

**Whatcom County
Council Criminal Justice and Public Safety Committee**

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



Committee Minutes - Final

**Tuesday, June 20, 2023
1:50 PM
Hybrid Meeting**

**HYBRID MEETING - ADJOURNS BY 2:10 P.M., MAY BEGIN EARLY
(PARTICIPATE IN-PERSON, SEE REMOTE JOIN INSTRUCTIONS AT
www.whatcomcounty.us/joinvirtualcouncil, OR CALL 360.778.5010)**

COUNCILMEMBERS

Barry Buchanan
Tyler Byrd
Carol Frazey

CLERK OF THE COUNCIL

Dana Brown-Davis, C.M.C.

Call To Order

Committee Chair Barry Buchanan called the meeting to order at 2:05 p.m. in a hybrid meeting.

Roll Call

Present: 3 - Barry Buchanan, Tyler Byrd, and Carol Frazey

Also Present: Todd Donovan, Ben Elenbaas, Kaylee Galloway, and Kathy Kershner

Announcements

Special Presentation

1. [AB2023-391](#) Presentation by Whatcom County Search and Rescue

The following people presented:

- Scott Huso, Sheriff's Office
- Ben Wood

They spoke about the Search and Rescue (SAR) Council and what SAR does. Search and Rescue currently leases a building on Smith Road but due to plans for redevelopment of the Northwest Annex area, they have been given until the end of May of 2024 to vacate and find another home. They have had some meetings with the Executive's office, but would like to see what type of support the County can provide the Search and Rescue groups.

The following people also discussed the topic with Councilmembers:

- Tyler Schroeder, Director of Administrative Services
- Bill Elfo, Sheriff
- Gwynne Gruizenga-Top, Search and Rescue Council Chair
- Satpal Sidhu, County Executive

They discussed whether the Northwest Annex area has to be destroyed and rebuilt, what would be ideal for SAR if they are not at that location, an offer from a builder to develop land in the Everson area, whether the Irongate property is a possibility, the fact that SAR may not have to vacate in May since the Council still needs to decide about the Northwest Annex building itself, the perspective that Search and Rescue is an essential function of government, the need for SAR to know whether they have a building or not or whether they need to consider the offer of land in Everson that is on the

table, what dollar amount would be needed for a new building and whether that could fit into the Emergency Medical Services (EMS) levy as emergency services, how the County could overcome hurdles of prevailing wage and gifting of funds, who would own the building, how long it would take to get a proposal together to address these needs, and whether a building in Everson is workable for groups such as Bellingham Mountain Rescue.

This agenda item was 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 2:34 p.m.

ATTEST:

WHATCOM COUNTY COUNCIL
WHATCOM COUNTY, WA

Barry Buchanan-via email 6/30/2023

Dana Brown-Davis, Council Clerk

Barry Buchanan, Committee Chair

Kristi Felbinger, Minutes Transcription

SIGNED COPY ON FILE