

Whatcom County Council (Special)

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



Minutes - Draft Minutes

**VIRTUAL MEETING - VIEW ONLINE
BUDGET WORK SESSION**

Thursday, November 5, 2020

9:30 AM

Council Chambers

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 9:30 a.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

Discussion

1. [AB2020-484](#) Discussion of the County Executive’s recommended 2021-2022 Biennium Budget
The following departments briefed the Councilmembers on their respective budgets and answered questions:

WSU Extension

Michael Wallace, WSU Extension Interim Chair
Tyler Schroeder, Executive's Office
Approximate Video Timestamp: 00:02:16

Sheriff and Jail

Bill Elfo, Sheriff
Doug Chadwick, Undersheriff
Tyler Schroeder, Executive's Office
Brad Bennett, Administrative Services Department
Wendy Jones, Sheriff's Office
Approximate Video Timestamp: 00:08:36

Superior Court

Dave Reynolds, Superior Court
Approximate Video Timestamp: 00:16:56

Juvenile Court

Dave Reynolds, Superior Court
Approximate Video Timestamp: 01:27:41

Public Works

Jon Hutchings, Public Works Department Director
Approximate Video Timestamp: 01:42:35

Prosecuting Attorney

Eric J. Richey, Prosecuting Attorney

Vanessa Martin, Prosecuting Attorney's Office

Approximate Video Timestamp: 01:50:56

The meeting went into recess and reconvened at 1 p.m.

Parks and Recreation

Mike McFarlane, Parks and Recreation Department Director

Tyler Schroeder, Executive's Office

Approximate Video Timestamp: 02:08:17

Health

Kathleen Roy, Health Department

Erika Lautenbach, Health Department Director

Tyler Schroeder, Executive's Office

Brad Bennett, Administrative Services Department

Approximate Video Timestamp: 02:09:19

Administrative Services

Tyler Schroeder, Executive's Office

Karen Goens, Human Resources

Brad Bennett, Finance Manager

Perry Rice, Information Technology

Rob Ney, Facilities Projects and Operations Manager

Approximate Video Timestamp: 02:25:40

Executive

Satpal Sidhu, County Executive

Tyler Schroeder, Executive's Office

Approximate Video Timestamp: 02:44:53

Non-Departmental

Satpal Sidhu, County Executive

Approximate Video Timestamp: 04:03:37

Law Library

Tyler Schroeder, Executive's Office

Approximate Video Timestamp: 04:19:00

Miscellaneous

Tyler Schroeder, Executive's Office

Approximate Video Timestamp: 04:20:58

Discussion and Formulation of Budget Recommendations

Councilmembers decided to discuss AB2020-521 and moved to that item. They came back to AB2020-484 after that discussion.

This agenda item was DISCUSSED.

Discussion and Possible Action

1. [AB2020-521](#) Request authorization for the County Executive to enter into a contract amendment between G6 Hospitality Properties, LLC and Whatcom County to extend the lease term through February 28, 2021 with the option to extend an additional three months through May 30, 2021 at an increased of \$10,000 in the monthly base rent

Tyler Schroeder, Executive's Office, briefed the Councilmembers.

Buchanan moved that the contract be authorized. The motion was seconded by Donovan.

The following people also spoke and answered questions:

- Brad Bennett, Administrative Services Department
- Satpal Sidhu, County Executive

Councilmembers discussed and the speakers answered questions about the lease, how many rooms are available and how many the contract designates for housing solutions and other purposes, The cost of operating expenses and lease per month, how many rooms had to be remodeled because of contamination, whether beds are still in a storage unit, what upgrades the County made to the rooms, what would be the earliest someone could be in place to manage the facility, whether they are using the proposed 15 rooms for a winter shelter or a temporary housing solution, who might stay there, whether the County has a warming shelter at this time, how many rooms could have been rented out and how it was determined to only utilize 15 rooms, whether it would be more cost effective to use hotel vouchers at a different hotel for these families, who owns G6 Hospitality Properties, LLC, who pays for the utilities, whether there were other facilities that negotiated with the County, whether the lease extension can be billed to CARES Act money and how a potential future stimulus package might play into it, whether the State's requirement to have an isolation and quarantine facility is still in place, whether the County could get out of this contract, who negotiated the contract, and whether they should look at other options.

Byrd stated he would like to table the motion to authorize and to request the Executive's Office to try to get more rooms and bring back an updated agreement and a management plan to the Council on Tuesday.

Councilmembers discussed the suggestion and other options that should be considered.

Byrd moved to table the motion to authorize and to request that Executive's Office negotiate for full usage of the facility. The motion was seconded by Kershner.

Councilmembers and staff discussed the motion.

The motion to table carried by the following vote:

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

Nay: 1 - Donovan

Byrd answered a question about his request of the Executive's Office.

This agenda item was DISCUSSED AND MOTION(S) APPROVED.

1. [AB2020-484](#) Discussion of the County Executive's recommended 2021-2022 Biennium Budget
Councilmembers returned to this discussion.

Kershner requested to receive more information about why the decisions were made to not accept Additional Service Requests (ASRs) and the following people spoke:

- Tyler Schroeder, Executive's Office
- Doug Chadwick, Undersheriff

Dana Brown-Davis, Clerk of the Council, and Schroeder discussed with Councilmembers the budget approval process and how to proceed from here, and the budget for the Conservation District Firewise program.

Items Added by Revision

There were no agenda items added by revision.

Other Business

There was no other business.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 4:45 p.m.

ATTEST:

WHATCOM COUNTY COUNCIL
WHATCOM COUNTY, WA

Dana Brown-Davis, Council Clerk

Barry Buchanan, Council Chair

Kristi Felbinger, Minutes Transcription