

Whatcom County Council

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



Minutes - Draft Minutes

Tuesday, October 21, 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 10.20.2025

COUNCILMEMBERS

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

CLERK OF THE COUNCIL

Cathy Halka, AICP, CMC

COUNTY COUNCIL

CALL TO ORDER

Council Chair Kaylee Galloway called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m. in a hybrid meeting.

ROLL CALL

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

FLAG SALUTE

ANNOUNCEMENTS

COUNTY EXECUTIVE'S REPORT

There was no report.

MINUTES CONSENT

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

1. [MIN2025-064](#) Committee of the Whole Executive Session for October 7, 2025

Scanlon moved and Byrd 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 Stremler

Nay: 0

2. [MIN2025-066](#) Committee of the Whole for October 7, 2025

Scanlon moved and Byrd 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 Stremler

Nay: 0

3. [MIN2025-067](#) Regular County Council for October 7, 2025

Scanlon moved and Byrd 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 Stremler

Nay: 0

PUBLIC HEARINGS

1. [AB2025-637](#) Ordinance amending the Countywide Planning Policies, which reside in Whatcom County Comprehensive Plan Appendix C

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

Scanlon moved and Stremmler seconded that the Ordinance Requiring a Public Hearing be ADOPTED.

Matt Aamot, Planning and Development Services Department, answered what happens if this is not approved. He stated it is an up or down vote, and if it does not get approved, they would need to start over and go back to the cities to discuss with them any changes the Council wants.

Donovan stated he supported this last time with the concern that they were deleting language, that had previously existed in the Countywide Planning Policies, that said they should use the best available data when they are doing their projections for urban growth areas.

Scanlon's motion that the Ordinance Requiring a Public Hearing be ADOPTED carried by the following vote:

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

Nay: 3 - Byrd, Elenbaas, and Stremmler

Enactment No: ORD 2025-049

2. [AB2025-672](#) Resolution approving the Public Works Six-Year Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for the years 2026-2031

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

Scanlon moved and Byrd seconded that the Resolution Requiring a Public Hearing be APPROVED. The motion carried by the following vote:

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

Nay: 0

Enactment No: RES 2025-033

3. [AB2025-673](#) Resolution adopting the 2026 Annual Road Program

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

Scanlon moved and Donovan seconded that the Resolution Requiring a Public Hearing be APPROVED. The motion carried by the following vote:

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

Nay: 0

Enactment No: RES 2025-034

OPEN SESSION

The following people spoke:

- John Westerfield
- David Foreman
- Hank Maleng
- Kendra Cristelli
- Doug Revelle ("Yoshe")
- RobRoy Graham
- Scott Farrell
- Aaron Longstreth
- Diane Kitchen
- Lyle Sorenson
- John (last name not stated)
- Ivy Little
- Deb Shawver
- Alex Fisenko

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 items one and two, with item three being considered separately. Councilmembers voted on those items (see votes on individual items below).

1. [AB2025-727](#) Request authorization for the County Executive to enter into an interlocal grant agreement between Whatcom County and the Washington State Department of Commerce to reimburse the 5% match obligation required in the two elevation grants, in the amount of \$600,000 (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

2. [AB2025-728](#) Request authorization for the County Executive to enter into a contract amendment between Whatcom County and Opportunity Council to administer the Housing and Essential Needs (HEN) Program in the amount of \$1,813,929, for a total amended contract amount of \$5,223,812

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

3. [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

This item was considered separately below.

CONSENT AGENDA CONSIDERED SEPARATELY

3. [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 Contract be HELD IN COMMITTEE until November 5th.

Kayla Schott-Bresler, Executive's Office, gave a summary of what this money is for and answered a question about it being an increased amount for the contract costs.

Donovan's motion that the Contract be HELD IN COMMITTEE until November 5th carried by the following vote:

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

Nay: 0

Held in Committee until November 5th.

OTHER ITEMS**(From Council Finance and Administrative Services Committee)**

1. [AB2025-678](#) Ordinance amending the project budget for the New Public Health, Safety and Justice Facility, request no. 9

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

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

Nay: 0

Enactment No: ORD 2025-050

2. [AB2025-680](#) Resolution amending the 2025 Flood Control Zone District and Subzones Budget, request no. 4, in the amount of \$49,400 (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 Resolution (FCZDBS) be APPROVED. The motion carried by the following vote:

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

Nay: 0

Enactment No: RES 2025-035

3. [AB2025-682](#) Ordinance establishing the Silver Lake Lagoon Project Fund and establishing an initial budget for the Silver Lake Lagoon Bridge Fund

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

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

Nay: 0

Enactment No: ORD 2025-051

4. [AB2025-685](#) Ordinance amending the 2025 Whatcom County Budget, request no. 11, in the amount of \$517,671

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

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

Nay: 0

Enactment No: ORD 2025-052

CONFIRMATION OF EXECUTIVE APPOINTMENTS TO ADVISORY GROUPS

1. [AB2025-705](#) Request confirmation of the County Executive's appointment of Michael Byers to the Whatcom County Agricultural Advisory Committee

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

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

Nay: 1 - Elenbaas

2. [AB2025-729](#) Request confirmation of the County Executive's appointment of Matt Hargleroad to the Whatcom County Parks and Recreation Commission

***Scanlon moved* and Byrd seconded that the Executive Appointment be CONFIRMED.**

He thanked the Executive's Office for processing this because it fills the committee and he spoke about the appointee.

Scanlon's motion that the Executive Appointment be CONFIRMED carried by the following vote:

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

Nay: 0

3. [AB2025-731](#) Request confirmation of the County Executive's appointment of J G Sandy Phillips to the Whatcom County Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee

***Scanlon moved* and Byrd seconded that the Executive Appointment be CONFIRMED.**

Scanlon and Elenbaas spoke about the appointee.

Scanlon's motion that the Executive Appointment be CONFIRMED carried by the following vote:

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

Nay: 0

ITEMS ADDED BY REVISION

There were no agenda items added by revision.

INTRODUCTION ITEMS

Donovan moved to introduce items one through eleven (with item number 6 being a substitute version). The motion was seconded by Buchanan.

Scanlon asked about potentially setting a timeline for the budget related items.

Galloway stated by introducing these items they set forward to have a public hearing on November 5th, and they have received guidance from the Prosecutor's Office that they can hold a single public hearing for the budget and all the associated levy ordinances, so they would invite members of the public to speak to that. Then the Council would have the opportunity to either take action on November 5th or to hold until the December 2nd meeting to allow for more time to process amendments and for community outreach. She asked if the Council feels they would want to set that timeline now and commit to that.

The following people answered questions about the process of holding one public hearing on all the budget items and then voting on each individual item:

- Cathy Halka, Clerk of the Council
- Kimberly Thulin, Prosecuting Attorney's Office

Halka stated that introduction item number 1 (**AB2025-676**) is a substitute.

Councilmembers voted on the introduction items (see votes on individual items below).

Scanlon moved to follow the following proposed schedule for the budget:
October 28 - Discussion in Special Committee of the Whole
November 5 - Public Hearing
November 18 - Continue discussion and give any proposals on amendments
December 2 - Final vote

The motion was seconded by Donovan.

Halka stated the December 2nd meeting would be a Special Council meeting at 1 p.m.

Galloway stated that December 2nd would be the last available opportunity to take action on this budget and the associated budget levy ordinances.

Councilmembers, Thulin, and Halka discussed how this timeline fits into the timeline for certifying amounts to be levied by Whatcom County taxing districts, whether the motion includes that the Flood Control Zone resolutions should be done at the same time as the other levy ordinances, and the motion.

The motion carried by the following vote:

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

Nay: 1 - Elenbaas

Motion approved 6-1, with Elenbaas opposed, to follow the following proposed schedule for the budget:

October 28 - Discussion in Special Committee of the Whole

November 5 – Public Hearing

November 18 - Continue discussion and give any proposals on amendments

December 2 – Final vote

1. [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)

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

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

Nay: 1 - Byrd

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

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

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

Nay: 1 - Byrd

3. [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)

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

Nay: 1 - Byrd

4. [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)

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

Nay: 1 - Byrd

5. [AB2025-713](#) Resolution declaring the Whatcom County Flood Control Zone District's intention to lease property on River Road (Council acting as the Whatcom County Flood Control Zone District Board of Supervisors)

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

Nay: 1 - Byrd

6. [AB2025-715](#) Resolution declaring the Whatcom County Flood Control Zone District's intention to lease property on East Main Street (Council acting as the Whatcom County Flood Control Zone District Board of Supervisors)

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

Nay: 1 - Byrd

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

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

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

Nay: 1 - Byrd

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

Donovan moved and Buchanan seconded that the Ordinance Requiring a

Public Hearing be INTRODUCED FOR PUBLIC HEARING. The motion carried by the following vote:

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

Nay: 1 - Byrd

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

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

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

Nay: 1 - Byrd

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

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

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

Nay: 1 - Byrd

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

Donovan moved and Buchanan seconded that the Council Appointment Requiring Introduction be INTRODUCED. The motion carried by the following vote:

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

Nay: 1 - Byrd

COMMITTEE REPORTS, OTHER ITEMS, AND COUNCILMEMBER UPDATES

Councilmembers gave committee reports and updates on recent activities and upcoming events.

ADJOURN

The meeting adjourned at 7:34 p.m.

ATTEST:

WHATCOM COUNTY COUNCIL
WHATCOM COUNTY, WA

Cathy Halka, Council Clerk

Kaylee Galloway, Council Chair

Meeting Minutes prepared by Kristi Felbinger