

Whatcom County Council Finance and Administrative Services Committee

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



Committee Minutes - Final

**Tuesday, May 7, 2024
10:30 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); AGENDA
REVISED 5.7.2024**

COUNCILMEMBERS

Tyler Byrd
Todd Donovan
Kaylee Galloway

CLERK OF THE COUNCIL

Dana Brown-Davis, C.M.C.

Call To Order

Committee Chair Todd Donovan called the meeting to order at 10:35 a.m. in a hybrid meeting.

Roll Call

Present: 3 - Tyler Byrd, Kaylee Galloway, and Todd Donovan

Also Present: Barry Buchanan, Ben Elenbaas, Jon Scanlon, and Mark Stremmler

Announcements

Council "Consent Agenda" Items

Galloway moved to recommend approval of Consent Agenda item numbers 1-15.

Byrd requested they pull Consent Agenda Item #2 (**AB2024-278**) for separate consideration. He stated he also had a question on item number 6.

Galloway stated she had a question on Consent Agenda item #3.

Galloway amended her motion and *moved* to recommend approval of Consent Agenda item numbers 1, and 3-15.

Consent Agenda item #3 (AB2024-281)

Tyler Schroeder, Director of Administrative Services, briefed the Councilmembers and stated this agreement lays a foundation that the County and the seven cities will be able to use the new public safety tax that was passed by Whatcom County constituents last year for the funding of the new facility and for the ongoing implementation plan strategies. The agreement is to establish the upfront financing for the facility which will be utilizing 75 percent of the cities' (sales tax) funds for the first few years, and also lays out a finance and facility advisory board and its membership. He answered questions.

Galloway stated she hopes the small cities, though not required, will consider using some of their proceeds toward the Justice Project Implementation Plan because this needs to be a community-wide effort. She pointed out a scrivener's error on page 5, section E.

Schroeder answered whether there has been an update on other funds they are leveraging or planning on leveraging to kick start investments into the implementation plan priorities, and how they might continue to put an

urgency on those in the first five to six years as they are also trying to buy down the bond. He stated the City of Bellingham will be collecting money and keeping portions of their sales tax that they will be spending toward implementation plan strategies in the first six years. The County has also been looking at other revenue sources for the first-year strategies. He answered whether it is just an assumption that the cities could potentially extend the years that they are contributing their 75 percent toward capital construction and stated the agreement recognizes that flexibility once capital costs are known. He answered how the 25 percent from the cities going toward projects in the implementation plan will be coordinated so that everyone is on the same page, and stated the coordination will continue through the task force but also the Council's request for oversight and monitoring of the sales tax through the finance and facility advisory board.

Satpal Sidhu, County Executive, stated this represents the normal course of work. If there are catastrophic contingencies, the county and city councils would have to address them at that time. He answered whether they expect anything in the agreement to change as the other five city councils (besides Ferndale and Bellingham which have already passed it) consider the agreement so Council does not have to vote on this several times. He stated they have gone to the cities and are communicating with them to make sure they are satisfied.

Kayla Schott-Bresler, Executive's Office, spoke about other revenue sources for the implementation plan strategies.

Donovan asked whether it is built into the agreement that the city will be taking their 25 percent and using it for implementation plan strategies, and stated that is correct. This agreement is what ties the City of Bellingham to the implementation plan strategies.

Consent Agenda item#6 (AB2024-293)

Mike Hilley, Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Manager, briefed the Councilmembers on the program.

Scanlon asked what the status is of the County's response to the letter the Council recently received from the Lummi Nation about the quality of EMS services delivered to the Lummi Nation, and whether this program is potentially part of that response to ensure they are delivering high quality services. Hilley stated they have a meeting scheduled tomorrow with multiple parties but he does not know that the two topics are connected. He spoke about what he hopes will come from the Emergency Medical

Technician (EMT) course.

Sidhu stated he called the Chairman of the Lummi Indian Business Council and met with the Mayor, who has met with Whatcom County District 8 Fire Chief, Bill Hewett. They will be meeting tomorrow and he will come back and report to the Council.

Hilley answered what the training looks like in other rural areas of the county such as Lummi Island, and how they might be able to access programs like this.

Councilmembers voted on the Consent Agenda items (1 and 3-15). See votes on individual items below.

1. [AB2024-274](#) Request authorization for the County Executive to enter into an interlocal agreement amendment between Whatcom County and the City of Bellingham to extend the agreement which provides funding for staffing and implementation of the Alternative Response Team Program in the amount of \$0 for a total amended agreement amount of \$402,179

Galloway moved that the Interlocal be RECOMMENDED FOR AUTHORIZATION BY CONSENT. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 3 - Byrd, Galloway, and Donovan

Nay: 0

2. [AB2024-278](#) Request authorization for the County Executive to enter into a contract between Whatcom County and K&H Printers-Lithographers, Inc dba K&H Election Services, to procure election related materials in the amount of \$862,000.00

This item was considered separately below.

3. [AB2024-281](#) Request authorization for the County Executive to enter into an Interlocal Agreement between Whatcom County, the City of Bellingham, the City of Blaine, the City of Everson, the City of Ferndale, the City of Lynden, the City of Nooksack and the City of Sumas to jointly finance a new Whatcom County Justice Facility and Behavioral Health Treatment Center

Galloway moved that the Interlocal be RECOMMENDED FOR AUTHORIZATION BY CONSENT. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 3 - Byrd, Galloway, and Donovan

Nay: 0

4. [AB2024-285](#) Request permission for the County Executive to enter into a contract between Whatcom County and Western Refinery Services, in the amount of \$877,105.00

Galloway moved that the Bid Award be RECOMMENDED FOR AUTHORIZATION BY CONSENT. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 3 - Byrd, Galloway, and Donovan

Nay: 0

5. [AB2024-287](#) Request authorization for the County Executive to enter into a grant agreement between Whatcom County and the State of Washington Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO) for Black Slough comprehensive barrier removals design, in the amount of \$207,000 plus \$40,500 in match for a total project amount of \$247,500 (Council acting as the Whatcom County Flood Control Zone District Board of Supervisors)

Galloway moved that the Contract (FCZDBS) be RECOMMENDED FOR AUTHORIZATION BY CONSENT. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 3 - Byrd, Galloway, and Donovan

Nay: 0

6. [AB2024-293](#) Request authorization for the County Executive to enter into a contract between Whatcom County and Remote Medical Training (RMT) to provide instruction of an Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) course to students in order for them to achieve a Washington State EMT certification, National Registry of EMTs (NREMT) and ECSI BLS Healthcare provider certification, in the amount of \$51,500.95

Galloway moved that the Contract be RECOMMENDED FOR AUTHORIZATION BY CONSENT. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 3 - Byrd, Galloway, and Donovan

Nay: 0

7. [AB2024-295](#) Request authorization for the County Executive to enter into an interlocal agreement between Whatcom County and Blaine School District for the provision of behavioral health services in the amount of \$144,540

Galloway moved that the Interlocal be RECOMMENDED FOR AUTHORIZATION BY CONSENT. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 3 - Byrd, Galloway, and Donovan

Nay: 0

8. [AB2024-296](#) Request authorization for the County Executive to enter into an interlocal agreement between Whatcom County and Bellingham School District #501 for the provision of behavioral health services in the amount of \$151,800

Galloway moved that the Interlocal be RECOMMENDED FOR AUTHORIZATION BY CONSENT. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 3 - Byrd, Galloway, and Donovan

Nay: 0

9. [AB2024-297](#) Request authorization for the County Executive to enter into an interlocal agreement between Whatcom County and Ferndale School District for the provision of behavioral health services in the amount of \$132,000

Galloway moved that the Interlocal be RECOMMENDED FOR AUTHORIZATION BY CONSENT. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 3 - Byrd, Galloway, and Donovan

Nay: 0

10. [AB2024-298](#) Request authorization for the County Executive to enter into an interlocal agreement between Whatcom County and Lynden School District for the provision of behavioral health services in the amount of \$122,100

Galloway moved that the Interlocal be RECOMMENDED FOR AUTHORIZATION BY CONSENT. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 3 - Byrd, Galloway, and Donovan

Nay: 0

11. [AB2024-299](#) Request authorization for the County Executive to enter into an interlocal agreement between Whatcom County and Mount Baker School District for the provision of behavioral health services in the amount of \$118,800

Galloway moved that the Interlocal be RECOMMENDED FOR AUTHORIZATION BY CONSENT. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 3 - Byrd, Galloway, and Donovan

Nay: 0

12. [AB2024-300](#) Request authorization for the County Executive to enter into an interlocal agreement between Whatcom County and Meridian School District for the provision of behavioral health services in the amount of \$118,800

Galloway moved that the Interlocal be RECOMMENDED FOR AUTHORIZATION BY CONSENT. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 3 - Byrd, Galloway, and Donovan

Nay: 0

13. [AB2024-301](#) Request authorization for the County Executive to enter into an interlocal agreement between Whatcom County and Nooksack Valley School District for the provision of behavioral health services in the amount of \$132,000

Galloway moved that the Interlocal be RECOMMENDED FOR AUTHORIZATION BY CONSENT. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 3 - Byrd, Galloway, and Donovan

Nay: 0

14. [AB2024-305](#) Request authorization for the County Executive to enter into an interlocal agreement between Whatcom County and U.S. Department of Justice Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Force (OCDETF) for overtime reimbursement for case RL-23-0008, in the amount of \$5,000

Galloway moved that the Interlocal be RECOMMENDED FOR AUTHORIZATION BY CONSENT. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 3 - Byrd, Galloway, and Donovan

Nay: 0

15. [AB2024-306](#) Request authorization for the County Executive to enter into an interlocal agreement between Whatcom County and U.S. Department of Justice Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Force (OCDEFT) for overtime reimbursement for case RL-23-0010, in the amount of \$5,000

Galloway moved that the Interlocal be RECOMMENDED FOR AUTHORIZATION BY CONSENT. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 3 - Byrd, Galloway, and Donovan

Nay: 0

Council "Consent Agenda" Items Considered Separately

2. [AB2024-278](#) Request authorization for the County Executive to enter into a contract between Whatcom County and K&H Printers-Lithographers, Inc dba K&H Election Services, to procure election related materials in the amount of \$862,000.00
- Byrd moved*** (inferred motion) that the Contract be RECOMMENDED FOR AUTHORIZATION.

Stacy Henthorn, County Auditor, briefed the Councilmembers and answered whether this is county-wide, and whether we got money from the State to cover presidential primary costs. She stated the State reimburses the County 100 percent.

Byrd's motion that the Contract be RECOMMENDED FOR AUTHORIZATION carried by the following vote:

Aye: 3 - Byrd, Galloway, and Donovan

Nay: 0

Special Presentation

1. [AB2024-283](#) Report from the Human Resources Division of the Administrative Services Department
- Melissa Keeley, Administrative Services Department Human Resources, read from a presentation (on file) and answered whether there is anything common across the workers comp claims and whether the data indicates anything they can update in policy or practice. She stated they have departments (Sheriff's Department and Public Works) that incur more claims than others because of the nature of their jobs and she described current measures in place to improve workplace safety. She answered whether the new NEOGOV Onboard software is something employees are going to use throughout the duration of their employment, and whether it will be user-friendly.

This agenda item was REPORTED.

Committee Discussion and Recommendation to Council

1. [AB2024-268](#) Request authorization to amend Resolution 2023-048 for Unrepresented County employees
- Tyler Schroeder, Director of Administrative Services, briefed the Councilmembers and stated this amendment is to add the Medical Examiner (ME) into the unrepresented resolution. He answered what the process would look like for structuring the ME office, what the hiring processes

will be for the five other FTEs (besides the Medical Examiner) that the office would support, and what they do when the ME is out of town and their services are needed. He described the positions and the onboarding process and stated that in the budget there is a contract for a secondary forensic pathologist to provide services when the ME is out of the office. He answered whether being appointed as Medical Examiner as an actual employee of the County would require a separate confirmation process and stated they did the confirmation at the time that Dr. Hunt came to the community and the County was contracting for those services. He does not think there is an indication or a need to reconfirm.

Councilmembers and Schroeder discussed whether they should need to re-hire the head of a new department, who the ME will report to, and whether the Council needs to create a new department first.

Galloway moved that the Resolution be RECOMMENDED FOR APPROVAL.

Schroeder stated if, in the future, the Council wants to establish a specific department once the transition happens, he thinks they would have the ability to establish a budget with that department established and pass a related ordinance.

Keeley answered whether the only amendments to the resolution are the items regarding the Medical Examiner and stated it is solely the Medical Examiner changes with a small clarification to a section regarding paid time off and sick leave.

Schroeder, Keeley, and the Councilmembers discussed how the ME staff salaries compare to other counties, whether they regularly review contracted positions to see if they would be appropriate to be brought in-house, the fact that the ME salary is double that of the undersheriff, the understanding that this was going to be a new department under the purview of the Executive's Office and structured similar to EMS, first figuring out a very clear direction for what roles law enforcement, the ME, and support officers would have, conversations that have already taken place about those responsibilities, the fact that adding the ME as non-departmental was approved by the Council during the budget process, and what the total budget impact of this move will be.

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

Aye: 2 - Galloway, and Donovan

Nay: 1 - Byrd

2. [AB2024-271](#) Request authorization for the County Executive to enter into a contract between Whatcom County and Triangle Associates, Inc. to support the Forest Resilience Task Force for a total amount of \$74,927.50

Because of time, Donovan stated they would address this and the next item (**AB2024-311**) in tonight's Council meeting.

This agenda item was NOT ACTED UPON.

Items Added by Revision

1. [AB2024-311](#) Request authorization for the County Executive to enter into an agreement between Whatcom County and Justice AV Solutions (JAVS) for equipment to replace the audio visual recording system in the Superior Court Department 4 courtroom in the amount not to exceed \$84,799.81

See note on AB2024-271 above.

This agenda item was NOT ACTED UPON.

Other Business

There was no other business.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 11:47 a.m.

ATTEST:

WHATCOM COUNTY COUNCIL
WHATCOM COUNTY, WA

Todd Donovan-via email 5/13/2024

Dana Brown-Davis, Council Clerk

Todd Donovan, Committee Chair

Kristi Felbinger, Minutes Transcription

SIGNED COPY ON FILE