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WHATCOM COUNTY COUNCIL
Special County Council Meeting

East Whatcom Regional Resource Center 8251 Kendall Road, Maple Falls

October 29, 2019

CALL TO ORDER

Council Chair Rud Browne called the meeting to order at 6 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Present: Rud Browne, Barry Buchanan, Tyler Byrd, Todd Donovan, Carole Frazey, Satpal Sidhu
Absent: Barbara Brenner

PUBLIC HEARING

1. **AB2019-540** **Public hearing to review final project performance for the East Whatcom Regional Resource Center Phase II construction, funded in part by a grant through the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program**

Browne opened the public hearing and the following people spoke;

Greg Winter, Opportunity Council Executive Director, thanked those involved in funding the project. He explained the grant and stated that the project should be completed and open for business in January 2020. He stated the funds for the project are about 98% spent out. He thanked Councilmembers for coming to Kendall and being in the community.

Phil Clowend thanked the Council.

Jack Hovenier, Subcommittee member, thanked everyone for their work and thanked the Council for being in the community for this meeting.

Greg Winter asked the Council to come back in January for the grand opening.

Cheryl Thompson, Foothills Food Bank Board President thanked the Council and stated she is excited to move from St. Peters Church where they are limited to one day a week. Many clients are working families. She stated she is also a member of the East Whatcom Community Council and hopes the County Council and Executive will continue to support the build out of the community.

Shorty Bjornsted stated he likes all the improvements that have been made to the Center and noted the building is used as a food bank most of the time. The community

1 worked hard to put this together. He thanked the Council for the additional Deputy
2 assigned to the area.

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4 Hearing no one else, Browne closed the public hearing.

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6 **OPEN SESSION**

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8 The following audience members spoke about the covered outdoor play area planned
9 for the EWRCC:

- 10 • Jerry Burns asked when the play area would be installed.
- 11 • Greg Winter, Opportunity Council, explained the Opportunity Council is
12 committed to making the play area happen. He explained building three was
13 eliminated from the project due to cost.

14 The following audience members spoke about fire danger and organized wood
15 chipping projects:

- 16 • Richard Whitson stated the community is concerned about fire hazards.
17 There have been a couple wood chipping projects to help with fire hazards
18 scheduled in the area.
- 19 • Rebecca Cann explained there are a lot of storms in the valley and if there are
20 chipping projects made available to the community it would reduce outdoor
21 burning. Chipping projects have worked well and are well received. She
22 stated the last two projects produced about 55 tons of wood chips in just a
23 couple days. She stated DNR Forest Management is coming out with a plan
24 for the area, but feels it should extend to the whole valley.
- 25 • Carl McDaniel stated there used to be a place in the area to get rid of
26 branches, but there is absolutely no place to dispose of the branches
27 currently. Chipping projects help remove fuel and the chips can be given to
28 those who need them.
- 29 • Vern Yadon, Pastor of Kendall Chapel, stated his church received the chips
30 from the chipping projects. The church is developing a 3.65 acre park and
31 the wood chips will be going on park paths.

32 The following audience members spoke about speed limits and sidewalk installation:

- 33 • Richard Whitson, Peaceful Valley Board Member, stated they have worked
34 hard to get sidewalks installed in the area.
- 35 • Shorty Bjornsted, Fire Commissioner, stated the first sidewalks were installed
36 at the roundabout. They are now working on a study to install a trail from
37 the church to the library. They are looking into easements and whether or
38 not Puget Sound Energy utility poles need to be moved. There have been
39 incidents where people have been hit by cars while walking on the highway.
40 They would like to have trails installed and are working with the State to
41 make that happen.

42 The following audience member spoke about high-speed internet:

- 43 • Jerry Burns asked about steps that are being taken by the County to get
44 better internet service to the area.

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- 1 The following Councilmembers commented on various topics:
2 • Councilmember Sidhu stated he is a member of the Northwest Clean Air
3 Agency and Board. They approved giving money to the Whatcom
4 Conservation District to come up with a strategy regarding fire danger. The
5 Kendall area is a concern because there is a high population. There has to be
6 some kind of plan to remove the fuel or take out trees. Sidhu also recognized
7 the community for working together for over 20 years to get the EWRCC built.
8 He stated when citizens work together it pays off. Sidhu addressed the issue
9 of high-speed internet and stated the topic has been discussed at every
10 forum. The community sees the need for high-speed internet.
11 • Councilmember Browne stated he is concerned about the lack of sidewalks
12 and crosswalks in the area. His main issue of concern is the area between the
13 Resource Center and the school. He talked about the Port of Bellingham
14 leading an initiative to bring service through the Economic Development
15 Grant Program.
16 • Councilmember Donovan thanked everyone for all their work.
17 • Councilmember Frazey stated she appreciates all the volunteers and thanked
18 them for all their work.
19 • Councilmember Buchanan stated it is a pleasure to work with and support the
20 efforts of this community.
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22 **ADJOURN**

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24 The meeting adjourned at approximately 6:45 p.m.

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26 The County Council approved these minutes on _____.

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29 ATTEST:

WHATCOM COUNTY COUNCIL
WHATCOM COUNTY, WASHINGTON

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Dana Brown-Davis, Council Clerk

Rud Browne, Council Chair

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NaDean Hanson, Minutes Transcription
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