

**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, September 24, 2024**

**2 PM**

**Council Chambers - Hybrid Meeting**

**HYBRID MEETING - MAY BEGIN EARLY - (PARTICIPATE IN-PERSON, SEE  
REMOTE JOIN INSTRUCTIONS AT [www.whatcomcounty.us/joinvirtualcouncil](http://www.whatcomcounty.us/joinvirtualcouncil), OR  
CALL 360.778.5010)**

**COUNCILMEMBERS**

Barry Buchanan  
Tyler Byrd  
Jon Scanlon

**CLERK OF THE COUNCIL**

Cathy Halka, AICP, CMC

## **Call To Order**

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

## **Roll Call**

**Present:** 3 - Barry Buchanan, Tyler Byrd, and Jon Scanlon

Also Present: Todd Donovan, Ben Elenbaas, Kaylee Galloway, and Mark Stremmler

## **Announcements**

### **Special Presentation**

1. [AB2024-528](#) Report from the Sheriff's Office

Donnell Tanksley, Sheriff, reported on the following:

- Two dogs recently trained for Fentanyl detection and a request to add one that would be dedicated to the jail
- The current jail population
- The County's drug task force and the amount of drugs they have seized
- Crime statistics in unincorporated Whatcom County and the state
- Sheriff's Department staffing and the efforts to recruit for twelve open positions
- Washington Association of Sheriffs & Police Chiefs (WASPC) Loaned Executive Management Assistance Program (LEMAP) assessors coming in July of 2025 as a step toward accreditation
- An upcoming crisis intervention team certification course in December

He answered questions about the use of the plantation rifle range, where they go while that is unavailable, and how much the Sheriff's Office needs the range for training if there is a resource that is working now. He stated they really do need a space, and he thinks that it would be preferred if they had a space that is owned by the County. He answered whether there is interest in the Sheriff's Department in taking the range over so it is not in the Parks Department, and stated it is something he would love to have a conversation about. It would be a resource that would not only be used properly, but would increase their training capacity.

Byrd spoke about the possibility of privatizing the range, who uses it, and

that Parks might be charging the Sheriff's Office a higher rate than what Custer charges them.

Tanksley answered questions about the drug task force, the reasons for crime rates in the county being lower than the state, impacts of increased staffing in some areas of the county, and the impacts of being down twelve deputies in corrections. He stated, at the core, it has the largest impact on the employees that are working there now and also has impacts on operations.

**This agenda item was REPORTED.**

**Items Added by Revision**

There were no agenda items added by revision.

**Other Business**

There was no other business.

**Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 2:25 p.m.

ATTEST:

WHATCOM COUNTY COUNCIL  
WHATCOM COUNTY, WA

**Barry Buchanan-via email 10/2/2024**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Cathy Halka, Council Clerk

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Barry Buchanan, Committee Chair

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Kristi Felbinger, Minutes Transcription

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