

Whatcom County Council Committee of the Whole

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



Committee Minutes - Final

Tuesday, March 7, 2023

3:20 PM

Hybrid Meeting

HYBRID MEETING - ADJOURNS BY 4:30 P.M.; MAY BEGIN EARLY
(PARTICIPATE IN-PERSON AT 311 GRAND AVENUE SUITE 101, SEE REMOTE
JOIN INSTRUCTIONS AT www.whatcomcounty.us/joinvirtualcouncil, OR CALL
360.778.5010)

COUNCILMEMBERS

Barry Buchanan

Tyler Byrd

Todd Donovan

Ben Elenbaas

Carol Frazey

Kaylee Galloway

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 3:10 p.m. in a hybrid meeting.

Roll Call

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

Announcements

Special Presentation

1. [AB2023-088](#) Presentation from Housing Team regarding 2023 work plan and local homelessness programs

The following people presented:

- Ann Beck, Health and Community Services
- Chris D'Onofrio, Health and Community Services

They answered questions about programs losing funding and how many people may be out of their homes if they cannot backfill some of those programs, the eviction prevention program and who is getting that assistance, whether there is a plan to get those people back on their feet, whether we have the money to hire more staff in light of the funding cliff spoken about in the presentation, what we need to do to fix homelessness here, and whether they have any plans to replace the eviction funding which they are going to lose.

Satpal Sidhu, County Executive, spoke about the cost of housing the homeless, that we are not addressing why people become homeless, the magnitude of the problem, and whether it can be solved on a county level.

The speakers answered whether there is anything in the current State budget cycle to help cover funding that local governments are losing.

Galloway stated she would like to break down what the Federal, State, County, and City governments are doing for housing, and look at how we are leveraging all these different levels of government and exploring all the available funding opportunities. She would also like to think about housing with both a health and a planning lens.

Beck spoke about looking at long-term prevention and not just crisis response.

This agenda item was PRESENTED AND DISCUSSED.

Committee Discussion

- 1. [AB2023-162](#) Discussion on the Healthy Children’s Fund Implementation Plan

Erika Lautenbach, Health and Community Services Director, presented and discussed with Councilmembers when they will see enough work done on these programs that they can actually do an assessment, how many years the levy goes, moving funds into the Early Learning and Care bucket to help families with childcare, what "birthing people" are as referenced in the plan, what "Coordinate and provide resources and community-wide training on trauma-informed care, supporting LGBTQ+ youth, and equity/anti-racist assessments and improvements" means as stated on page 37 of the plan, keeping the plan focused on childcare, aligning messaging in the implementation plan to account for unbudgeted (American Rescue Plan Act) funding, what the Council can do around capacity-building internally to make sure they are getting contracts out in a timely manner for our community, and whether we will be doing a bi-annual evaluation.

This agenda item was PRESENTED AND 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 4:09 p.m.

The County Council approved these minutes on 3/21/2023.

ATTEST:

WHATCOM COUNTY COUNCIL
WHATCOM COUNTY, WA

Dana Brown-Davis, Council Clerk

Barry Buchanan, Council Chair

Kristi Felbinger, Minutes Transcription

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