of the community.

Russ Houley – Auburn

Russ stated he is semi-retired and plays pickleball 3-5 times a week. Just this week I was playing with 16 people ranging of all ages. I live in Auburn and if you go by Game Farm Park on any sunny evening and look at the tennis courts, they are full of people playing pickleball, at least 80 people. If you had a facility with time slots that families could play after dinner or work it would be full.

Abby Hansen – Enumclaw

Abby stated that she loves pickleball and started playing when she was a kid on her aunt and uncle's backyard sport court. About 10 years ago they moved, and I haven't played pickleball since until a few years ago a group of people formed a pickleball group in Enumclaw who would play on the outdoor tennis courts. This group ended up growing where we would rent out the Expo center. I can no longer play indoors anymore as the Expo center is only available in the morning when I'm working. With this facility I would be able to play in the evenings as well as the weekends with my children as well.

Dale Maris –

Dale stated he has a lease out at the Rainier School. This land is a rare jewel, and the facility out there would be fantastic, but I don't think a pickleball court in the middle of Eg land would be conforming as there is a clause that the state can pull the lease at anytime which is one reason why I have not put anymore money into the land. I think pickleball is the right time, but Collins is the wrong place.

Lance Stohr – Shay Estates

Lance stated he isn't against pickleball, but he is against the location. I encourage the 410 location. Make sure we listen to the voters in the community.

Arden Barden – Enumclaw

Arden stated he is a retired pastor, and a lot of churches would love to have the enthusiasm as the pickleball community has. There is quality about this pickleball group who is uplifting members of the community.

Amy Boucher – Buckley

Amy stated she is a member of the Buckley Downtown Association and as I'm listening to the enthusiasm and passion behind what this pickleball project represents it's great and a great opportunity. However, with timing and going into a deficit how can we take on another project as it's been presented. I think there is a way to make this happen but there are more questions that need to be answered first.

Jamie Bendon – Buckley

Jamie stated that he has never played pickleball but now I want to. I've been here for about 6 years now and I know there is a lot of things that would have to go into this project. If we put it anywhere it needs to be on 410.

Janet Phillips – Buckley

Janet stated that she moved here 18 years ago from Tacoma because I was tired of the shootings, drugs and litter everywhere. When I moved to Buckley, I found heaven, and I don't want my heaven to turn out like Tacoma. I miss the wildlife running through my yard and I don't want the pickleball court next to my property because I like peace and quiet. I'm not happy about having this here.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Admin/Finance/Public Safety

Council member Smith stated the meeting was cancelled.

Parks & Community Services:

Council member Green stated they met on March 6th and discussed what was on the agenda and talked about the staff changes.

Council Member Comments & Good of the Order:

Council member Smith stated that a group of people well organized came to address the council. Someone stated that if something is too good to be true it probably is. There were three potential city locations and most citizens who spoke were against with some for this facility. I'm happy that the mayor is going to check with legal on the public yielding their time to someone else. This is public comment, and you should bring your own ideas to speak and not yield to someone else. I'm all for bringing business to the City of Buckley but we need to pump the breaks on this.

Council member Sundstrom stated that the council hasn't heard enough or got enough information yet to make a decision. I'm all for things to help the City of Buckley but we don't have enough information. Also, there is some rumbling that we may have a revenue shortage and I want to get it on record that there will be no cuts in public safety we know what that looks like. Secondly, we need to address the money for the road fund, and we need to make sure that every function in our city is self-sufficient.

Council member Anderson stated that she was recently privileged to work with the Downtown Business Association during her role as the WRHS soccer coach to raise some money. It was awesome to be there and see the community engagement and I want to thank the association for the work they are doing to try and revitalize the City of Buckley.

Council member Arsanto stated that they were asked by Ali to look at the beer garden plan and we need to look at this so we can give her a decision.

Council member Anderson also stated that we should have a study session strictly on the pickleball project.

Council member Green also stated that he agreed with council member Anderson on setting up an additional study session to tackle this issue. We heard from a lot of Enumclaw residents, and I would like to hear from more Buckley residents, and I need some more information as well as footprints of this facility.

Council member Anderson stated she wanted to say one last comment and that was that pickleball is now in the school curriculum.

CONSENT AGENDA

Council Member Smith moved to approve the Consent Agenda. Council member Rose seconded the motion. Motion carried.

- a. Fire Vehicle 35 Replacement

STAFF REPORTS

- 1. City Administrator Update
 - a. ARPA non-profit grant application introduction
 - b. Stormwater Management Plan Introduction

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

Dave Morell –

Dave Morell stated that he is the Pierce County Council member for the City of Buckley. All I can say about pickleball is they are a fierce group of people. I have watched games, and they just go crazy. I have Tehalah in my district and they have a very active group out there. Obviously, there is a lot of work to make sure this is right for the City of Buckley. That is not the reason why I'm here though. I've spoken with council member Green about this, but the county is looking at implementing a one tenth of 1 percent sales tax increase for affordable housing. Also, we are expanding Pierce County's economic innovation grant program to small cities, and this would be open to all small businesses in Buckley.

Council member Smith moved to adjourn. Council member Anderson seconded the motion. Motion carried.

With nothing further, the meeting was adjourned at 8:06 PM.



Mayor



City Administrator

Prepared by: Kristin Loye