

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, February 21, 2023

3 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 2:48 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

Committee Discussion

1. [AB2023-116](#) Discussion with Whatcom County Prosecutor Eric Richey regarding District Court
Eric Richey, Whatcom County Prosecuting Attorney, updated the Councilmembers on a situation in which affidavits of prejudice were filed against District Court Judge Jonathan Rands. He answered questions about why they have heard so much about this situation, how it might affect the hearing of DUI cases in the future, how it might affect District Court fiscally and from an efficiency standpoint, how and when the affidavits were filed, and how the situation could have been handled with the press and public at the beginning.

This agenda item was DISCUSSED.

2. [AB2023-146](#) Discussion on the Healthy Children's Fund Implementation Plan
The following people presented:

- Amy Rydel, Health and Community Services
- Erika Lautenbach, Health and Community Services Director

Lautenbach answered whether the evaluation and assessment specialist would be part of the three percent allocated for evaluation under administration as referenced on the presentation slide showing expected revenue allocation and how the three percent was determined, and whether the timeline for the spending authority is too ambitious.

Kershner stated we have a huge issue with staffing in the businesses in our communities, with childcare being part of that problem, and she spoke about the idea of offering childcare as a benefit.

Galloway stated she is impressed with the implementation plan.

Kayla Schott-Bressler, Administrative Services Strategic Initiatives Special

Programs Manager, answered a question about the breakdown of the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) budget referenced on page 43 of the Implementation Plan and making sure it is really clear in the Plan.

The presenters answered whether there is funding set aside within the Healthy Children's Fund to allow us to do some capacity building in the community, whether a childcare technical education program is maybe something we could be thinking about implementing in our school districts as a way of capacity building, whether some of the money could be used to pay a lobbyist to go down to Olympia and work on legislation that would get us back to people being able to do in-home care, whether there are any criteria by which parents and children are made eligible to participate, and whether it should be for those who are going to work or to school to get a job or be needs-based.

This agenda item was PRESENTED AND DISCUSSED.

Committee Discussion and Recommendation to Council

1. [AB2023-107](#) Resolution accepting the Justice Project Needs Assessment Report (Public Health, Safety, and Justice Facility Needs Assessment)

Galloway moved and Frazey seconded that the Resolution be RECOMMENDED FOR APPROVAL.

Buchanan spoke about a couple key points of the Resolution. The first page is just a history of the project. When you get to the "Now therefore, be it resolved" part it starts talking about the framework for the implementation plan. They also included in this Resolution that they would like the Incarceration Prevention and Reduction Task Force (IPRTF) to continue working with the implementation plan and the task force (acting as the Law and Justice Council) "will continue to monitor and assess progress towards implementing the recommendations of the Justice Project Needs Assessment report through its Annual Report development." By approving the Resolution, the Council would also be instructing the IPRTF to put that on their work plan.

Councilmembers discussed whether the IPRTF has a sunset in the Ordinance that set it up, whether a location for a facility will be identified before this goes on the ballot, and making sure that this plan is something the Council will take action on this year. The implementation team plans on having that Ordinance to put it on the ballot the first meeting in June.

Galloway's motion that the Resolution be RECOMMENDED FOR APPROVAL carried by the following vote:

Aye: 7 - Buchanan, Byrd, Donovan, Elenbaas, Frazey, Galloway, and Kershner

Nay: 0

Items Added by Revision

There were no agenda items added by revision.

Other Business

There was no other business.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 4:08 p.m.

The County Council approved these minutes on March 7, 2023.

ATTEST:

WHATCOM COUNTY COUNCIL
WHATCOM COUNTY, WA

Dana Brown-Davis, Council Clerk

Barry Buchanan, Council Chair

Kristi Felbinger, Minutes Transcription

SIGNED COPY ON FILE