

DISCLAIMER: This document is a draft and is provided as a courtesy. This document is not to be considered as the final minutes. All information contained herein is subject to change upon further review and approval by the Whatcom County Council.

WHATCOM COUNTY COUNCIL
Special County Council Meeting

February 26, 2019

CALL TO ORDER

Council Chair Rud Browne called the meeting to order at 10:50 a.m. in the Council Chambers, 311 Grand Avenue, Bellingham, Washington.

ROLL CALL

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

Absent: None.

1. AB2019-142 DISCUSSION REGARDING OPERATION OF THE WARMING SHELTER

The following staff answered questions:

- Jack Louws, County Executive
- Bill Elfo, County Sheriff
- Tyler Schroeder, County Executive's Office
- Dana Brown-Davis, Clerk of the Council

Staff and councilmembers discussed managing volunteers, the City of Bellingham and County's declarations of emergency through March 1 or beyond, staffing the warming shelter, creating a policy to handle future cold weather events, whether they can allow staffing from the small cities' emergency management divisions, whether it's feasible to hire a professional shelter manager or contract for the service, dividing the shelter population among different churches and other nonprofit organizations, an appropriate facility for a warming shelter, identifying where processes create problems and barriers to solutions, point of entry to all shelter services, an appropriate threshold at which a warming shelter should reopen, providing shelter to individuals without the developmental or mental capacity to follow shelter rules, volunteer safety, and options for providing law enforcement staff for safety during shifts.

The following people spoke:

- Dana Briggs spoke about the diversity of the homeless population and providing shelter for all populations
- Heather Woods spoke about creating a long-term organizational plan for future events
- Lynnette Allen spoke about the comfort of the warming center and planning for the different populations

Councilmembers and staff continued to discuss whether to continue keeping the warming center open beyond March 1 and providing law enforcement for safety.

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1 **Byrd moved** to formally request via a letter that Bellingham staff any remaining
2 available shifts through March 1 with Bellingham police officers at Bellingham's cost.

3
4 The motion was seconded.

5
6 The motion carried by the following vote:

7 **Ayes:** Brenner, Browne, Buchanan, Byrd, Donovan, Frazey, and Sidhu (7)

8 **Nays:** None (0)

9
10
11 **ADJOURN**

12
13 The meeting adjourned at 11:55 a.m.

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15 The County Council approved these minutes on _____, 2019.

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17
18 ATTEST:

WHATCOM COUNTY COUNCIL
WHATCOM COUNTY, WASHINGTON

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23 _____
24 Dana Brown-Davis, Council Clerk

Rud Browne, Council Chair

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28 _____
29 Jill Nixon, Minutes Transcription