

Whatcom County Council Committee of the Whole

COUNTY COURTHOUSE
311 Grand Avenue, Ste #105
Bellingham, WA 98225-4038
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Committee Minutes - Draft Minutes

VIRTUAL MEETING - ENDS NO LATER THAN 5 P.M. (TO
PARTICIPATE, SEE INSTRUCTIONS AT
www.whatcomcounty.us/joinvirtualcouncil OR CALL 360.778.5010)
Tuesday, June 1, 2021

2:10 PM

Virtual Meeting

COUNCILMEMBERS

Rud Browne
Barry Buchanan
Tyler Byrd
Todd Donovan
Ben Elenbaas
Carol Frazey
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 2:10 p.m. in a virtual meeting.

Roll Call

Present: 7 - Rud Browne, Barry Buchanan, Tyler Byrd, Todd Donovan, Carol Frazey, Ben Elenbaas and Kathy Kershner

Absent: None

Announcements

Special Presentation

1. [AB2020-219](#) Discussion and update on strategies and other items related to COVID-19 (Council and Health Board)

Erika Lautenbach, Health Department Director, gave the following updates:

- A reached milestone of over half of Whatcom County's population having initiated (at least one dose) the COVID-19 vaccine
- Resolution of data inoperability issues with the State system and the system that our tribal partners report data into. Vaccination records still need to be input which will affect the County's percent of those vaccinated.
- A decreased demand at the community vaccination center and the last day of operation in two weeks

She answered questions about matching potential vaccine venues with partners who can administer the vaccine, whether the county gets credit for vaccine doses administered to Whatcom County residents in a different county, and whether there is still a high number of people hospitalized with COVID-19.

This agenda item was DISCUSSED.

2. [AB2021-317](#) Presentation regarding efforts to gather input from local stakeholders on the possible opening of a refugee resettlement office in Whatcom County

Steven Shetterly, Bellingham Covenant Church and World Relief, briefed the Councilmembers and gave a presentation.

Clerk's note: Shetterly's connection was lost part-way through his presentation so the Councilmembers went on to the next agenda item. They came back to this item after AB2021-306 started below.

Committee Discussion

1. [AB2021-306](#) Discussion and update on the American Rescue Plan Act with Executive Sidhu Satpal Sidhu, County Executive, began to brief the Councilmembers on this item but after a short period of time the previous speaker was able to rejoin the meeting, so Sidhu stopped his briefing and Councilmembers went back to AB2021-317. See notes on this item below after AB2021-317.

Special Presentation (Continued from above)

2. [AB2021-317](#) Presentation regarding efforts to gather input from local stakeholders on the possible opening of a refugee resettlement office in Whatcom County

Shetterly continued his presentation and answered questions about how to balance this effort with Whatcom County's already low vacancy rates, what he is asking of the Council, whether Whatcom County residents might be displaced because of the existing housing shortage if refugees are invited to come here, and whether there is a requirement for refugees to commit to the religious organizations that bring them in.

Kershner moved to recommend that the Council refer this item to the Public Health Advisory Board or Housing Advisory Committee for potential recommendations on impacts to the programs in Whatcom County that are currently in place to help house our homeless population before they make a recommendation as a Council to support or not support this program. The motion was seconded by Byrd.

Councilmembers discussed the motion.

Kershner clarified her motion to ask the staff that work on housing and homelessness in our community to weigh in back to the Council so that the Council could have an informed opinion before they support or not support it.

Shetterly stated he does not need a statement of support though he would be happy to receive one. This was an informational meeting.

Kershner withdrew her motion.

Shetterly continued to answer questions and Councilmembers continued to discuss the item.

Satpal Sidhu, County Executive, spoke about his conversations with Shetterly on this topic and his suggestion that he present to the

Councilmembers.

This agenda item was PRESENTED AND DISCUSSED.

Committee Discussion

1. [AB2021-306](#) Discussion and update on the American Rescue Plan Act with Executive Sidhu

The following people briefed the Councilmembers and answered questions:

- Satpal Sidhu, County Executive
- Tyler Schroeder, Executive's Office

They answered questions about the qualified census track and how it relates to ideas and decisions regarding childcare, and amending the proposed Ordinance for introduction tonight to state that no additional monies shall be appropriated from this fund without prior approval of the County Council.

This agenda item was DISCUSSED.

Committee Discussion and Recommendation to Council

1. [AB2021-185](#) Ordinance amending Whatcom County Code 9.32, Unlawful Discharge of Firearms, to establish a no shooting zone in the Drayton Harbor area of Whatcom County

Clerk's note: AB2021-185 and AB2021-186 were discussed together. See notes for AB2021-186 under AB2021-185.

Byrd briefed the Councilmembers on an acceptance of a 1000 foot or the City of limits of Blaine (whichever is greater) buffer by the different groups except for the City of Blaine.

Councilmembers discussed this item and the next agenda item, AB2021-186.

Donovan moved and Frazey seconded that **AB2021-186** (Ordinance amending Whatcom County Code 9.32, Unlawful Discharge of Firearms, to establish a no shooting zone to be known as the Dearborn No Shooting Zone) be RECOMMENDED FOR ADOPTION.

The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 5 - Browne, Buchanan, Byrd, Donovan, and Frazey

Nay: 2 - Kershner and Elenbaas

Councilmembers discussed **AB2021-185** (Ordinance amending Whatcom County Code 9.32, Unlawful Discharge of Firearms, to establish a no

shooting zone in the Drayton Harbor area of Whatcom County)

Browne moved to recommend moving **AB2021-185** forward with an amendment that the boundary applies to one thousand (1,000) feet from the shore, or the city limits of Blaine, whichever is further. The motion was seconded by Byrd.

Councilmembers discussed the motion, implications for enforcement, and whether it would require that a new ordinance be introduced.

Browne restated his motion to recommend that an ordinance be introduced tonight with language that states the boundaries would be set to the City limits of Blaine or 1000 feet, whichever is further from the shore.

Councilmembers continued to discuss the motion and whether the proposed Ordinance should be formally submitted to the City of Blaine, the different tribes, and hunting associations so they are all aware.

Browne's motion that an ordinance be introduced tonight with language that states the boundaries would be set to the City limits of Blaine or 1000 feet, whichever is further from the shore, carried by the following vote:

Aye: 6 - Browne, Buchanan, Byrd, Donovan, Elenbaas and Kershner

Nay: 1 - Frazey

Absent: 0

2. [AB2021-186](#) Ordinance amending Whatcom County Code 9.32, Unlawful Discharge of Firearms, to establish a no shooting zone to be known as the Dearborn No Shooting Zone
Clerk's note: AB2021-185 and AB2021-186 were discussed together. See notes under AB2021-185 for this item.

ACTION FOR THIS FILE AS DISCUSSED IN AB2021-185: Donovan's motion that the Ordinance Requiring a Public Hearing be RECOMMENDED FOR ADOPTION carried by the following vote:

Aye: 5 - Browne, Buchanan, Byrd, Donovan and Frazey

Nay: 2 - Elenbaas and Kershner

Absent: 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 3:43 p.m.

ATTEST:

WHATCOM COUNTY COUNCIL
WHATCOM COUNTY, WA

Dana Brown-Davis, Council Clerk

Barry Buchanan, Council Chair

Kristi Felbinger, Minutes Transcription