

Whatcom County Council Public Works & Health Committee

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



Committee Minutes - Draft Minutes

**Tuesday, July 9, 2024
11:20 AM
Hybrid Meeting**

**HYBRID MEETING - ADJOURNS BY 12:00 PM - MAY BEGIN EARLY
(PARTICIPATE IN-PERSON, SEE REMOTE JOIN INSTRUCTIONS AT
www.whatcomcounty.us/joinvirtualcouncil, OR CALL 360.778.5010)**

COUNCILMEMBERS

Kaylee Galloway
Jon Scanlon
Mark Stremler

CLERK OF THE COUNCIL

Cathy Halka, AICP, CMC

Call To Order

Committee Chair Jon Scanlon called the meeting to order at 11:05 a.m. in a hybrid meeting.

Roll Call

Present: 3 - Kaylee Galloway, Jon Scanlon, and Mark Strempler

Also Present: Barry Buchanan, Tyler Byrd, Todd Donovan, and Ben Elenbaas

Announcements

Special Presentation

1. [AB2024-451](#) Presentation on the Whatcom County Disposal of Toxics Facility Feasibility Study Report

Jennifer Hayden, Health and Community Services, read from a presentation (on file) and stated the contract they have with the current provider reaches its expiration date at the end of this year. Because of increasing costs and some concerns about facility operations, they decided to conduct a feasibility study looking at the pros and cons of continuing to contract services out or folding this program into County operations. She answered questions about the comparison of the capital and operational cost scenarios for each option, State rules about how many light bulbs people can drop off at the facility and whether there is anything the County can implement to get around those, and whether the County partners with businesses to provide more convenient locations for people to take waste. She answered whether the contractor hauls all the waste to another facility, and stated it all goes to Kent. She answered who would do that if the County takes this on, and stated they would contract with a transport and disposal company.

She answered what the County would do differently, if they are operating the facility, to help with the recruitment and retention challenges they face now, and stated the ability to interact directly with a supervisor, for staff to have agency in the program, and to have County benefits all make for a more engaged workforce. She answered questions about liability and insurance if it is County-operated, and what the next steps would be from here. She stated she would bring this to the solid waste executive committee to review before it comes back to Council. They would also bring a contract extension with the vendor in order to give them more time to either go out to bid for another contract or transition the program over to the County.

Councilmembers concurred they were in favor of her pursuing it.

This agenda item was PRESENTED.

2. [AB2024-455](#) Presentation from the Health and Community Services Department regarding ongoing efforts to support vulnerable populations during smoke and heat season

Ann Beck, Health and Community Services, read from a presentation on what they definitively have in place now and are going to do, and the things they are still trying to work out and figure out for heat and smoke response. She answered whether there are no cooling center sites in Bellingham since they do not show on the Washington 211 interactive map of cooling centers, and whether the County has something set up that would trigger regular meetings and coordination between the Health Department and Department of Emergency Management when hot weather and smoke come. She stated the nature of their work is that they are talking to each other every week but they could put something in place for summer. She answered whether information about generic places for heat or smoke relief (malls, movie theaters, etc.) could be put in a central place for the public to see, and stated they are cautious about putting out sites for people to go to that are privately owned. She answered whether we have programs or whether we are aware of Federal programs that can help places like community centers make upgrades or renovations to address smoke and heat, and stated they send information from the Department of Commerce on grants to those entities. She answered whether the information presented on the Washington 211 site is updated to only show what is currently open, and stated she could get more information about that. She answered whether organizations across the county that are open should contact Washington 211 to be included, and stated that is a great place, and entities can also contract the Health and Community Services Department.

This agenda item was PRESENTED.

Items Added by Revision

There were no agenda items added by revision.

Other Business

There was no other business.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 11:50 a.m.

ATTEST:

WHATCOM COUNTY COUNCIL
WHATCOM COUNTY, WA

Cathy Halka, Council Clerk

Jon Scanlon, Committee Chair

Kristi Felbinger, Minutes Transcription