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WHATCOM COUNTY COUNCIL  
**Special County Council**

February 15, 2019

**CALL TO ORDER**

Council Chair Rud Browne called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers, 311 Grand Avenue, Bellingham, Washington.

**ROLL CALL**

**Present:** Barbara Brenner, Rud Browne, Barry Buchanan, Todd Donovan, Carol Frazey, and Satpal Sidhu.

**Absent:** Tyler Byrd.

**1. DISCUSSION REGARDING THE POSSIBLE OPENING OF AN EMERGENCY SHELTER**

Jack Louws, County Executive, gave a staff report on current operations, permitting requirements, and planning for future events.

Louws and the following staff answered questions:

- Bill Elfo, County Sheriff
- Karen Frakes, Prosecutor's Office
- Tyler Schroeder, Administrative Services Department

Councilmembers and staff discussed the specific emergency that necessitates the special meeting, City of Bellingham permitting requirements and potential exemptions, the current status of and processes for finding shelter for unhoused individuals during the current cold weather event, the capacity of current shelters, gaps in service, liability concerns, and the processes of the County's Department of Emergency Management.

Jim Peterson, HomesNow, spoke on the status of capacity of current shelters, costs, and gaps in service.

Michael Lilliquist, Bellingham City Council Member, answered questions.

Councilmembers and staff continued to discuss City of Bellingham regulations and the possibility of opening an emergency shelter location in a County facility within the City of Bellingham, including protocols for severe weather shelters in the emergency disaster management plans, and whether the Council can appropriate funds for these issues.

Ron Schultz, Bellingham Seventh-Day Adventist Church Pastor, spoke about his Church's experiences in providing shelter services.

Councilmembers and staff continued to discuss trained and untrained staff resources and coordination between the City of Bellingham and Whatcom County.

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1  
2 The following people spoke:

- 3
  - 4 • Amy Glasser
  - 5 • Krista Rome
  - 6 • Ronna Loerch
  - 7 • Hans Erchinger-Davis, Lighthouse Mission Ministries Director, spoke on his organization's services and capacity.

8  
9 *(Clerk's Note: Councilmember Sidhu left the meeting at 3:05 p.m.)*

- 10  
11
  - 12 • Autumn Lynn
  - 13 • Lynnette Allen
  - 14 • Sarah *(inaudible)*

15 ***Buchanan moved*** to respectfully request the administration open the Civic Center  
16 Garden Room for shelter as soon as possible after Bellingham permitting allows.

17  
18 The motion was seconded.

19  
20 Councilmembers and staff discussed the Council instructing the Executive to take  
21 over the City of Bellingham's jurisdiction and encouraging Bellingham to reopen their  
22 shelter.

23  
24 ***Buchanan restated the motion*** that, in coordination with City of Bellingham and  
25 once the City makes its permitting decision at 4:00 p.m., the County make every effort to  
26 open the Civic Center Garden Room so it's available and staffed for a shelter immediately.

27  
28 ***Brenner moved*** to call the question.

29  
30 The motion to call the question was seconded.

31  
32 The motion to call the question carried by the following vote:

33 **Ayes:** Brenner, Browne, Buchanan, Donovan, and Frazey (5)

34 **Nays:** None (0)

35 **Absent:** Byrd and Sidhu (2)

36  
37 The main motion carried by the following vote:

38 **Ayes:** Brenner, Browne, Buchanan, Donovan, and Frazey (5)

39 **Nays:** None (0)

40 **Absent:** Byrd and Sidhu (2)

41  
42 The following people spoke:

- 43
  - 44 • Jocelyn Mansfield
  - 45 • Marcus D., HomesNow
  - 46 • Michael Lilliquist
  - 47 • Jim Peterson
  - 48 • Rachel Duval
  - 49 • Von Ochoa
  - 50 • Jim Peterson

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1 Councilmembers spoke about the development of the County's new crisis  
2 stabilization facility and coordinating the efforts of the Lighthouse Mission and HomesNow.  
3

4  
5 **ADJOURN**

6  
7 The meeting adjourned at 3:42 p.m.

8  
9 The Council approved these minutes on \_\_\_\_\_, 2019.

10  
11 ATTEST:

WHATCOM COUNTY COUNCIL  
WHATCOM COUNTY, WASHINGTON

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13  
14  
15  
16 \_\_\_\_\_  
17 Dana Brown-Davis, Council Clerk

\_\_\_\_\_

Rud Browne, Council Chair

18  
19  
20  
21 \_\_\_\_\_  
22 Jill Nixon, Minutes Transcription