

**Whatcom County
Council Finance and Administrative Services Committee**

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



Committee Minutes - Final

Tuesday, February 20, 2024

10:55 AM

Hybrid Meeting

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

COUNCILMEMBERS

Tyler Byrd
Todd Donovan
Kaylee Galloway

CLERK OF THE COUNCIL

Dana Brown-Davis, C.M.C.

Call To Order

Committee Chair Todd Donovan called the meeting to order at 10:55 a.m. in a hybrid meeting.

Roll Call

Present: 3 - Tyler Byrd, Kaylee Galloway, and Todd Donovan

Also Present: Barry Buchanan, Jon Scanlon, and Mark Stremler

Announcements

Council "Consent Agenda" Items

Byrd moved to recommend approval of Consent Agenda items one through nine.

Consent Agenda #9 (AB2024-148)

Bennett Knox, Parks and Recreation Department Director, answered when the conservation easement for the Canyon Lake Community Forest will be open for the public to use, and whether Western Washington University is contributing funding for this. He stated it should be open around late summer and the university is not contributing funding.

Councilmembers voted on the Consent items (see votes on individual items below).

1. [AB2024-123](#) Request authorization for the County Executive to enter into an interlocal cooperative agreement between Whatcom County and U.S. Department of Agriculture Forest Service for enhancement of state and local law enforcement on National Forest Service lands, in the amount of \$22,704.00

Byrd moved that the Interlocal be RECOMMENDED FOR AUTHORIZATION BY CONSENT. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 3 - Byrd, Galloway, and Donovan

Nay: 0

2. [AB2024-129](#) Resolution ordering the cancellation of an accounts receivable invoice from the Sheriff's Office

Byrd moved that the Resolution be RECOMMENDED FOR APPROVAL. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 3 - Byrd, Galloway, and Donovan

Nay: 0

3. [AB2024-130](#) Request authorization for the County Executive to enter into an interlocal agreement amendment between Whatcom County and North Sound Behavioral Health Administrative Services Organization to acknowledge and fund Whatcom County's participation in the North Sound Integrated Care Network, in the amount of \$523,788.10 for a total amended contract amount of \$1,496,767.30

Byrd moved that the Interlocal be RECOMMENDED FOR AUTHORIZATION BY CONSENT. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 3 - Byrd, Galloway, and Donovan

Nay: 0

4. [AB2024-135](#) Request authorization for the County Executive to enter into a grant agreement between Whatcom County and Washington State Department of Ecology for the 2023-2025 Biennial Stormwater Capacity Grant, in the amount of \$130,000

Byrd moved that the Interlocal be RECOMMENDED FOR AUTHORIZATION BY CONSENT. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 3 - Byrd, Galloway, and Donovan

Nay: 0

5. [AB2024-136](#) Request authorization for the County Executive to enter into a contract between Whatcom County and Washington State Military Department and the U.S. Department of Homeland Security to assist in preparing for all hazards through sustainment and enhancement of current programs, in the amount of \$74,670.00

Byrd moved that the Interlocal be RECOMMENDED FOR AUTHORIZATION BY CONSENT. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 3 - Byrd, Galloway, and Donovan

Nay: 0

6. [AB2024-137](#) Request authorization for the County Executive to enter into a contract amendment between Whatcom County and the Washington State Department of Commerce to change the scope of work and reduce the funding by \$29,391.00 for a total amended contract amount of \$1,850,608.00

Byrd moved that the Interlocal be RECOMMENDED FOR AUTHORIZATION BY CONSENT. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 3 - Byrd, Galloway, and Donovan

Nay: 0

7. [AB2024-141](#) Request authorization for the County Executive to enter into a contract agreement between Whatcom County and ImageTrend, Inc. to increase the contract in the amount of \$14,460.00 for a total amended contract amount of \$201,876.32

Byrd moved that the Contract be RECOMMENDED FOR AUTHORIZATION BY CONSENT. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 3 - Byrd, Galloway, and Donovan

Nay: 0

8. [AB2024-143](#) Request authorization for the County Executive to enter into an interlocal amendment between Whatcom County and Washington State Military Department for Operation Stonegarden FY20, in the amount of \$234,343.94 for a total amended amount of \$639,943.94

Byrd moved that the Interlocal be RECOMMENDED FOR AUTHORIZATION BY CONSENT. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 3 - Byrd, Galloway, and Donovan

Nay: 0

9. [AB2024-148](#) Request authorization for the County Executive to enter into an easement agreement with Western Washington University and Sierra Pacific Land & Timber Company to allow public access to Canyon Lake Community Forest, in the amount of \$100,000

Byrd moved that the Agreement be RECOMMENDED FOR AUTHORIZATION BY CONSENT. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 3 - Byrd, Galloway, and Donovan

Nay: 0

Committee Discussion and Recommendation to Council

1. [AB2024-110](#) Ordinance establishing a project based budget for Eagleridge Stormwater Improvements Project Fund SWP #SWLW24-01
Kraig Olason, Public Works Department, briefed the Councilmembers.

Galloway moved that the Ordinance be RECOMMENDED FOR ADOPTION. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 3 - Byrd, Galloway, and Donovan

Nay: 0

2. [AB2024-111](#) Resolution amending the 2024 Flood Control Zone District and Subzones Budget, request no. 1, in the amount of \$14,400 (Council acting as the Whatcom County Flood Control Zone District Board of Supervisors)

Galloway moved that the Resolution (FCZDBS) be RECOMMENDED FOR APPROVAL. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 3 - Byrd, Galloway, and Donovan

Nay: 0

3. [AB2024-114](#) Ordinance establishing a 23-Hour Crisis Relief Center Fund and establishing an initial project based budget for the 23-Hour Crisis Relief Center Project

Kayla Schott-Bresler, Executive's Office, briefed the Councilmembers on funding sources and timeline for the project. She answered questions about how much funding has been approved by the Legislature, where the facility will be built, and why it is only a 23-hour center as opposed to 24. She stated it is so it can be classified as an outpatient facility rather than an inpatient facility which triggers a different set of licensing requirements and restrictions.

Perry Mowery, Health and Community Services, answered whether they have to release someone at 23 hours and 59 minutes to stay within the guidelines. He stated it does away with the maximum 16-bed requirement in terms of reimbursement for Medicaid, and the idea is that if someone has more extensive needs, the staff can work with them during the time they are in the facility to move them to a higher level of care. He answered if people showing up to the Anne Deacon Center for Hope and not able to get services, can go to the 23-hour Crisis Relief Center, and stated the staffing and model of the program is to facilitate all admissions.

Galloway moved that the Ordinance be RECOMMENDED FOR ADOPTION. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 3 - Byrd, Galloway, and Donovan

Nay: 0

4. [AB2024-116](#) Ordinance amending the 2024 Whatcom County Budget, request no. 4, in the amount of \$3,247,623

Byrd moved that the Ordinance be RECOMMENDED FOR ADOPTION. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 3 - Byrd, Galloway, and Donovan

Nay: 0

5. [AB2024-118](#) Resolution to declare Whatcom County owned structure located in Hovander Park as worthless

Christ Thomsen, Parks and Recreation Department, reviewed the answers (on file as “Additional Information for 2.20.2024”) to the questions asked at the last meeting, including the amount they are charging for rent, renovation costs, whether the property has flooded in recent years, how long the tenant has lived there, and whether Whatcom County aids in renters' relocation. He answered questions about the list of future capital maintenance needs.

Byrd stated he does not understand why they want to get rid of this building.

Thomsen stated anytime they do a capital improvement on their rental facilities it is competing for the same dollars for improvement on park amenities.

Bennett Knox, Parks and Recreation Department Director, stated they would like to reduce their dependence on these types of facilities in lieu of performing other functions that are more critical to parks management activities. He answered whether they looked at Public Works’ new flood maps and stated part of the process for the Master Plan for Hovander Park is reevaluating those maps.

Byrd stated if they could see what the park plan is and how this property is going to get used, that might help. He suggested they hire a property management company to manage rental properties.

Donovan asked whether, if they keep the house standing, they are looking at \$180,000 to \$530,000 of capital expenses that would come out of Parks’ funds, and Thomsen stated that is accurate.

Councilmembers discussed making sure they are working with the tenant and not making them homeless, delaying demolition until that is taken care of, whether the Parks Department should act as landlords at all, and whether to recommend this for approval.

Byrd moved to hold this until we see a master plan for the parks and evaluate whether or not it makes sense to replace this property in the future with whatever is incorporated in the master plan.

Scanlon asked that Parks ask Public Works if there are updated flood maps for this property.

Donovan asked what the time frame is for holding the item and Byrd stated it is in relation to getting back the master plan. He would like to know what the plan looks like for this parcel, how the parcel is going to get incorporated if they tear down the structure, and what the total cost associated with all of it will be.

Knox stated they are planning on starting the master plan this year so it would probably be next year before they would have that finalized.

Councilmembers discussed how long they should hold this, because they do not want to displace a tenant but they also do not want to keep them in an uninhabitable dwelling.

Satpal Sidhu, County Executive, spoke about the duty of landlord and not holding the County to a different standard than other landlords.

The motion failed by the following vote:

Aye: 1 - Byrd

Nay: 1 - Donovan

Abstain: 1 - Galloway

Donovan stated he will report it as having no recommendation coming from the committee.

This agenda item was FORWARDED TO COUNCIL WITHOUT A RECOMMENDATION.

6. [AB2024-122](#) Ordinance establishing Whatcom County Code Chapter 3.39 Public Health, Safety, and Justice Facilities and Services Sales and Use Tax

Galloway moved that the SUBSTITUTE Ordinance be RECOMMENDED FOR ADOPTION.

Tyler Schroeder, Director of Administrative Services, stated it is the substitute ordinance that Council will be making a decision on today and he answered questions about the language added to the code in section 3.39.010 regarding the motor vehicle tax. He stated this is just clarifying what the RCW indicates and what the voters passed.

Galloway's motion that the SUBSTITUTE Ordinance be RECOMMENDED FOR ADOPTION carried by the following vote:

Aye: 3 - Byrd, Galloway, and Donovan

Nay: 0

7. [AB2024-142](#) County Executive requests approval of the Economic Development Investment (EDI) Board's recommendation for funding to support the City of Blaine's Wellfield Reservoir Replacement Project and the City of Bellingham's Old Town Urban Village Infrastructure Improvement Project

Tyler Schroeder, Director of Administrative Services, stated there are two applications in the Economic Development Investment (EDI) Board recommendations. They are the Blaine Wellfield Reservoir Replacement and Old Town Urban Village Infrastructure Improvement Project for the City of Bellingham. Blaine is not going to give a presentation, but that project was passed unanimously by the EDI Board.

Byrd moved that the SUBSTITUTE REQUEST be RECOMMENDED FOR APPROVAL.

The following people read from a presentation (on file as "Updated Presentation"), spoke about the Bellingham project, and answered questions:

- Tara Sundin, City of Bellingham
- Pete Dawson, Dawson Construction
- Curt O'Connor, Old Town Representative

Galloway spoke about looking at policy changes in local building and land use codes and how the Council can help with that. She would also like to think about how we are using this project as an opportunity to explore housing policy that might further drive development and density into the city.

Councilmembers discussed the motion and voiced their support.

Byrd's motion that the SUBSTITUTE REQUEST be RECOMMENDED FOR APPROVAL carried by the following vote:

Aye: 3 - Byrd, Galloway, and Donovan

Nay: 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 11:56 a.m.

ATTEST:

WHATCOM COUNTY COUNCIL
WHATCOM COUNTY, WA

Todd Donovan-via email 3/22/2024

Dana Brown-Davis, Council Clerk

Todd Donovan, Committee Chair

Kristi Felbinger, Minutes Transcription

SIGNED COPY ON FILE