

Whatcom County Council Water Work Session

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



Minutes - Draft Minutes

Tuesday, September 22, 2020

10:30 AM

VIRTUAL MEETING

COUNCILMEMBERS

Rud Browne
Barry Buchanan
Tyler Byrd
Todd Donovan
Ben Elenbaas
Carol Frazey
Kathy Kershner

CLERK OF THE COUNCIL

Dana Brown-Davis, C.M.C.

Call To Order

Council Chair Barry Buchanan called the meeting to order at 10:30 a.m. in a virtual meeting.

Roll Call

Present: 3 - Barry Buchanan, Todd Donovan and Carol Frazey

Absent: 4 - Rud Browne, Tyler Byrd, Ben Elenbaas and Kathy Kershner

Water Resources Update

Gary Stoyka, Public Works Department, updated the Councilmembers on the following items:

- Lake Whatcom updates
- Watershed Planning
- Water Use Efficiency Projects
- Adjudication

He answered questions about what the solutions to water supply problems might be in drainage basins and how much the funding would be for the enhanced water use efficiency program.

Satpal Sidhu, County Executive, spoke about the Department of Ecology's pending recommendation for adjudication in the Nooksack and Upper Columbia Basins. The Administration, along with the Natural Resources Department, has prepared a white paper settlement proposal. They consulted with the major parties during the drafting of the proposal and have shared it with Lummi and Nooksack. They also requested a position paper and would like every affected party to write out what their vision is for what the ideal settlement should look like, share it with the other parties, then just concentrate on what they do not agree on. The County will be a neutral facilitator.

He answered questions about the nature of the position paper and what the agricultural community may not cooperate with. He stated he is going to make a request to the Department of Ecology and the Legislature to give the County \$200,000 for each of the next five years to facilitate these settlement talks and is also still on track to hire a director-level person to focus on all water issues.

Stoyka updated the Councilmembers on the dates and topics of the next Watershed Management Board and Planning Unit meetings.

Lake Whatcom Stormwater Utility Capital Facilities Charge

The following staff briefed the Councilmembers and answered questions.

- Kraig Olason, Public Works Department
- Cathy Craver, Public Works Department

Olason answered whether the proposed amendment is just to fix problems with the language of the original Ordinance which set up a capital facilities charge and not a policy change.

Craver went over the proposed changes to the Code language and answered what the dollar amount would be if they were to collect it and whether it is a one-time or a per-year charge.

2021-2026 Water Resources Improvement Plan

The following staff briefed the Councilmembers:

Kraig Olason, Public Works Department
Paula Harris, Public Works Department

Olason answered questions about how Whatcom County was going to be able to partner with Kitsap County on the Geneva Bioretention Pilot Project, and whether none of the projects are using the stormwater utility funds after 2023.

Harris briefed the Councilmembers on River and Flood projects and answered a question about the dollar amount listed for the Everson Overflow Pipeline Bank Stabilization project.

WRIA 1 Planning Unit

Skip Richards briefed the Councilmembers on items scheduled on the Planning Unit's upcoming agenda for September 23, 2020.

Other Business

There was no other business.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 11:51 a.m.

ATTEST:

WHATCOM COUNTY COUNCIL
WHATCOM COUNTY, WA

Dana Brown-Davis, Council Clerk

Barry Buchanan, Council Chair

Kristi Felbinger, Minutes Transcription