

Whatcom County Council Committee of the Whole

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



Committee Minutes - Draft Minutes

**VIRTUAL MEETING - MAY BEGIN EARLY; ENDS NO LATER THAN 5
P.M. (TO PARTICIPATE, SEE INSTRUCTIONS AT
www.whatcomcounty.us/joinvirtualcouncil OR CALL 360.778.5010)
Tuesday, March 23, 2021**

3 PM

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 3:01 p.m. in a virtual meeting.

Roll Call

Present: 7 - Rud Browne, Barry Buchanan, Tyler Byrd, Todd Donovan, Carol Frazey, Ben Elenbaas and Kathy Kershner

Absent: None

Committee Discussion

1. [AB2020-219](#) Discussion and update on strategies and other items related to COVID-19 (Council and Health Board)

Erika Lautenbach, Health Department Director, updated the Councilmembers on the following:

- Declining COVID-19 case rates in the county and specifically in those age 60 plus
- The move this week to Phase Three of the State's Roadmap to Recovery and what it means
- The status of COVID-19 vaccinations in Whatcom County (as of last week, 72% of eligible Whatcom County residents have received at least one shot), the number of doses expected in the next few weeks and the community vaccine clinic
- An upcoming COVID Impact Assessment

She answered questions about whether the allowance for an indoor maximum of 50% capacity applies to houses of worship in Phase Three, why the supply of vaccine doses will be lower for the next two weeks and how summer camps for kids would be affected by the State guidance.

This agenda item was DISCUSSED.

2. [AB2021-181](#) Discussion of letter from Incarceration Prevention and Reduction Task Force to State legislators on funding of Crisis Stabilization Center and establishing the Center as a State pilot program for diversion

Anne Deacon, Health Department, briefed the Councilmembers and stated a letter is not being sent yet but they would like the Council's support in case a letter needs to be sent.

She answered whether they could include in the letter that the Crisis Stabilization Center is a regional facility for other parts of the state and not just for Whatcom County.

This agenda item was DISCUSSED.

3. [AB2021-182](#) Discussion regarding impacts of the Blake decision

The following people briefed the Councilmembers:

- Eric Richey, Whatcom County Prosecuting Attorney
- Karen Frakes, Prosecuting Attorney's Office

They answered questions about impacts of the decision on the County including whether having to pay back legal financial obligations (LFOs) will include interest and how far back it will go, whether the State statute has been eliminated or just eliminated as it has been applied, whether the Prosecuting Attorney’s Office is planning to come to the Council with a local proposal in the interim before the State does a statute that considers intent, whether the County will have to reimburse for LFOs before there is a decision on whether it is the Sate or the County that will be financially liable for them and how much time the County has to pay them, how much the County might have to pay if it has to pay for LFOs, what percentage of the jail population is from simple possession cases and whether local laws should be adopted to help the situation.

This agenda item was DISCUSSED.

Items Added by Revision

There were no agenda items added by revision.

Other Business

There was no other business.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 3:47 p.m.

ATTEST:

WHATCOM COUNTY COUNCIL
WHATCOM COUNTY, WA

Dana Brown-Davis, Council Clerk

Barry Buchanan, Council Chair

Kristi Felbinger, Minutes Transcription