

Whatcom County Council

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



Minutes - Draft Minutes

**Wednesday, November 5, 2025
6 PM**

Hybrid Meeting - Council Chambers

**HYBRID MEETING (PARTICIPATE IN-PERSON, SEE REMOTE JOIN
INSTRUCTIONS AT www.whatcomcounty.us/joinvirtualcouncil, OR CALL
360.778.5010); AGENDA REVISED 11.4.2025**

COUNCILMEMBERS

Barry Buchanan
Tyler Byrd
Todd Donovan
Ben Elenbaas
Kaylee Galloway
Jon Scanlon
Mark Stremmler

CLERK OF THE COUNCIL

Cathy Halka, AICP, CMC

COUNTY COUNCIL

CALL TO ORDER

Council Chair Kaylee Galloway called the meeting to order at 6:03 p.m. in a hybrid meeting.

ROLL CALL

Present: 7 - Barry Buchanan, Tyler Byrd, Todd Donovan, Ben Elenbaas, Kaylee Galloway, Jon Scanlon, and Mark Stremmer

FLAG SALUTE

ANNOUNCEMENTS

COUNTY EXECUTIVE'S REPORT

There was no report.

MINUTES CONSENT

Buchanan moved to accept the minutes consent items. The motion was seconded by Scanlon (see votes on individual items below).

1. [MIN2025-070](#) Committee of the Whole for October 21, 2025

Buchanan moved and Scanlon seconded that the Minutes Consent be APPROVED BY CONSENT. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 7 - Buchanan, Byrd, Donovan, Elenbaas, Galloway, Scanlon, and Stremmer

Nay: 0

2. [MIN2025-071](#) Regular County Council for October 21, 2025

Buchanan moved and Scanlon seconded that the Minutes Consent be APPROVED BY CONSENT. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 7 - Buchanan, Byrd, Donovan, Elenbaas, Galloway, Scanlon, and Stremmer

Nay: 0

INTRODUCTION ITEMS

Byrd moved to introduce items one through five. The motion was seconded by Buchanan.

Galloway stated it is Council's intent that by introducing the three alternate levy ordinances/resolution (**AB2025-783, AB2025-784, and AB2025-788**) this evening, they would be setting them on a concurrent path with the other budget items, which would be to have them back in committee for

discussion on November 18 and then up for Council's final consideration on December 2nd.

Donovan spoke about the alternate versions and Councilmembers voted on the Introduction items (see votes on individual items below).

1. [AB2025-749](#) Ordinance repealing Whatcom County Code 2.170, Forest Resilience Task Force

Byrd moved and Buchanan seconded that the Ordinance be INTRODUCED. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 7 - Buchanan, Byrd, Donovan, Elenbaas, Galloway, Scanlon, and Stremler

Nay: 0

2. [AB2025-756](#) Ordinance establishing the Opioid Settlement Fund and establishing a budget for the Opioid Settlement Fund

Byrd moved and Buchanan seconded that the Ordinance be INTRODUCED. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 7 - Buchanan, Byrd, Donovan, Elenbaas, Galloway, Scanlon, and Stremler

Nay: 0

3. [AB2025-783](#) Ordinance authorizing the levy of taxes for County Road purposes for 2026

Byrd moved and Buchanan seconded that the Ordinance Requiring a Public Hearing be INTRODUCED FOR PUBLIC HEARING. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 7 - Buchanan, Byrd, Donovan, Elenbaas, Galloway, Scanlon, and Stremler

Nay: 0

Motion approved to Introduce for Public Hearing on December 2nd and schedule for Committee of the Whole discussion on November 18.

4. [AB2025-784](#) Resolution authorizing the levy of taxes for the Whatcom County Flood Control Zone District for 2026 (Council acting as the Flood Control Zone District Board of Supervisors)

Byrd moved and Buchanan seconded that the Resolution (FCZDBS) Requiring a Public Hearing be INTRODUCED FOR PUBLIC HEARING. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 7 - Buchanan, Byrd, Donovan, Elenbaas, Galloway, Scanlon, and Stremler

Nay: 0

Motion approved to Introduce for Public Hearing on December 2nd and schedule for Committee of the Whole discussion on November 18.

5. [AB2025-788](#) Ordinance authorizing the levy of taxes for County and State purposes in Whatcom County, Washington, for the year of 2026

Byrd moved and Buchanan seconded that the Ordinance Requiring a Public Hearing be INTRODUCED FOR PUBLIC HEARING. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 7 - Buchanan, Byrd, Donovan, Elenbaas, Galloway, Scanlon, and Stremmler

Nay: 0

Motion approved to Introduce for Public Hearing on December 2nd and schedule for Committee of the Whole discussion on November 18.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

COMBINED PUBLIC HEARING ON COUNTY BUDGET ITEMS

Councilmembers held a combined public hearing on AB2025-707, AB2025-719, AB2025-721, AB2025-723, and AB2025-725. See minutes under AB2025-707.

Galloway read items 1-5 under this header into the record.

1. [AB2025-707](#) Ordinance amending the 2026 Whatcom County Budget, request no. 1, in the amount of \$20,970,606

Kayla Schott-Bresler, Executive's Office, stated she was available to answer questions.

Scanlon read from the suggested amendments (on file as "Substitute Councilmember Amendments") about his suggestions to use \$200,000 of the Community Priorities Fund to create a strategic plan and metrics for the county, and to add a note after Exhibit A regarding including funding and staffing levels necessary to complete the Community Health Assessment.

Byrd stated he thinks those amendments would be substantive changes to the budget document that was noticed for public comment. He does not think they should be going over proposed changes at this time since they are not included in the document that is in front of them.

Kimberly Thulin, Prosecuting Attorney's Office, stated if the plan is just to advise those who are here to make comments, just so they are aware and so they have the opportunity to come back and comment if there is a proposal that is substantive, then it is procedurally fine.

Councilmembers and Thulin discussed that the plan is to hold the public

hearing open because they will be taking final action on the budget on December 2nd, and that they could present the proposed amendments so the public can speak to them.

Elenbaas spoke about his proposal that they cut contracts for third-party facilitators for boards and commissions and move those funds to other budget areas in order to not have to raise taxes.

Stremmer spoke about his proposal to cut \$244,000 from the Parks & Recreation Department budget in the General Fund, currently allocated for extra help for parks facilities and Lake Whatcom forest lands, and add \$244,000 for the Whatcom County Food Bank Network.

Donovan spoke about his proposal to move \$500,000 from the Community Priorities Fund (capital reserves) to fund the Whatcom County Food Bank Network, and he spoke about the budget in general.

Galloway opened the combined Public Hearing and the following people spoke:

- Adam Bellingar
- John Westerfield
- Lauren Carlson (and mother)
- RobRoy Graham
- Amy Steele
- Daniel Burdick
- James Hallet
- Rosa Figueroa
- Krisinda Plenkovich
- Ralph Weiche
- Sarah VanWoerden
- Brian Atkins (on behalf of Dave Zoeller)
- Hannah Ordos
- Lyle Sorenson
- Henry Fisher
- Hannah Palm

Galloway did not close the hearing.

Councilmembers then considered each public hearing agenda bill separately. See below under **SEPARATE CONSIDERATION OF PUBLIC HEARING ITEMS.**

2. [AB2025-719](#) Ordinance authorizing the levy of taxes for Conservation Futures purposes for 2026
3. [AB2025-721](#) Ordinance authorizing the levy of taxes for County Road purposes for 2026
4. [AB2025-723](#) Ordinance authorizing the levy of taxes for countywide emergency medical purposes for 2026
5. [AB2025-725](#) Ordinance authorizing the levy of taxes for County and State purposes in Whatcom County, Washington, for the year of 2026

Public testimony was received on the five files above. See Notes under AB2025-707.

SEPARATE CONSIDERATION OF PUBLIC HEARING ITEMS

1. [AB2025-707](#) Ordinance amending the 2026 Whatcom County Budget, request no. 1, in the amount of \$20,970,606

Donovan moved and Elenbaas seconded to hold AB2025-707 and keep the public hearing open, to be continued on December 2nd, and to place this item in Committee of the Whole on November 18th for discussion.

Councilmembers discussed the item with the following people:

- Kimberly Thulin, Prosecuting Attorney's Office
- Aly Pennucci, Executive's Office

Councilmembers and the speakers discussed whether any of the proposed councilmember amendments are substantive and what constitutes a substantive change, if they can take action on proposed amendments if the intention is to hold the agenda items, how they can give staff time to make adjustments to the budget documents after voting on amendments, and maybe starting Committee of the Whole in the morning on November 18th as opposed to the afternoon to prioritize the budget discussion.

Donovan's motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 7 - Buchanan, Byrd, Donovan, Elenbaas, Galloway, Scanlon, and Stremler

Nay: 0

Motion approved 7-0 to hold AB2025-707 and keep the public hearing open, to be continued on December 2nd, and to place this item in Committee of the Whole on November 18th for discussion.

2. [AB2025-719](#) Ordinance authorizing the levy of taxes for Conservation Futures purposes for 2026

Donovan moved and Galloway seconded that the ordinance be ADOPTED.

Cathy Halka, Clerk of the Council, answered whether they have to approve

all of these budget-related ordinances and resolutions at the same time, and stated nothing requires that they approve them as a group.

Aly Pennucci, Executive's Office, answered whether Conservation Futures was part of the executive's amendments presented today. She stated it was part of the technical amendments, but she believes that the state law requires, because we do budget-based levies, that Council has to adopt the budget before they adopt any tax levies. So that is why they all run together, because they approve the expenses and then they approve the revenues.

Donovan withdrew his motion.

Elenbaas stated he would prefer to adopt them (individually) at the same time anyway so that the impact to the taxpayer is taken into account as a whole.

Councilmembers discussed that the only separate budget is the Flood Control Zone District.

Galloway moved and Donovan seconded to hold AB2025-719 and keep the public hearing open, to be continued on December 2nd, and to place this item in Committee of the Whole on November 18th for discussion. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 7 - Buchanan, Byrd, Donovan, Elenbaas, Galloway, Scanlon, and Stremler

Nay: 0

Motion approved 7-0 to hold AB2025-719 and keep the public hearing open, to be continued on December 2nd, and to place this item in Committee of the Whole on November 18th for discussion.

3. [AB2025-721](#) Ordinance authorizing the levy of taxes for County Road purposes for 2026

Galloway moved and Donovan seconded to hold AB2025-721 and keep the public hearing open, to be continued on December 2nd, and to place this item in Committee of the Whole on November 18th for discussion. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 7 - Buchanan, Byrd, Donovan, Elenbaas, Galloway, Scanlon, and Stremler

Nay: 0

Motion approved 7-0 to hold AB2025-721 and keep the public hearing open, to be continued on December 2nd, and to place this item in Committee of the Whole on November 18th for discussion.

4. [AB2025-723](#) Ordinance authorizing the levy of taxes for countywide emergency medical purposes for 2026

Galloway moved and Donovan seconded to hold AB2025-723 and keep the public hearing open, to be continued on December 2nd, and to place this item in Committee of the Whole on November 18th for discussion. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 7 - Buchanan, Byrd, Donovan, Elenbaas, Galloway, Scanlon, and Stremler

Nay: 0

Motion approved 7-0 to hold AB2025-723 and keep the public hearing open, to be continued on December 2nd, and to place this item in Committee of the Whole on November 18th for discussion.

5. [AB2025-725](#) Ordinance authorizing the levy of taxes for County and State purposes in Whatcom County, Washington, for the year of 2026

Galloway moved and Scanlon seconded to hold AB2025-725 and keep the public hearing open, to be continued on December 2nd, and to place this item in Committee of the Whole on November 18th for discussion. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 7 - Buchanan, Byrd, Donovan, Elenbaas, Galloway, Scanlon, and Stremler

Nay: 0

Motion approved 7-0 to hold AB2025-725 and keep the public hearing open, to be continued on December 2nd, and to place this item in Committee of the Whole on November 18th for discussion.

COMBINED PUBLIC HEARING ON FCZDBS BUDGET ITEMS

Councilmembers held a combined public hearing on **AB2025-711** and **AB2025-709**.

Galloway opened the Public Hearing and no one spoke.

6. [AB2025-711](#) Resolution adopting 2026 budget for the Whatcom County Flood Control Zone District and Subzones (Council acting as the Flood Control Zone District Board of Supervisors)

See minutes under the header above for this hearing, and the header below for separate consideration of this item.

7. [AB2025-709](#) Resolution authorizing the levy of taxes for the Whatcom County Flood Control Zone District for 2026 (Council acting as the Flood Control Zone District Board of Supervisors)

See minutes under the header above for this hearing, and the header below for separate consideration of this item.

Public testimony was received on the two files above.

SEPARATE CONSIDERATION OF PUBLIC HEARING ITEMS

6. [AB2025-711](#) Resolution adopting 2026 budget for the Whatcom County Flood Control Zone District and Subzones (Council acting as the Flood Control Zone District Board of Supervisors)

Galloway moved and Buchanan seconded to hold AB2025-711 and keep the public hearing open, to be continued on December 2nd, and to place this item in Committee of the Whole on November 18th for discussion.

Councilmembers discussed the motion.

Galloway's motion to hold AB2025-711 and keep the public hearing open, to be continued on December 2nd, and to place this item in Committee of the Whole on November 18th for discussion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 7 - Buchanan, Byrd, Donovan, Elenbaas, Galloway, Scanlon, and Stremmer

Nay: 0

Motion approved 7-0 to hold AB2025-711 and keep the public hearing open, to be continued on December 2nd, and to place this item in Committee of the Whole on November 18th for discussion.

7. [AB2025-709](#) Resolution authorizing the levy of taxes for the Whatcom County Flood Control Zone District for 2026 (Council acting as the Flood Control Zone District Board of Supervisors)

Galloway moved and Donovan seconded to hold AB2025-709 and keep the public hearing open, to be continued on December 2nd, and to place this item in Committee of the Whole on November 18th for discussion. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 7 - Buchanan, Byrd, Donovan, Elenbaas, Galloway, Scanlon, and Stremmer

Nay: 0

Motion approved 7-0 to hold AB2025-709 and keep the public hearing open, to be continued on December 2nd, and to place this item in Committee of the Whole on November 18th for discussion.

OTHER PUBLIC HEARINGS

8. [AB2025-676](#) Resolution adopting the 2026-2031 Six-Year Water Resources Improvement Program (WRIP) (Council acting as the Whatcom County Flood Control Zone District Board of Supervisors)

Galloway opened the Public Hearing and hearing no one, closed the Public Hearing.

Buchanan moved and Scanlon seconded that the Resolution (FCZDBS)

Requiring a Public Hearing be APPROVED.

Donovan spoke against the motion and stated the capital planning has virtually all of the projects in Lake Whatcom funded by the Lake Whatcom Stormwater Utility and not the stormwater funding that they used to get through the Flood Fund. They set up the utility to provide additional funding for Whatcom County's efforts to clean up and protect Lake Whatcom water quality, but they have shifted the money from the flood fund away from those programs.

The following people responded to Donovan's concerns:

- Aly Pennucci, Executive's Office
- Elizabeth Kosa, Public Works Department Director
- Randy Rydel, Administrative Services Department Finance Director

They and councilmembers discussed that one of the reasons is because they are being extra cautious with Real Estate Excise Tax (REET), which is one of the other funding sources that typically supports these projects, until decisions can be made about some of the major County Facilities, what the impact would be if they decide not to take the one percent Road Fund increase (which also funds some of these projects), that they would look at anything that draws from the Road Fund (which includes the WRIP), whether the same thing is true for the Birch Bay Watershed and Aquatic Resources Management (BBWARM) District, that the stormwater dollars are gone, whether there is equity in how the tax dollars are being used across the county, and the concern that they are taking money out of the watershed and putting it in other places and that money that was previously going to the watershed is going to the flood fund to do other things now and not to Lake Whatcom.

Buchanan's motion that the Resolution (FCZDBS) Requiring a Public Hearing be APPROVED carried by the following vote:

Aye: 5 - Buchanan, Byrd, Galloway, Scanlon, and Stremmer

Nay: 2 - Donovan, and Elenbaas

Enactment No: RES 2025-036

OPEN SESSION

The following people spoke:

- Adam Bellinger
- John Westerfield

- Todd Damon
- Jayson Loreen
- Samuel Madrid
- Rick Kiene
- Magnus Gervol
- Booker Laughlin
- James Triplett
- Austin Streubel
- Caleb Erickson
- Donnell Tanksley, Sheriff
- Steve Harris
- Mary Kay Decker
- Lyle Sorenson
- Barbara Powers
- Natalie Chavez

Hearing no one else, Galloway closed the Open Session.

CONSENT AGENDA

(From Council Finance and Administrative Services Committee)

Donovan reported for the Finance and Administrative Services Committee and ***moved*** to approve Consent Agenda item numbers 1, 2, 4, 5, 7-14, and 16-21 (voting on item numbers 3, 6, and 15 separately).

Elenbaas requested to also consider 16 separately.

Galloway stated that item 21 has an item title revision (and is substitute).

Elenbaas spoke about item number 19 and the amount being funded for a lawsuit.

Councilmembers voted on item numbers 1, 2, 4, 5, 7-14, and 17-21 (see votes on individual items below).

1. [AB2025-740](#) Request authorization for the County Executive to enter into a contract between Whatcom County and Parametrix, Inc. to develop a comprehensive Subwatershed Master Plan as an addendum to the 2008 Lake Whatcom Comprehensive Stormwater Plan, in the amount of \$298,741

Donovan reported for the Finance and Administrative Services Committee and moved that the Contract be AUTHORIZED BY CONSENT. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 7 - Buchanan, Byrd, Donovan, Elenbaas, Galloway, Scanlon, and Stremler

Nay: 0

2. [AB2025-741](#) Request authorization for the County Executive to enter into an interlocal agreement between Whatcom County and City of Bellingham to provide partial funding for Whatcom County's 2025-2026 Severe Weather Shelter, in the amount of \$100,000

Donovan reported for the Finance and Administrative Services Committee and moved that the Interlocal be AUTHORIZED BY CONSENT. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 7 - Buchanan, Byrd, Donovan, Elenbaas, Galloway, Scanlon, and Stremler

Nay: 0

3. [AB2025-742](#) Request authorization for the County Executive to enter into an interlocal agreement between Whatcom County and Whatcom Fire Protection District 7 for the provision of the Paramedic Training Program, in the amount of \$345,537

THIS ITEM WAS CONSIDERED SEPARATELY BELOW.

4. [AB2025-743](#) Request authorization for the County Executive to enter into an interlocal agreement between Whatcom County and Marysville Fire District for the provision of the paramedic training program, in the amount of \$136,200

Donovan reported for the Finance and Administrative Services Committee and moved that the Interlocal be AUTHORIZED BY CONSENT. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 7 - Buchanan, Byrd, Donovan, Elenbaas, Galloway, Scanlon, and Stremler

Nay: 0

5. [AB2025-744](#) Request authorization for the County Executive to enter into an interlocal agreement between Whatcom County and Camano Fire and Rescue for the provision of the paramedic training program, in the amount of \$55,600

Donovan reported for the Finance and Administrative Services Committee and moved that the Interlocal be AUTHORIZED BY CONSENT. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 7 - Buchanan, Byrd, Donovan, Elenbaas, Galloway, Scanlon, and Stremler

Nay: 0

6. [AB2025-747](#) Request authorization for the County Executive to enter into a contract between Whatcom County and Geneva Consulting Services to support coordination of the Whatcom Local Integrating Organization (LIO), in the amount of \$291,068 (Council acting as the Whatcom County Flood Control Zone District Board of Supervisors)

THIS ITEM WAS CONSIDERED SEPARATELY BELOW.

7. [AB2025-751](#) Request authorization for the County Executive to enter into a contract between Whatcom County and Compass Health to lease space within the crisis stabilization center for the provision of mental health treatment services, in the amount of \$24,000

Donovan reported for the Finance and Administrative Services Committee and moved that the Agreement be AUTHORIZED BY CONSENT. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 7 - Buchanan, Byrd, Donovan, Elenbaas, Galloway, Scanlon, and Stremmler

Nay: 0

8. [AB2025-752](#) Request authorization for the County Executive to enter into an interlocal agreement between Whatcom County and San Juan County to provide Veteran Service Officer services to San Juan County resident veterans, in the amount of \$10,000

Donovan reported for the Finance and Administrative Services Committee and moved that the Interlocal be AUTHORIZED BY CONSENT. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 7 - Buchanan, Byrd, Donovan, Elenbaas, Galloway, Scanlon, and Stremmler

Nay: 0

9. [AB2025-753](#) Request authorization for the County Executive to enter into a grant agreement between Whatcom County and the Washington State Department of Ecology to fund administrative support and action projects for the Whatcom County Marine Resources Committee (MRC), in the amount of \$252,000 (Council acting as the Whatcom County Flood Control Zone District Board of Supervisors)

Donovan reported for the Finance and Administrative Services Committee and moved that the Contract (FCZDBS) be AUTHORIZED BY CONSENT. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 7 - Buchanan, Byrd, Donovan, Elenbaas, Galloway, Scanlon, and Stremmler

Nay: 0

10. [AB2025-758](#) Request authorization for the County Executive to enter into a contract between Whatcom County and Pioneer Human Services to lease space within the crisis stabilization center for the provision of withdrawal management services, in the amount of \$24,000

Donovan reported for the Finance and Administrative Services Committee and moved that the Agreement be AUTHORIZED BY CONSENT. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 7 - Buchanan, Byrd, Donovan, Elenbaas, Galloway, Scanlon, and Stremler

Nay: 0

11. [AB2025-759](#) Request authorization for the County Executive to enter into an interlocal agreement between Whatcom County and the Washington State Department of Commerce to receive CDBG (Community Development Block Grant) funds in support of public services, in the amount of \$130,000

Donovan reported for the Finance and Administrative Services Committee and moved that the Interlocal be AUTHORIZED BY CONSENT. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 7 - Buchanan, Byrd, Donovan, Elenbaas, Galloway, Scanlon, and Stremler

Nay: 0

12. [AB2025-760](#) Request authorization for the County Executive to enter into a contract between Whatcom County and Pioneer Human Services to lease space within the crisis stabilization center for the provision of food services, in the amount of \$24,000

Donovan reported for the Finance and Administrative Services Committee and moved that the Agreement be AUTHORIZED BY CONSENT. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 7 - Buchanan, Byrd, Donovan, Elenbaas, Galloway, Scanlon, and Stremler

Nay: 0

13. [AB2025-762](#) Request authorization for the County Executive to enter into a contract amendment between Whatcom County and Catholic Community Services to provide permanent supportive housing services at Francis Place, in the amount of \$555,446, for a total amended contract amount of \$833,169

Donovan reported for the Finance and Administrative Services Committee and moved that the Contract be AUTHORIZED BY CONSENT. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 7 - Buchanan, Byrd, Donovan, Elenbaas, Galloway, Scanlon, and Stremler

Nay: 0

14. [AB2025-763](#) Request authorization for the County Executive to enter into an interlocal cost-share agreement between Whatcom County and the Laurel Watershed Improvement District (LWID) for the Neevel Levee Cougar Creek Fish Passage Project, in the amount of \$10,000 (Council acting as the Whatcom County Flood Control Zone District Board of Supervisors)

Donovan reported for the Finance and Administrative Services Committee and moved that the Contract (FCZDBS) be AUTHORIZED BY CONSENT.

The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 7 - Buchanan, Byrd, Donovan, Elenbaas, Galloway, Scanlon, and Stremler

Nay: 0

15. [AB2025-764](#) Request authorization for the County Executive to enter into an interlocal agreement between Whatcom County and the City of Bellingham for the provision of the paramedic training program, in the amount of \$1,008,442

THIS ITEM WAS CONSIDERED SEPARATELY BELOW.

16. [AB2025-765](#) Request authorization for the County Executive to enter into a grant agreement between Whatcom County and Washington State Recreation and Conservation Office Washington Wildlife and Recreation Forestland Preservation grant program for the acquisition of a forestry conservation easement on the Canyon Creek Forest property through the Conservation Easement Program (CEP) in the amount of \$500,000

THIS ITEM WAS CONSIDERED SEPARATELY BELOW.

17. [AB2025-766](#) Request authorization for the County Executive to enter into an agreement between Whatcom County and Opportunity Council to pass through CDBG (Community Development Block Grant) funds for the delivery of public services to low and moderate income residents in the amount of \$126,500

Donovan reported for the Finance and Administrative Services Committee and moved that the Contract be AUTHORIZED BY CONSENT. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 7 - Buchanan, Byrd, Donovan, Elenbaas, Galloway, Scanlon, and Stremler

Nay: 0

18. [AB2025-767](#) Request authorization for the County Executive to enter into an amendment to the Regional Economic Partnership Interlocal Cooperation Agreement between Whatcom County, the Port of Bellingham, and the City of Bellingham to restructure financial commitments for fiscal years 2026-2027, with no change to Whatcom County's financial contribution

Donovan reported for the Finance and Administrative Services Committee and moved that the Interlocal be AUTHORIZED BY CONSENT. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 7 - Buchanan, Byrd, Donovan, Elenbaas, Galloway, Scanlon, and Stremler

Nay: 0

19. [AB2025-775](#) Request authorization for the County Executive to enter into an interlocal agreement

between Whatcom County and the Washington State Department of Commerce for a grant to Whatcom County through The Local Community Projects Program for Nooksack Water Adjudication Facility Needs, in the amount of \$1,212,500

Donovan reported for the Finance and Administrative Services Committee and moved that the Interlocal be AUTHORIZED BY CONSENT. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 7 - Buchanan, Byrd, Donovan, Elenbaas, Galloway, Scanlon, and Stremmer

Nay: 0

20. [AB2025-777](#) Request authorization for the County Executive to enter into a three-year agreement, using the National Association of State Procurement Officials (NASPO) ValuePoint Master Agreement #AR2474 and State of Washington Participating Addendum #05116, between Whatcom County and Century Link Communications, LLC dba Lumen Technologies Group (CenturyLink) for telecommunication access lines and services, in the amount of \$144,849

Donovan reported for the Finance and Administrative Services Committee and moved that the Contract be AUTHORIZED BY CONSENT. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 7 - Buchanan, Byrd, Donovan, Elenbaas, Galloway, Scanlon, and Stremmer

Nay: 0

21. [AB2025-787](#) Request authorization for the County Executive to enter into a contract between Whatcom County and Euna Solutions, Inc. to purchase budget and reporting software for the financial system in the amount of \$441,159.37

Donovan reported for the Finance and Administrative Services Committee and moved that the SUBSTITUTE Contract be AUTHORIZED BY CONSENT. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 7 - Buchanan, Byrd, Donovan, Elenbaas, Galloway, Scanlon, and Stremmer

Nay: 0

CONSENT AGENDA CONSIDERED SEPARATELY

3. [AB2025-742](#) Request authorization for the County Executive to enter into an interlocal agreement between Whatcom County and Whatcom Fire Protection District 7 for the provision of the Paramedic Training Program, in the amount of \$345,537

Donovan reported for the Finance and Administrative Services Committee and moved that the Interlocal be AUTHORIZED. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 5 - Buchanan, Donovan, Elenbaas, Galloway, and Scanlon

Nay: 2 - Byrd, and Stremmler

6. [AB2025-747](#) Request authorization for the County Executive to enter into a contract between Whatcom County and Geneva Consulting Services to support coordination of the Whatcom Local Integrating Organization (LIO), in the amount of \$291,068 (Council acting as the Whatcom County Flood Control Zone District Board of Supervisors)

Donovan reported for the Finance and Administrative Services Committee and moved that the Contract (FCZDBS) be AUTHORIZED. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 6 - Buchanan, Donovan, Elenbaas, Galloway, Scanlon, and Stremmler

Nay: 1 - Byrd

15. [AB2025-764](#) Request authorization for the County Executive to enter into an interlocal agreement between Whatcom County and the City of Bellingham for the provision of the paramedic training program, in the amount of \$1,008,442

Donovan reported for the Finance and Administrative Services Committee and moved that the Interlocal be AUTHORIZED. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 5 - Buchanan, Donovan, Elenbaas, Galloway, and Scanlon

Nay: 2 - Byrd, and Stremmler

16. [AB2025-765](#) Request authorization for the County Executive to enter into a grant agreement between Whatcom County and Washington State Recreation and Conservation Office Washington Wildlife and Recreation Forestland Preservation grant program for the acquisition of a forestry conservation easement on the Canyon Creek Forest property through the Conservation Easement Program (CEP) in the amount of \$500,000

Donovan reported for the Finance and Administrative Services Committee and ***moved*** that the Contract be AUTHORIZED.

Councilmembers discussed the motion.

Donovan's motion that the Contract be AUTHORIZED carried by the following vote:

Aye: 4 - Buchanan, Donovan, Galloway, and Scanlon

Nay: 3 - Byrd, Elenbaas, and Stremmler

OTHER ITEMS

(From Council Finance and Administrative Services Committee)

1. [AB2025-730](#) Request authorization for the County Executive to enter into a three-year contract between Whatcom County and Correctional Healthcare Partners Inc. for the provision of jail healthcare and juvenile detention nursing services, in the three-year total amount of \$22,896,000

Donovan reported for the Finance and Administrative Services Committee and ***moved*** that the SUBSTITUTE Contract be AUTHORIZED.

Councilmembers discussed the motion and a suggestion to come back in six to eighteen months to analyze the contract and how things are going.

Galloway stated the version that is before them is a substitute. She thanked Jill Boudreau and the Executive's Office for all the work they have done to see this contract through.

Jill Boudreau, Executive's Office, confirmed that this is a three-year contract.

Donovan stated this is obviously a critical need, but we are increasing our costs \$3.4 million a year over the current level. He stated the budget adjustment accounts for one year and we probably do not really have a plan going forward to cover that growing structural deficit unless we raise taxes or come up with a commensurate \$3.4 million in cuts to other services. He stated part of his discomfort with the budget is that they are putting a lot of eggs in the basket of a future council doing future things.

Elenbaas spoke about why he supports it.

Donovan's motion that the SUBSTITUTE Contract be AUTHORIZED carried by the following vote:

Aye: 7 - Buchanan, Byrd, Donovan, Elenbaas, Galloway, Scanlon, and Stremmler

Nay: 0

2. [AB2025-770](#) Resolution approving the 2026 recommended convention center allocations for tourism-related facilities and activities as defined through RCW 67.28.1816

Donovan reported for the Finance and Administrative Services Committee and moved that the Resolution be APPROVED. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 7 - Buchanan, Byrd, Donovan, Elenbaas, Galloway, Scanlon, and Stremmler

Nay: 0

Enactment No: RES 2025-037

3. [AB2025-782](#) Request authorization for the Whatcom County Executive's Office to enter into a lease agreement between Whatcom County and Ryanna LLC for the lease of office and storage space for the Sheriff's Office at 4600 Ryzex Way, Bellingham

Donovan reported for the Finance and Administrative Services Committee and **moved** that the Agreement be AUTHORIZED.

Donovan stated his concern is that they have funding for one year but if they do not pass this tax, the next option is asking the sheriff to absorb \$750,000 of cuts a year, and they are leaving that to a future council to determine. It also has not been in front of the public very long and he has discomfort with passing a lease that is directing funds to a former councilmember and current Planning Commission member.

Elenbaas stated he thinks the need has been demonstrated. He spoke about the cost and that they looked at other options, and stated not only is this option feasible, it is hands down the best deal as far as their options are concerned. He stated there is also nothing inappropriate about the contract. It is a great deal for the taxpayers and an even better deal for the Sheriff's Department.

Aly Pennucci, Executive's Office, gave a history of how they got to this point and how this building fits the specific needs they needed to fill.

Councilmembers discussed the motion and Pennucci answered whether this new expense will be alleviating expenses they have in other areas.

Donovan's motion that the Agreement be AUTHORIZED carried by the following vote:

Aye: 6 - Buchanan, Byrd, Elenbaas, Galloway, Scanlon, and Stremler

Nay: 0

Abstain: 1 - Donovan

(From Council Planning and Development Committee)

4. [AB2025-769](#) Resolution approving recommendation on an application for open space current use assessment

Elenbaas reported for the Planning and Development Committee and **moved** that the Resolution be APPROVED.

He stated the committee passed it but they did talk about amending it, and Councilmember Galloway has brought that tonight. He summarized the discussion in committee. The proposal had enough points to qualify without

allowing public access. The Planning Commission asked for there to be public access but the landowner was leery about it for liability's sake and to protect habitat. The discussion tonight is about what kind of public access the Council will require.

Galloway briefed the councilmembers on the substitute version.

Galloway moved to amend the motion and that they approve the substitute resolution as presented.

The motion was seconded by Elenbaas.

Councilmembers discussed the proposed substitute with the following people:

- Kimberly Thulin, Prosecuting Attorney's Office
- Aly Pennucci, Executive's Office
- Collin Stevens, landowner
- Mark Personius, Planning and Development Services Department Director
- Cathy Halka, Clerk of the Council

They discussed that Council would not have to approve the specific public access plan that gets worked out between Planning staff and the property owner, and making sure the language of the resolution is clear regarding the Planning Commission's recommendation and the intent to allow only limited public access.

Galloway's motion to amend the main motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 5 - Galloway, Scanlon, Stremmer, Buchanan, and Elenbaas

Nay: 0

Out of the Meeting: 2 - Donovan and Byrd

Elenbaas's motion that the SUBSTITUTE Resolution as presented be APPROVED carried by the following vote:

Aye: 5 - Buchanan, Elenbaas, Galloway, Scanlon, and Stremmer

Nay: 0

Temp Absent: 2 - Byrd, and Donovan

Enactment No: RES 2025-038

Motion approved to amend the motion (to approve) and that they approve the substitute resolution as presented.

COUNCIL APPOINTMENTS TO ADVISORY GROUPS

1. [AB2025-732](#) Appointment to a vacancy on the Justice Project Oversight and Planning Committee, EMS Paramedic Position, Applicant(s): Jonathan Oliveira

Galloway moved and Scanlon seconded that the Council Appointment Requiring Introduction be APPOINTED. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 5 - Buchanan, Elenbaas, Galloway, Scanlon, and Stremler

Nay: 0

Temp Absent: 2 - Byrd, and Donovan

2. [AB2025-748](#) Appointment to a vacancy on the Public Health Advisory Board, applicant(s): Alan Lifson

Galloway moved and Scanlon seconded that the Council Appointment be APPOINTED. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 5 - Buchanan, Elenbaas, Galloway, Scanlon, and Stremler

Nay: 0

Temp Absent: 2 - Byrd, and Donovan

CONFIRMATION OF EXECUTIVE APPOINTMENTS TO ADVISORY GROUPS

1. [AB2025-772](#) Request confirmation of the County Executive's appointment of Laura Hanna to the Whatcom County Marine Resources Committee

Galloway moved and Scanlon seconded that the Executive Appointment be CONFIRMED. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 5 - Buchanan, Elenbaas, Galloway, Scanlon, and Stremler

Nay: 0

Temp Absent: 2 - Byrd, and Donovan

2. [AB2025-774](#) Request confirmation of the County Executive's appointment of Tannis Peura to the Whatcom County Behavioral Health Advisory Committee

Galloway moved and Scanlon seconded that the Executive Appointment be CONFIRMED. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 5 - Buchanan, Elenbaas, Galloway, Scanlon, and Stremler

Nay: 0

Temp Absent: 2 - Byrd, and Donovan

ITEMS ADDED BY REVISION

There were no agenda items added by revision.

COMMITTEE REPORTS, OTHER ITEMS, AND COUNCILMEMBER UPDATES

Scanlon spoke about an idea to allow the food banks to use their 2026 funds as soon as possible to help them for the short term.

Buchanan moved to request that the Executive prepare a 2025 budget amendment, to include in the next supplemental budget ordinance scheduled for introduction on November 18th, that will allow a contract amendment to provide flexibility to the food banks to spend 2026 funding in 2025.

The motion seconded by Scanlon.

He stated it would be like front-loading their 2026 spending so they would have 13 months to spend the funds as opposed to 12.

Aly Pennucci, Executive's Office, answered if the Administration would need anything from Council if they were to amend the Healthy Children's Fund contracts or if the Administration already has the authority to do that. She stated they have the authority to do that because it would be a no-dollar amendment and would not require new budget authority.

The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 5 - Buchanan, Elenbaas, Galloway, Scanlon, and Stremler

Nay: 0

Out of the Meeting: 2 - Byrd and Donovan

Councilmembers gave committee reports.

Cathy Halka, Clerk of the Council, stated that Councilmember Donovan, as the chair of the Finance and Administrative Services Committee, is designated in the new tort claim code to serve as a representative on the Risk Management Working Group and he is unable to serve through the end of the year. He would like to have the Council designate another council member, as is permitted in code, to serve through the end of the year. Then the new Finance Committee chair would serve in that position in the new year.

Galloway moved to appoint Councilmembers Scanlon.

The motion was seconded by Buchanan.

The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 5 - Elenbaas, Galloway, Scanlon, Stremmer, and Buchanan

Nay: 0

Out of the Meeting: 2 - Byrd and Donovan

MOTION 1

Motion approved 5-0 with Byrd and Donovan out of the meeting to request that the Executive prepare a 2025 budget amendment, to include in the next supplemental budget ordinance scheduled for introduction on November 18th, that will allow a contract amendment to provide flexibility to the food banks to spend 2026 funding in 2025.

MOTION 2

Motion approved 5-0 with Byrd and Donovan out of the meeting to appoint Councilmembers Scanlon to serve as a representative on the Risk Management Working Group through the end of the year (after which the role will revert to the Finance Committee chair).

ADJOURN

The meeting adjourned at 10:06 p.m.

ATTEST:

WHATCOM COUNTY COUNCIL
WHATCOM COUNTY, WA

Cathy Halka, Council Clerk

Kaylee Galloway, Council Chair

Meeting Minutes prepared by Kristi Felbinger