

Whatcom County Council Public Works & Health Committee

**COUNTY COURTHOUSE
311 Grand Avenue, Ste #105
Bellingham, WA 98225-4038
(360) 778-5010**



Committee Minutes - Final

**Tuesday, June 4, 2024
10:10 AM
Hybrid Meeting**

**HYBRID MEETING - ADJOURNS BY 10:40 AM - MAY BEGIN EARLY -
(PARTICIPATE IN-PERSON, SEE REMOTE JOIN INSTRUCTIONS AT
www.whatcomcounty.us/joinvirtualcouncil, OR CALL 360.778.5010)**

COUNCILMEMBERS

Kaylee Galloway
Jon Scanlon
Mark Stremmer

CLERK OF THE COUNCIL

Dana Brown-Davis, C.M.C.

Call To Order

Committee Chair Jon Scanlon called the meeting to order at 10:20 a.m. in a hybrid meeting.

Roll Call

Present: 3 - Kaylee Galloway, Jon Scanlon, and Mark Stremmler

Also Present: Barry Buchanan, Tyler Byrd, Todd Donovan, and Ben Elenbaas

Announcements

Committee Discussion and Recommendation to Council

1. [AB2024-314](#) Ordinance establishing Whatcom County Code Chapter 2.180 Naming County-Owned Public Buildings, Properties, Parks, and Facilities

Buchanan briefed the Councilmembers and stated that former Councilmember Carol Frazey requested that he work with the Council's intern to continue to move this forward. The ordinance spells out how naming is done and there is a committee that would be formed.

Jed Holmes, Executive's Office, spoke about how the ordinance came to be.

Scanlon stated he has a question about the section that talks about naming after a donor and stated there are not as many requirements regarding that. He asked whether there would still be background research and vetting done to make sure that the name is one that most people would want to see.

Cathy Halka, Council Legislative Analyst, stated there is a set process and spoke about provisions in Whatcom County Code (WCC) 2.180.040 and 2.180.070 which outline the process and when it would not apply in respect to donors.

She and Buchanan answered whether they have worked with Public Works staff about the ordinance and signage. Scanlon stated he talked to Elizabeth Kosa, Public Works Department Director, and she stated she did not have any concerns from a department perspective.

Scanlon stated he has some concerns about the donor portion. He referred to WCC 2.180.040 D which states:

D. Facilities may be named for living persons provided that:
1. They made a significant contribution and the donor

stipulates naming of the facility as a condition of the donation;

He stated that plays into inequality and power dynamics and he would rather that it to go through the same vetting process.

Holmes stated it is a great policy question and if they want, Council can send it back for them to look at what they have done in the past.

Bennett Knox, Parks and Recreation Department Director, stated he does not see a listing of trails spelled out specifically, which is one of the things they probably name more often than not. It is unclear whether that falls under the official naming policy or one of the minor amenities. That is something that should be clarified. He also stated that Parks does signage on park property and would not expect Public Works to do that. Councilmembers discussed why trails were not included in the ordinance and a request that they be added. Buchanan stated he would like to look at the language regarding donors as well.

Councilmembers and Halka discussed whether changes to the ordinance could be made before the evening meeting and whether the changes would be substantive since the ordinance was already introduced on May 21st. Halka stated a change to the donor process would be a substantive change that would require reintroduction of the ordinance at a future meeting.

Galloway asked whether “properties” also includes roads and bridges. It may be as simple as defining what “properties” include. She stated the other big-ticket item that she could foresee them having a process for naming is the ferry and she does not know if the ferry is included in the ordinance or considered a facility and whether it would include a public process.

George Roche, Prosecuting Attorney’s Office, answered whether there is a common definition of “facilities” and whether it includes things like trails, ferries, or plows. He stated there are common definitions for all of these words. He thinks the ferry is considered property and trails would most likely fall under the scope of Parks, but it does not hurt to be more specific, so he does not have any objection to wordsmithing this to have more clarity for the future.

Councilmembers and staff discussed that there would likely be costs related to renaming and that Council would still have to approve any expenditure related to it, and how to proceed with the ordinance since potential changes

might be substantive.

Scanlon moved that they recommend to Council to hold this item for two more weeks.

The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 3 - Scanlon, Galloway, and Stremmler

Nay: 0

Scanlon's motion that the Ordinance be FORWARDED TO COUNCIL WITH RECOMMENDED MOTION(S) to hold for two weeks carried by the following vote:

Aye: 3 - Galloway, Scanlon, and Stremmler

Nay: 0

Motion approved to recommend to the full Council that they hold for two weeks.

Items Added by Revision

There were no agenda items added by revision.

Other Business

Scanlon stated they all received a note from a community member about their summer plans regarding heat and wildfire smoke and what is planned for unhoused neighbors in the community. He has reached out to the Health and Community Services Department and stated it looks like the first meeting in July might be a good time for having that discussion.

He also spoke about the recent presentation on the Healthy Children's Fund and the report from the Child and Family Well-Being Task Force and stated it seemed like there was a lot of interest from Councilmembers in hearing from the task force again. He brought that up at the most recent task force meeting and the co-chairs were interested. July might be a good time for this (either the first or second meeting). The task force's question to the Council was which topics they might be interested in so he asked if there was anything that Councilmembers want to hear.

Cathy Halka, Council Legislative Analyst, stated Councilmembers could email topics of interest to her and she would be happy to communicate those with the co-chairs.

Galloway stated she supports hosting them in this committee and getting additional updates.

Stremmler stated what stood out to him in the report was the task force almost questioning the ability for Health and Community Services to administer the whole fund.

Scanlon stated he will go back and look at that discussion in the report and they will put that in in the next discussion.

Byrd stated part of the discussion was that it was kind of written into the ordinance originally that it would have its own department at some point. So, they should look at that or whether there are other examples and structures they could use that might streamline everything. It would be nice to have that be part of the conversation.

Councilmembers discussed other business.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 10:43 a.m.

ATTEST:

WHATCOM COUNTY COUNCIL
WHATCOM COUNTY, WA

Jon Scanlon-via email 6/17/2024

Dana Brown-Davis, Council Clerk

Jon Scanlon, Committee Chair

Kristi Felbinger, Minutes Transcription

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