

RESOLUTION NO. _____

A RESOLUTION HONORING MAYOR SETH FLEETWOOD FOR HIS SERVICE TO THE CITY OF BELLINGHAM

WHEREAS, Seth Fleetwood has served as Mayor of Bellingham with distinction and dedication since January 2020; and

WHEREAS, prior to becoming Mayor, Mayor Seth served two terms on the Bellingham City Council (2010-2013), and two terms on the Whatcom County Council (2002-2009); and

WHEREAS, in addition to holding local elected positions, Mayor Seth has a long history of public-spirited commitment to leadership on issues of significance at all levels of government; and

WHEREAS, Mayor Seth took office in January 2020 at the onset of the worldwide COVID-19 pandemic, one of the most difficult challenges of modern times, requiring him to take emergency actions affecting government services, business operations, and community life. During the pandemic, he served as an incident commander and regional leader, taking actions that centered health and safety and directed resources toward helping people, particularly assisting vulnerable populations, and supporting local businesses; and

WHEREAS, in addition to addressing the local challenges of the pandemic, Mayor Seth assembled a strong, capable and collaborative leadership team that served as a driving force in maintaining Bellingham's vision and resilience in the face of the many challenges of the past four years; and

WHEREAS, together with his team, Mayor Seth prioritized action and made progress on affordable housing, climate initiatives, behavioral health, public safety, alternative response systems, race and justice issues, and other significant initiatives that are priorities for the Bellingham community; and

WHEREAS, Mayor Seth prioritized strategic property acquisitions, including purchasing property to help protect the Post Point heron colony, along with many significant Greenways and Lake Whatcom Watershed purchases, and successfully negotiated the donation to the city of Lehigh pier, an incredible waterfront asset intended for future public use; and

WHEREAS, as a long-time Greenways champion, Mayor Seth led the establishment of a new Greenways Strategic Plan to guide future parks, trails and open space purchases and development, completed plans to guide the future of the Hundred Acre Wood, and contributed to the recent success of the Greenways V levy; and

WHEREAS, Mayor Seth established an executive-level Office of Climate and continued and amplified actions to achieve City climate goals, including increasing the number of electric and hybrid vehicles available in the City fleet, installing electric vehicle charging stations citywide,

initiating a pilot home electrification assistance program for low- and moderate-income residents, establishing extreme heat and smoke responses, gathering community feedback to create a roadmap for future actions, and more; and

WHEREAS, Mayor Seth was instrumental in establishing the Whatcom Racial Equity Commission, along with Whatcom County, the Chuckanut Health Foundation, and representing hundreds of community voices, after hosting the City's first-ever Listening Series on Race and Justice; and

WHEREAS, Mayor Seth enabled new approaches to addressing public safety staffing shortages, including retention bonuses and creative recruiting tactics; and

WHEREAS, Mayor Seth initiated new strategies to foster a safe, welcoming environment in Bellingham's downtown with significant investments identified collaboratively with the downtown business community and other stakeholders; and

WHEREAS, Mayor Seth maintained and expanded options for people experiencing homelessness that are healthy, safe, and offer services to help people transition into permanent housing, including the addition of two new tiny house villages; and

WHEREAS, Mayor Seth's administration made progress on key capital projects, such as building the new, 100-percent electric Pacific Street Operations Center and remodeling the Central Library downtown; and

WHEREAS, these are just a few examples of Mayor Seth's many achievements as Mayor of Bellingham during a tumultuous and challenging time; and

WHEREAS, Mayor Seth is known for his thoughtful, collaborative approaches to problem-solving, carefully listening to all sides of issues, and for "walking toward the fire" when confronted with difficult issues or circumstances; and

WHEREAS, Mayor Seth is also known for participating in 31 Ski to Sea races, his love of the Beatles, his particularly bushy hair and beard during the pandemic, and pairing his black and white Converse Chuck Taylor All Stars with a sports jacket and tie; and

WHEREAS, Mayor Seth is guided by his vision and a deep sense of purpose for a future in which we all work together to do the important, inspiring work of building a sustainable, equitable and thriving city; and

WHEREAS, as a lifelong resident and long-time public servant, the City Council anticipates that, after a well-deserved rest from public life, Seth will continue to contribute in significant and meaningful ways to his beloved hometown.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BELLINGHAM:

The City Council hereby expresses its appreciation and honors Bellingham Mayor Seth Fleetwood for his leadership, public service and dedication to the people of the City of Bellingham and to our wider community.

PASSED by the Council this _____ day of _____, 2023.

Council President

APPROVED by me this _____ day of _____, 2023.

Mayor

ATTEST: _____
Finance Director

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

Office of the City Attorney