

Whatcom County Council

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



Minutes - Draft Minutes

**Tuesday, March 10, 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 Stremmler

CLERK OF THE COUNCIL

Cathy Halka, AICP, CMC

COUNTY COUNCIL

CALL TO ORDER

Council Chair Kaylee Galloway called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m. in a hybrid meeting.

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

There was no report.

MINUTES CONSENT

Buchanan moved to accept the minutes consent items. The motion was seconded by Scanlon (see votes on individual items below).

1. [MIN2026-018](#) Special Council - Councilmember Retreat for February 17, 2026

Buchanan moved and Scanlon seconded that the Minutes Consent be APPROVED BY CONSENT. The motion carried by the following vote:

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

Nay: 0

2. [MIN2026-019](#) Committee of the Whole Executive Session for February 24, 2026

Buchanan moved and Scanlon seconded that the Minutes Consent be APPROVED BY CONSENT. The motion carried by the following vote:

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

Nay: 0

3. [MIN2026-020](#) Committee of the Whole for February 24, 2026

Buchanan moved and Scanlon seconded that the Minutes Consent be APPROVED BY CONSENT. The motion carried by the following vote:

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

Nay: 0

4. [MIN2026-021](#) Special Committee of the Whole for February 3, 2026

Buchanan moved and Scanlon seconded that the Minutes Consent be APPROVED BY CONSENT. The motion carried by the following vote:

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

Nay: 0

5. [MIN2026-022](#) Regular County Council for February 24, 2026

Buchanan moved and Scanlon seconded that the Minutes Consent be APPROVED BY CONSENT. The motion carried by the following vote:

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

Nay: 0

OPEN SESSION

The following people spoke:

- Michelle Genovese
- Jeremy Thompson
- Peter Condyles
- Helen Solem
- Craig Zimmerman
- David Parsons
- Ignacio Cariaga
- Stephanie Anderson
- Bill Craven
- Cynthia Sue Ripke-Kutsagoitz
- Lisa Adam
- Brian Heinrich
- Lesley Cooke
- Brian Gass
- Ryan Bowman
- Lyle Sorenson
- Darcy Jones
- Markis Dee
- Natalie Chavez
- Perry Eskridge
- JoEll Snyder

Hearing no one else, Galloway closed the Open Session.

CONSENT AGENDA

Scanlon reported for the Finance and Administrative Services Committee and **moved** to approve Consent Agenda items one through four. Councilmembers voted on those items (see votes on individual items below).

1. [AB2026-174](#) Request authorization for the County Executive to award Bid #26-01 and enter into a contract between Whatcom County and Lake Union Drydock Company for drydocking, repair, and maintenance of the Whatcom Chief Ferry in the amount of \$891,918

Scanlon reported for the Finance and Administrative Services Committee and moved that the Bid Award be AUTHORIZED BY CONSENT. The motion carried by the following vote:

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

Nay: 0

2. [AB2026-190](#) Request authorization for the County Executive to enter into a contract between Whatcom County and WSP USA, Inc to perform engineering and design services for the Everson-Nooksack Berms Project, in the amount of \$752,159.46 (Council acting as the Whatcom County Flood Control Zone District Board of Supervisors)

Scanlon reported for the Finance and Administrative Services Committee and moved that the Contract (FCZDBS) be AUTHORIZED BY CONSENT. The motion carried by the following vote:

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

Nay: 0

3. [AB2026-192](#) Request authorization for the County Executive to enter into an interlocal agreement amendment between Whatcom County and Washington State Department of Health to provide funding for various public health services in the amount of \$101,475, for a total amended agreement amount of \$11,229,797

Scanlon reported for the Finance and Administrative Services Committee and moved that the Interlocal be AUTHORIZED BY CONSENT. The motion carried by the following vote:

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

Nay: 0

4. [AB2026-199](#) Request authorization for the County Executive to enter into an interlocal agreement between Whatcom County and Public Utility District No. 1 of Whatcom County to outline the terms and conditions related to the operation and maintenance of water systems by the Public Utility District at the request of and as an agent for Whatcom County

Scanlon reported for the Finance and Administrative Services Committee and moved that the Interlocal be AUTHORIZED BY CONSENT. The motion carried by the following vote:

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

Nay: 0

OTHER ITEMS

(From Council Planning and Development Committee)

1. [AB2026-195](#) Resolution docketing Comprehensive Plan and Development Regulation amendments

Rienstra reported for the Planning and Development Committee and stated that this item was forwarded to Council without a recommendation.

Elenbaas stated it is not perfect, and holding it will not make it perfect, and they also have the ability to amend the docket at any time.

Rienstra moved and Scanlon seconded that the Resolution be APPROVED.

Councilmembers discussed if there was anything anyone wanted to add to the docket, and a concern that the docket gets prioritized by staff so it seems like a place where things go to die

Rienstra's motion that the Resolution be APPROVED carried by the following vote:

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

Nay: 0

Enactment No: RES 2026-009

COUNCIL APPOINTMENTS TO ADVISORY GROUPS

1. [AB2026-172](#) Appointment to a vacancy on the Planning Commission, District 1 or 5, Applicants: Lindsey Elenbaas, Gurdeep Bains, Selena Knoblauch, Jeremy Thompson, Joseph L. Stine, Steven Cohen

Elenbaas spoke about why he would not recuse himself this time. He stated he does not believe there are any legal issues with his wife being an applicant.

Galloway stated they will vote and the first applicant to get four votes will be appointed.

Scanlon moved and Buchanan seconded to consider all with a vote of one.

Elenbaas received three votes, Knoblauch received three votes, and Thompson received one vote as follows:

Elenbaas: Elenbaas

Galloway: Thompson

Rienstra: Knoblauch

Scanlon: Knoblauch

Stremmer: Elenbaas

Buchanan: Elenbaas

Boyle: Knoblauch

After the first vote, Galloway stated she would change her vote to Knoblauch. So, Knoblauch was appointed with four votes.

This agenda item was APPOINTED.

Appointed Selena Knoblauch with 4 votes.

2. [AB2026-173](#) Appointment to a vacancy on the Child and Family Well-Being Task Force, Applicant(s): Makela Alem

Scanlon moved and Rienstra seconded that the Council Appointment Requiring Introduction be APPOINTED.

Elenbaas stated he would like to know more about the applicant's empathy-based education which they do in the schools.

Scanlon's motion that the Council Appointment Requiring Introduction be APPOINTED carried by the following vote:

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

Nay: 0

CONFIRMATION OF EXECUTIVE APPOINTMENTS TO ADVISORY GROUPS

1. [AB2026-179](#) Request confirmation of the County Executive's appointment of Steven Price to the Whatcom County Housing Authority Board

Boyle moved and Rienstra seconded that the Executive Appointment be CONFIRMED. The motion carried by the following vote:

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

Nay: 0

2. [AB2026-202](#) Request confirmation of the County Executive's appointment of JoEll Snyder to the Whatcom County Conservation Easement Program Oversight Committee

Boyle moved and Scanlon seconded that the Executive Appointment be CONFIRMED. The motion carried by the following vote:

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

Nay: 0

ITEMS ADDED BY REVISION

There were no agenda items added by revision.

INTRODUCTION ITEMS

Buchanan moved to introduce items one through eight. The motion was seconded by Scanlon (see votes on individual items below).

Galloway stated that Introduction item number 3 (**AB2026-183**) is a substitute.

1. [AB2026-178](#) Appointment to a vacancy on the Justice Project Oversight and Planning (JPOP) Committee, Behavioral Health Provider position, Applicant(s): Keren Gott, Margery Dunkle

Buchanan moved and Scanlon seconded that the Council Appointment Requiring Introduction be INTRODUCED. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 6 - Boyle, Buchanan, Galloway, Rienstra, Scanlon, and Stremler

Nay: 1 - Elenbaas

2. [AB2026-181](#) Ordinance amending the project budget for the Eagleridge Stormwater Improvements Project Fund, request no. 1

Buchanan moved and Scanlon seconded that the Ordinance be INTRODUCED. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 6 - Boyle, Buchanan, Galloway, Rienstra, Scanlon, and Stremler

Nay: 1 - Elenbaas

3. [AB2026-183](#) Ordinance amending the project based budget for the Swift Creek Capital Projects Fund, request no. 3

Buchanan moved and Scanlon seconded that the SUBSTITUTE Ordinance be INTRODUCED. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 6 - Boyle, Buchanan, Galloway, Rienstra, Scanlon, and Stremler

Nay: 1 - Elenbaas

4. [AB2026-193](#) Receipt of the 2025 Whatcom County Contractor Apprenticeship Program Annual Report

Buchanan moved and Scanlon seconded that the document(s) be RECEIVED.

The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 6 - Boyle, Buchanan, Galloway, Rienstra, Scanlon, and Stremler

Nay: 1 - Elenbaas

5. [AB2026-200](#) Ordinance closing the Bellingham Senior Center HVAC Replacement Fund

Buchanan moved and Scanlon seconded that the Ordinance be INTRODUCED. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 6 - Boyle, Buchanan, Galloway, Rienstra, Scanlon, and Stremler

Nay: 1 - Elenbaas

6. [AB2026-204](#) Ordinance amending the 2026 Whatcom County Budget, request no. 5, in the amount of \$741,113

Buchanan moved and Scanlon seconded that the Ordinance be INTRODUCED. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 6 - Boyle, Buchanan, Galloway, Rienstra, Scanlon, and Stremler

Nay: 1 - Elenbaas

7. [AB2026-206](#) Ordinance amending the 2026 Whatcom County Budget, request no. 6, in the amount of \$3,920,278

Buchanan moved and Scanlon seconded that the Ordinance be INTRODUCED. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 6 - Boyle, Buchanan, Galloway, Rienstra, Scanlon, and Stremler

Nay: 1 - Elenbaas

8. [AB2026-213](#) Ordinance authorizing a sales and use tax of one-tenth of one percent for criminal justice purposes as authorized by RCW 82.14.345 and adding a new Chapter 3.27 Sales and Use Tax for Criminal Justice Purposes to the Whatcom County Code

Buchanan moved and Scanlon seconded that the Ordinance Requiring a Public Hearing be INTRODUCED FOR PUBLIC HEARING. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 6 - Boyle, Buchanan, Galloway, Rienstra, Scanlon, and Stremler

Nay: 1 - Elenbaas

COMMITTEE REPORTS, OTHER ITEMS, AND COUNCILMEMBER UPDATES

Galloway moved to enter into an executive session to have further discussion on the pending litigation that was discussed earlier today

pursuant to RCW 42.30.110 (1)(i). The attorney present will be Kimberly Thulin. The council will be in executive session until 7:32 p.m. If the meeting extends beyond the stated conclusion time, she will make a public announcement.

Clerk's note: the RCW citation was cited incorrectly and then later corrected by the chair to what is noted above.

The motion was seconded by Elenbaas.

The motion carried by the following vote:

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

Nay: 0

Councilmembers entered into executive session at 7:17 p.m.

At 7:33 p.m., the Council chair announced that the executive session would extend to no later than 7:43 p.m. and she restated the correct RCW citation as noted above.

The executive session adjourned at 7:44 p.m.

Council took a short recess and the meeting reconvened at 7:51 p.m.

Councilmembers gave committee reports and updates on recent activities and upcoming events.

Motion approved 7-0 to enter into an executive session to have further discussion on the pending litigation that was discussed earlier today pursuant to RCW 42.30.110 (1)(i).

ADJOURN

The meeting adjourned at 8:23 p.m.

ATTEST:

WHATCOM COUNTY COUNCIL
WHATCOM COUNTY, WA

Cathy Halka, Council Clerk

Kaylee Galloway, Council Chair

Meeting Minutes prepared by Kristi Felbinger