

Whatcom County Council

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



Action Summary

Tuesday, May 12, 2026

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)

COUNCILMEMBERS

Elizabeth Boyle
Barry Buchanan
Ben Elenbaas
Kaylee Galloway
Jessica Rienstra
Jon Scanlon
Mark Stremler

CLERK OF THE COUNCIL

Cathy Halka, AICP, CMC

COUNTY COUNCIL

CALL TO ORDER

ROLL CALL

Present: 7 - Elizabeth Boyle, Barry Buchanan, Ben Elenbaas, Kaylee Galloway, Jessica Rienstra, Jon Scanlon, and Mark Stremler

FLAG SALUTE

ANNOUNCEMENTS

COUNTY EXECUTIVE'S REPORT

MINUTES CONSENT

1. [MIN2026-039](#) Special Committee of the Whole for April 7, 2026

APPROVED BY CONSENT

Aye: 7 - Boyle, Buchanan, Elenbaas, Galloway, Rienstra, Scanlon, and Stremler

Nay: 0

2. [MIN2026-040](#) Committee of the Whole Executive Session for April 28, 2026

APPROVED BY CONSENT

Aye: 7 - Boyle, Buchanan, Elenbaas, Galloway, Rienstra, Scanlon, and Stremler

Nay: 0

3. [MIN2026-041](#) Committee of the Whole for April 28, 2026

APPROVED BY CONSENT

Aye: 7 - Boyle, Buchanan, Elenbaas, Galloway, Rienstra, Scanlon, and Stremler

Nay: 0

4. [MIN2026-042](#) Regular County Council for April 28, 2026

APPROVED BY CONSENT

Aye: 7 - Boyle, Buchanan, Elenbaas, Galloway, Rienstra, Scanlon, and Stremler

Nay: 0

PUBLIC HEARINGS

1. [AB2026-282](#) Resolution declaring Whatcom County Flood Control Zone District personal property, a single-family house, as surplus and approve sale (Council acting as the Flood Control Zone District Board of Supervisors)

APPROVED

Aye: 7 - Boyle, Buchanan, Elenbaas, Galloway, Rienstra, Scanlon, and Stremler

Nay: 0

Enactment No: RES 2026-015

2. [AB2026-284](#) Resolution declaring Whatcom County Flood Control Zone District personal property as surplus and approve sale (Council acting as Flood Control Zone District Board of Supervisors)

APPROVED

Aye: 7 - Boyle, Buchanan, Elenbaas, Galloway, Rienstra, Scanlon, and Stremler

Nay: 0

Enactment No: RES 2026-016

3. [AB2026-286](#) Resolution declaring Whatcom County Flood Control Zone District personal property as surplus and to approve sale (Council acting as the Flood Control Zone District Board of Supervisors)

APPROVED

Aye: 7 - Boyle, Buchanan, Elenbaas, Galloway, Rienstra, Scanlon, and Stremler

Nay: 0

Enactment No: RES 2026-017

4. [AB2026-339](#) Ordinance establishing a Ferry District to fund and manage the Lummi Island ferry system

ADOPTED

Aye: 5 - Boyle, Buchanan, Galloway, Rienstra, and Scanlon

Nay: 2 - Elenbaas, and Stremler

Enactment No: ORD 2026-024

OPEN SESSION**CONSENT AGENDA**

(From Council Finance and Administrative Services Committee)

1. [AB2026-347](#) Request authorization for the County Executive to enter into a contract amendment between Whatcom County and Cascadia Law Group PLLC to increase the maximum consideration in the amount of \$50,000, for a total amended contract amount of \$200,000

AUTHORIZED BY CONSENT

Aye: 7 - Boyle, Buchanan, Elenbaas, Galloway, Rienstra, Scanlon, and Stremler

Nay: 0

2. [AB2026-348](#) Request authorization for the County Executive to enter into a contract between Whatcom County and Ceterra Northwest, LLC to provide on-call construction materials testing and materials inspection for Whatcom County Public Works projects in the amount not to exceed \$200,000

AUTHORIZED BY CONSENT

Aye: 7 - Boyle, Buchanan, Elenbaas, Galloway, Rienstra, Scanlon, and Stremler

Nay: 0

3. [AB2026-349](#) Request authorization for the County Executive to enter into a contract between Whatcom County and Sustainable Connections to conduct an innovative waste reduction program for large scale events, in the amount of \$83,588

AUTHORIZED BY CONSENT

Aye: 7 - Boyle, Buchanan, Elenbaas, Galloway, Rienstra, Scanlon, and Stremler

Nay: 0

OTHER ITEMS

(From Council Criminal Justice and Public Safety Committee)

1. [AB2026-340](#) Resolution establishing a preliminary planning budget cap, affirming governing commitments, and providing recommendations to the administration from the Whatcom County Council on the capital construction of the Whatcom County Jail and Behavioral Care Center

REVISED SUBSTITUTE APPROVED AS AMENDED

Aye: 5 - Boyle, Buchanan, Galloway, Rienstra, and Scanlon

Nay: 2 - Elenbaas, and Stremler

Enactment No: RES 2026-018

Approved the “Revised Substitute Resolution for 5.12.26” 5-2 as amended, with Elenbaas and Stremler opposed.

Motion approved 6-1, with Rienstra opposed, to amend to add three whereas statements after the fourth to last whereas statement as amended that read:

WHEREAS, modern correctional facility design recognizes that the physical environment itself materially affects behavioral health outcomes, staff safety, institutional stability, trauma response, recidivism, and the ability to provide effective treatment and programming, and that investments in therapeutic housing environments, behavioral health treatment space, visitation, educational and vocational programming, and trauma-informed architectural design within the jail facility are integral to the Justice Project's goals of improved behavioral health outcomes, reduced recidivism, and successful reentry; and

WHEREAS, the purpose of the replacement jail is not merely to expand incarceration capacity, but to replace an outdated and inadequate facility with one capable of safely and humanely delivering behavioral health treatment, medical care, stabilization services, reentry support, and programming that are not feasible within the constraints of the current facility; and

WHEREAS, the existing Whatcom County Jail was not designed to meet modern standards for behavioral health treatment, medical care, trauma-informed housing, classification, programming, or staff wellness, and the replacement of that facility with one designed to incorporate dedicated behavioral health treatment space, detoxification and medication-assisted treatment capacity, therapeutic and trauma-informed housing environments, visitation and reentry services, educational and vocational programming, and humane working and living conditions will itself function as a foundational component of the community's favorite behavioral health infrastructure, benefiting incarcerated individuals, employees, contractors, and the broader community, but not a substitute for the broader community based services and supports that must accompany it.

Motion had been approved 5-2, with Stremmer and Elenbaas opposed, to amend Elenbaas' original motion by amending Elenbaas' final proposed whereas clause to strike "substantial investment in behavioral health benefiting incarcerated individuals, employees, contractors, and the broader community;" and replace with "foundational component of the community's favorite behavioral health infrastructure, benefiting incarcerated individuals, employee contractors, and the broader community, but not a substitute for the broader community based services and supports that must accompany it." This amendment to the proposed motion to amend the resolution is reflected in the motion above.

(From Council Committee of the Whole)

2. [AB2026-272](#) Request for motion regarding council meeting procedures for discussion of agenda bill items on the day of introduction

DISCUSSED AND MOTION(S) APPROVED

MOTION 1

Motion approved 5-2, with Elenbaas and Stremmer opposed, to rescind the motion passed on April 1st, 2025 to require discussion on the day of introduction.

MOTION 2

Motion approved 6-1, with Stremler opposed, to require discussion in committee on the day of introduction for the following: ordinances amending the County budget, ordinances requiring a public hearing, and all official recurring county plans or plan updates.

COUNCIL APPOINTMENTS TO ADVISORY GROUPS

1. [AB2026-325](#) Appointment to vacancies on the Lynden/Everson Flood Subzone Advisory Committee, Applicants: Ladd Shumway, Jackie Abercrombie, Luke Wolfisberg (Council acting as the Flood Control Zone District Board of Supervisors)

APPOINTED

Motion approved to accept late applications 6-1, with Elenbaas opposed

Appointed Luke Wolfisberg with 7 votes and Ladd Shumway with 4 votes

CONFIRMATION OF EXECUTIVE APPOINTMENTS TO ADVISORY GROUPS

1. [AB2026-350](#) Request confirmation of the County Executive's appointment of Neal Walker to the Food System Committee

CONFIRMED

Aye: 7 - Boyle, Buchanan, Elenbaas, Galloway, Rienstra, Scanlon, and Stremler

Nay: 0

ITEMS ADDED BY REVISION**INTRODUCTION ITEMS**

1. [AB2026-333](#) Ordinance increasing the Petty Cash Revolving Fund for the Parks & Recreation Department, in the amount of \$500

INTRODUCED

Aye: 7 - Boyle, Buchanan, Elenbaas, Galloway, Rienstra, Scanlon, and Stremler

Nay: 0

2. [AB2026-351](#) Ordinance amending the project budget for the Austin Court Stormwater Improvement Project Fund, request no. 1

INTRODUCED

Aye: 7 - Boyle, Buchanan, Elenbaas, Galloway, Rienstra, Scanlon, and Stremler

Nay: 0

3. [AB2026-353](#) Ordinance amending the project budget for the North Commercial Street Acquisition, request no. 1

INTRODUCED

Aye: 7 - Boyle, Buchanan, Elenbaas, Galloway, Rienstra, Scanlon, and Stremler

Nay: 0

4. [AB2026-355](#) Ordinance amending the project budget for the New Public Health, Safety and Justice Facility, request no. 11

INTRODUCED

Aye: 7 - Boyle, Buchanan, Elenbaas, Galloway, Rienstra, Scanlon, and Stremler

Nay: 0

5. [AB2026-369](#) Ordinance amending the 2026 Whatcom County Budget, request no. 8, in the amount of \$8,914,924

INTRODUCED

Aye: 7 - Boyle, Buchanan, Elenbaas, Galloway, Rienstra, Scanlon, and Stremler

Nay: 0

6. [AB2026-373](#) Resolution amending the 2026 Flood Control Zone District and Subzones Budget, request no. 3, in the amount of \$34,964 (Council acting as the Whatcom County Flood Control Zone District Board of Supervisors)

INTRODUCED

Aye: 7 - Boyle, Buchanan, Elenbaas, Galloway, Rienstra, Scanlon, and Stremler

Nay: 0

7. [AB2026-374](#) Ordinance amending the project based budget for the Lummi Nation Ferry Lease Fund-3901, request no. 1

INTRODUCED

Aye: 7 - Boyle, Buchanan, Elenbaas, Galloway, Rienstra, Scanlon, and Stremler

Nay: 0

8. [AB2026-379](#) Ordinance amending the project budget for the Central Shop National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Stormwater Improvements Project Fund, request no. 2

INTRODUCED

Aye: 7 - Boyle, Buchanan, Elenbaas, Galloway, Rienstra, Scanlon, and Stremler

Nay: 0

COMMITTEE REPORTS, OTHER ITEMS, AND COUNCILMEMBER UPDATES**ADJOURN**