

**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, January 24, 2023
3:05 PM
Hybrid Meeting**

**HYBRID MEETING - ADJOURNS BY 3:25 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
Carol Frazey

CLERK OF THE COUNCIL

Dana Brown-Davis, C.M.C.

Call To Order

Committee Chair Barry Buchanan called the meeting to order at 3:05 p.m. in a hybrid meeting.

Roll Call

Present: 3 - Barry Buchanan, Tyler Byrd, and Carol Frazey

Absent: None

Also Present: Todd Donovan, Ben Elenbaas, Kaylee Galloway, and Kathy Kershner

Announcements

Committee Discussion

1. [AB2023-025](#) Discussion on progress and next steps for the Justice Project (Public Health, Safety, and Justice Facility Needs Assessment)

Buchanan briefed the Councilmembers and stated the purpose of this discussion is to give them a preview of the Justice Project Needs Assessment Report and a chance to start thinking about the implementation plan for the report.

Tyler Schroeder, Director of Administrative Services, read from a memo (on file). He and Buchanan answered whether the Needs Assessment is done and when that will get to the Council, whether recommendations for facilities goals will be specific, and whether there will be enough time to work with the recommendations to have an Ordinance by June. One thing the Council should think about is how much specificity is needed to bring forward a ballot measure.

Councilmembers discussed what level of detail is needed to bring forward an Ordinance in the fall that sets a funding mechanism.

Frazey stated they need specifics such as location and what kind of behavioral health facilities are going to be around it.

Donovan stated people are going to care about where it is, how big it is, how much it is going to cost, and what the funding model is going to be. The problem of not having enough specificity is it would be asking people to just trust the County to figure out how to spend the money and he does not think that will pass.

Elenbaas stated there is already somewhat a lack of trust and he agrees with

Fraze and Donovan. It would be detrimental to the community if this failed again. The more specific the plan (including location), the better chance it has of being approved.

Buchanan stated the two important elements are going to be size and location and they are trying to balance how much architectural investment they make prior to a ballot initiative.

Schroeder answered a question about whether they have a location they are thinking about right now and stated the Stakeholder Advisory Committee identified three County-owned properties and made recommendations about criteria that the Council should consider when making that decision. He answered whether it will take a sixty percent vote or a fifty plus one. He stated a chart associated with funding sources is in the Needs Assessment.

Satpal Sidhu, County Executive, stated the Administration is coming to the Council as partners. They are coming early and engaging the Council because they want a joint plan that they can then present to the people.

Councilmembers and staff discussed how much it has cost in the past to put these ballot measures on the ballot with all the engineering and plans, not putting that out first, maybe having just a ground-breaking date so people can trust that something is going to happen, public events they will have for back-of-the-napkin style discussions about architecture and to get some idea of what it would look like, and collaboration between the Council and the Administration.

Schroeder stated collaboration and coordination with the cities associated with a possible public safety tax will be important and they have started those discussions with the cities.

Buchanan stated these things happened in a serial fashion before and now they are trying to get some parallel work done so they are not stuck at the end with a big something that they have not even considered.

Schroeder stated the City Council had a similar discussion about the Needs Assessment yesterday and he answered whether they have seen it already. Buchanan stated it is online on the Stakeholder Advisory Committee website.

This agenda item was DISCUSSED.

Items Added by Revision

There were no agenda items added by revision.

Other Business

There was no other business.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 3:30 p.m.

ATTEST:

WHATCOM COUNTY COUNCIL
WHATCOM COUNTY, WA

Barry Buchanan-via email 2/9/2023

Dana Brown-Davis, Council Clerk

Barry Buchanan, Committee Chair

Kristi Felbinger, Minutes Transcription

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