

**Whatcom County
Council Finance and Administrative Services Committee**

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



Committee Minutes - Final

**Tuesday, October 25, 2022
11:05 AM
Hybrid Meeting**

**HYBRID MEETING - ADJOURNS BY 12:50 P.M. (PARTICIPATE IN-PERSON, SEE
REMOTE JOIN INSTRUCTIONS AT www.whatcomcounty.us/joinvirtualcouncil, OR
CALL 360.778.5010)**

COUNCILMEMBERS

Tyler Byrd
Carol Frazey
Kathy Kershner

CLERK OF THE COUNCIL

Dana Brown-Davis, C.M.C.

Call To Order

Committee Chair Tyler Byrd called the meeting to order at 11:06 a.m. in a hybrid meeting.

Roll Call

Present: 3 - Tyler Byrd, Carol Frazey, and Kathy Kershner

Absent: None

Also Present: Barry Buchanan, Todd Donovan, Ben Elenbaas, and Kaylee Galloway

Announcements

Special Presentation

Kershner read the first item into the record.

1. [AB2022-527](#) Report from Facilities

Rob Ney, Administrative Services Department Facilities, reported on completed projects and the need to plan for County office space in the future. He answered whether any consideration is being given for leasing out any of the space at Bellis Fair Mall for temporary County offices or operations, whether we are using all floors of the Civic Center building, and whether the County owns or leases the building that the Public Defender is in.

This agenda item was REPORTED.

2. [AB2022-570](#) Report from the Human Resources Division of the Administrative Services Department

The following people reported on workforce data, the new NEOGOV recruitment software, and staff training:

- Melissa Keeley, Administrative Services Department Human Resources
- Donnie LaPlante, Administrative Services Department Human Resources

They answered how many of the vacant Health Department positions are new positions that have been approved in the last twelve months, what the vacancy rate would be if they did not figure in those positions, how many full-time positions the County had in 2006 before the 2008 recession, and whether that is substantially different than what we have now.

Tyler Schroeder, Director of Administrative Services, stated they were building up the FTE count to 2008 and that was the top year for full time positions. Then it went down from there in 2010 and 2011 in response to the recession. We are getting back up there in 2022 and will have additional positions in 2023 and 2024.

Councilmembers discussed whether the number of full-time positions is keeping up with the growth in population, the number of vacancies and how it speaks to a broader systemic issue, the importance of staff recruitment and retention and what is being developed (beyond new software) to hire 100 full-time employees a year and keep the staff we have, looking for ways such as a paid internship or apprenticeship program and getting into schools to recruit talent locally, and looking at what new positions have been hired (especially in the Health Department) to determine if we have really made progress Countywide or are keeping pace with population growth.

This agenda item was REPORTED.

Committee Discussion and Recommendation to Council

1. [AB2022-536](#) Ordinance amending Whatcom County Code 2.21.030 to increase the per diem amount paid to Board of Equalization members

Kershner moved that the Ordinance be RECOMMENDED FOR ADOPTION and briefed the Councilmembers on her recommendation to introduce the Ordinance at a higher amount at the last meeting.

Kershner's motion that the Ordinance be RECOMMENDED FOR ADOPTION carried by the following vote:

Aye: 3 - Byrd, Frazey, and Kershner

Nay: 0

Absent: 0

2. [AB2022-554](#) Ordinance amending the 2022 Whatcom County Budget, request no. 14, in the amount of \$420,917

Frazey moved that the Ordinance be RECOMMENDED FOR ADOPTION.

Diana Bradrick, County Auditor, answered whether they are seeing increased costs associated with all the cut and paste records requests that are inundating auditor's offices around the country.

The following people answered questions about the request to fund Medical Examiner cost increases:

- Tyler Schroeder, Director of Administrative Services, answered
- Dr. Allison Hunt, Chief Medical Examiner

Kershner asked whether it would be appropriate for the Medical Examiner come to the Public Works and Health Committee to give a more thorough update on the Medical Examiner's Office.

Hunt stated she would be glad to.

Frazey's motion that the Ordinance be RECOMMENDED FOR ADOPTION carried by the following vote:

Aye: 3 - Byrd, Frazey, and Kershner

Nay: 0

Absent: 0

3. [AB2022-576](#) Request authorization for the County Executive to enter into a contract between Whatcom County and Opportunity Council to provide funding to support childcare stabilization, in the amount of \$1,489,509

Frazey moved that the Contract be RECOMMENDED FOR AUTHORIZATION.

The following people spoke:

- Judy Ziels, Health Department
- Greg Winter, Opportunity Council
- Wilanne Oilla-Perry, Opportunity Council
- Kenda Sipma, Opportunity Council

Councilmembers and the speakers discussed whether the Health Department had a Request for Quote (RFQ) or Request of Proposals (RFP) process to determine who they would give this money to, whether the Opportunity Council has a childcare certification through the State, whether the Opportunity Council staff and the Center for Retention and Expansion of Child Care (C-RECC) NW will reach out to other organizations to make sure we are incorporating all the resources in the community, not having just one huge organization that is taking care of all of the social issues in our community, whether the Opportunity Council will be administering the process of the grants but will not actually be providing the services, whether the Opportunity Council is planning on providing consultation services or whether they will be contracting those out, how the C-RECC team will

support the grant recipients, how the contract and grants to childcare providers interplay with what we potentially have as a result of the childcare levy ballot measure, and whether this the best use of the limited American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) dollars that we have to spend if the levy does not pass.

Frazey's motion that the Contract be RECOMMENDED FOR AUTHORIZATION carried by the following vote:

Aye: 2 - Frazey, and Kershner

Nay: 1 - Byrd

Absent: 0

4. [AB2022-579](#) Request authorization for the County Executive to enter into a Subrecipient Agreement between Whatcom County and Opportunity Council for pass-through of a CDBG Public Services grant for the delivery of direct public services in the amount of \$131,000

Frazey moved that the Contract be RECOMMENDED FOR AUTHORIZATION.

Tyler Schroeder, Director of Administrative Services, answered whether this item is the actual pass through of AB2022-554 and whether the Opportunity Council is applying for this grant and it needs to come through the Whatcom County operation to then be passed through to them.

Greg Winter, Opportunity Council, spoke about what they hope to accomplish over the next year.

Frazey's motion that the Contract be RECOMMENDED FOR AUTHORIZATION carried by the following vote:

Aye: 2 - Frazey, and Kershner

Nay: 1 - Byrd

Absent: 0

Council "Consent Agenda" Items

Kershner moved to approve Consent Agenda items one through ten.

Councilmembers asked questions about two of the items.

AB2022-564

The following people answered questions:

- Bennett Knox, Parks and Recreation Department Director
- Christ Thomsen, Parks and Recreation Department

They answered whether the current agreement that expired in 2016 just got carried over and was continued and if not, what they have been doing since then, what the level of service for fire protection is, and whether they have had fires in any County parks.

AB2022-567

Dean Wight, Health Department, answered whether we are doing a bunch of alternative response teams and why we do not have just one, who is responsible for each of the teams, whether they are all coordinated, whether the \$2.2 million in this request is paying for staff costs, whether we are building another office space for calls that do not require medical or mental health crisis response, whether it is more cost effective for 9-1-1 calls to come into one location and be routed from there to the appropriate place, how calls to the State's 9-8-8 call line would be routed, and whether the only thing that has changed is the date.

Councilmembers voted on all the Consent items (see votes on individual items below).

1. [AB2022-563](#) Request authorization for the County Executive to enter into an interlocal agreement between Whatcom County and Washington State Department of Commerce for Drug Task Force Justice Assistance Grant (JAG), in the amount of \$199,375.00

Kershner moved that the Interlocal be RECOMMENDED FOR AUTHORIZATION BY CONSENT. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 3 - Byrd, Frazey, and Kershner

Nay: 0

Absent: 0

2. [AB2022-564](#) Request authorization for the County Executive to enter into an interlocal agreement between Whatcom County and South Whatcom Fire Authority for fire protection services in an amount determined by the current levy rate and the assessed value of improvements on the park properties within the district

Kershner moved that the Interlocal be RECOMMENDED FOR AUTHORIZATION BY CONSENT. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 3 - Byrd, Frazey, and Kershner

Nay: 0

Absent: 0

3. [AB2022-567](#) Request authorization for the County Executive to enter into an interlocal agreement between Whatcom County and Washington State Health Care Authority to establish an alternative response team to respond to 911 calls that do not require law enforcement, in the amount of \$2,213,000

Kershner moved that the Interlocal be RECOMMENDED FOR AUTHORIZATION BY CONSENT. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 3 - Byrd, Frazey, and Kershner

Nay: 0

Absent: 0

4. [AB2022-572](#) Request authorization for the County Executive to enter into an interlocal agreement between Whatcom County and U.S. Department of Justice Drug Enforcement Administration for reimbursement of overtime for two Sheriff's Office detectives, in the amount of \$39,681.50

Kershner moved that the Interlocal be RECOMMENDED FOR AUTHORIZATION BY CONSENT. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 3 - Byrd, Frazey, and Kershner

Nay: 0

Absent: 0

5. [AB2022-573](#) Request authorization for the County Executive to enter into an interlocal agreement between Whatcom County and U.S. Department of Justice Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Forces (OCDETF) for reimbursement of overtime of Whatcom County Sheriff's Office deputies engaged in OCDETF investigation PA-WAW-0363, in the amount of \$2,500.00

Kershner moved that the Interlocal be RECOMMENDED FOR AUTHORIZATION BY CONSENT. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 3 - Byrd, Frazey, and Kershner

Nay: 0

Absent: 0

6. [AB2022-574](#) Request authorization for the County Executive to enter into an interlocal agreement

between Whatcom County and U.S. Department of Justice Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Forces (OCDETF) for reimbursement of overtime of Whatcom County Sheriff's Office deputies engaged in OCDETF investigation PA-WAW-0362, in the amount of \$2,500.00

Kershner moved that the Interlocal be RECOMMENDED FOR AUTHORIZATION BY CONSENT. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 3 - Byrd, Frazey, and Kershner

Nay: 0

Absent: 0

7. [AB2022-578](#) Request authorization for the County Executive to enter into an interlocal agreement between Whatcom County and City of Bellingham for partial funding of the ongoing maintenance and operations of the Crisis Stabilization Center, in the amount of \$65,000

Kershner moved that the Interlocal be RECOMMENDED FOR AUTHORIZATION BY CONSENT. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 3 - Byrd, Frazey, and Kershner

Nay: 0

Absent: 0

8. [AB2022-580](#) Request authorization for the County Executive to enter into an interlocal amendment between Whatcom County and the City of Bellingham to extend the term of the Jail Use Agreement until December 31, 2023

Kershner moved that the Interlocal be RECOMMENDED FOR AUTHORIZATION BY CONSENT. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 3 - Byrd, Frazey, and Kershner

Nay: 0

Absent: 0

9. [AB2022-582](#) Request authorization for the County Executive to enter into an interlocal agreement between Whatcom County and the City of Bellingham for design and construction costs associated with the Meridian Birchwood Roundabout project in the amount of \$2,625,000

Kershner moved that the Interlocal be RECOMMENDED FOR

AUTHORIZATION BY CONSENT. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 3 - Byrd, Frazey, and Kershner

Nay: 0

Absent: 0

10. [AB2022-590](#) Request authorization for the County Executive to enter into an interlocal agreement between Whatcom County and the City of Bellingham for joint support of the Whatcom Racial Equity Committee in the amount of \$600,000

Kershner moved that the Interlocal be RECOMMENDED FOR AUTHORIZATION BY CONSENT. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 3 - Byrd, Frazey, and Kershner

Nay: 0

Absent: 0

Items Added by Revision

There were no agenda items added by revision.

Other Business

There was no other business.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 12:28 p.m.

ATTEST:

WHATCOM COUNTY COUNCIL
WHATCOM COUNTY, WA

Tyler Byrd-via email 10/31/2022

Dana Brown-Davis, Council Clerk

Tyler Byrd, Committee Chair

Kristi Felbinger, Minutes Transcription

SIGNED COPY ON FILE

