

Whatcom County Council Public Works & Health Committee

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



Committee Minutes - Final

Tuesday, October 10, 2023

11 AM

Hybrid Meeting

**HYBRID MEETING - ADJOURNS BY 11:45 A.M., MAY BEGIN EARLY
(PARTICIPATE IN-PERSON, SEE REMOTE JOIN INSTRUCTIONS AT
www.whatcomcounty.us/joinvirtualcouncil, OR CALL 360.778.5010)**

COUNCILMEMBERS

Carol Frazey
Kaylee Galloway
Kathy Kershner

CLERK OF THE COUNCIL

Dana Brown-Davis, C.M.C.

Call To Order

Committee Chair Kathy Kershner called the meeting to order at 11:13 a.m. in a hybrid meeting.

Roll Call

Present: 3 - Carol Frazey, Kaylee Galloway, and Kathy Kershner

Also Present: Barry Buchanan, Tyler Byrd, Todd Donovan, and Ben Elenbaas

Announcements

Committee Discussion and Recommendation to Council

1. [AB2023-592](#) Resolution approving the Samish Water District Comprehensive Sewer Plan
Kershner moved that the Resolution be RECOMMENDED FOR APPROVAL.

Doug Ranney, Public Works Department, answered whether the comments in the fifth Whereas statement of the proposed resolution got incorporated or need to be incorporated into the plan, and stated he does not feel it is necessary.

Dana Brown-Davis, Clerk of the Council, answered why Council should approve this before they have heard back from the Department of Ecology (DOE) and how this got on the Council's agenda, and stated the Council has 60 days to approve this once it is received. The DOE's timeline might fall outside of that 60 days.

Cathy Halka, Council Legislative Analyst, stated the Council has 60 days to approve and the State has 90 days. It will not become effective until the State issues their approval, but the timeline and Revised Code of Washington (RCW) does allow for that to happen after Council approval.

Galloway asked about the last Whereas statement that states "the County Council has reviewed the Samish Water District Comprehensive Sewer Plan for compliance with the approval criteria set forth in RCW 57.16.010(7) and RCW 57.02.040," and whether that review was done by the Council or whether they should change it to say that the County has reviewed it.

Karen Frakes, Prosecuting Attorney's Office, answered whether there is an issue with changing that language from "County Council" to "Whatcom County," but stated she needs to take some time to look at the statute.

Brown-Davis and Halka answered when the Council's 60 days expires and whether that 60-day time limit is in the law. Brown-Davis stated it is in the law and Halka spoke about the referenced RCWs.

Frakes stated she reviewed the statute and thinks it is OK to say “Whatcom County” as opposed to “County Council.”

Galloway moved to amend the final Whereas clause to say:

~~“WHEREAS, the Whatcom County Council~~ has reviewed the Samish Water District Comprehensive Sewer Plan...”

The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 3 - Frazey, Galloway, and Kershner

Nay: 0

Kershner's motion that the Resolution be RECOMMENDED FOR APPROVAL WITH PROPOSED AMENDMENT(S) carried by the following vote:

Aye: 3 - Frazey, Galloway, and Kershner

Nay: 0

Special Presentation

1. [AB2023-664](#) Presentation from the Health and Community Services Department regarding severe weather shelter updates for 2023-24 season

Ann Beck, Health and Community Services, stated they put out two Requests for Proposal (RFPs) to find winter shelter operators to help during winter season, one of which is for outside the city limits of Bellingham and for which the respondent was Ferndale Community Services. She answered what capacity that shelter will have.

For the RFP for inside the city of Bellingham, she stated they had nobody respond wanting to offer a severe weather shelter and two respondents who were willing to operate ongoing winter shelter (Road2Home and Y.W.C.A) and Y.W.C.A is looking for a space. The County will be sharing the responsibility for the nightly shelter operations with the City of Bellingham and there is an interlocal agreement coming to share the cost of a nightly shelter at Civic. They still have no severe weather shelter operator right now, so Health and Community Services is looking to rent a space to operate a shelter. They have a first draft of a lease on a space but cannot say yet where that will be. She answered whether the operators they have in

place will operate 24/7 and stated they do not anticipate that at this point. She spoke about staffing the new location with temporary positions. She answered whether the Healthy Children's Fund could be tapped since they are offering these services for families with children and stated there are other funding sources. She answered whether these would be American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) dollars.

The following people discussed with Councilmembers:

- Ann Beck
- Erika Lautenbach, Health and Community Services Director
- Satpal Sidhu, County Executive

They discussed the temporary positions and their wages and benefits, the fact that the ordinance to pass the Healthy Children's Fund is very restrictive in how it can be used, whether funding of basic needs is underrepresented in the Health Children's Fund implementation plan and should be further discussed, having further discussion about what that fund can be used for, whether this program might pull staff away from other programs that are already providing support to people in need, options for finding workers, reaching out to other support agencies with trained staff to see if they would like to work in this capacity, how much people should be paid, what Health and Community Services' role should be in responding to severe weather, whether it is possible to give Road2Home money to contract for and hire people, how late a nightly winter shelter stays open, whether it should not just be the County that steps up to offer severe weather shelter but also the cities and the state, that severe conditions go beyond just winter weather now, and a vigil held every December for unhoused people who have lost their lives.

This agenda item was PRESENTED.

Items Added by Revision

There were no agenda items added by revision.

Other Business

There was no other business.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 11:55 a.m.

ATTEST:

WHATCOM COUNTY COUNCIL
WHATCOM COUNTY, WA

Kathy Kershner-via email 10/23/2023

Dana Brown-Davis, Council Clerk

Kathy Kershner, Committee Chair

Kristi Felbinger, Minutes Transcription

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