

Whatcom County Council Committee of the Whole

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



Committee Minutes - Draft Minutes

Tuesday, September 26, 2023

3:25 PM

Hybrid Meeting

**HYBRID MEETING - ADJOURNS BY 4:30 P.M., MAY BEGIN EARLY
(PARTICIPATE IN-PERSON, SEE REMOTE JOIN INSTRUCTIONS AT
www.whatcomcounty.us/joinvirtualcouncil, OR CALL 360.778.5010)**

COUNCILMEMBERS

Barry Buchanan
Tyler Byrd
Todd Donovan
Ben Elenbaas
Carol Frazey
Kaylee Galloway
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 3:30 p.m. in a hybrid meeting.

Roll Call

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

Announcements

Committee Discussion

1. [AB2023-582](#) Discussion of American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding allocation

Kayla Schott-Bresler, Strategic Initiatives Special Programs Manager, briefed the Councilmembers on the most up to date spending plan and the Executive's recommendations for additional budget proposals in the staff memo (on file).

Buchanan stated he and Galloway are bringing forward a request for funds for Pacific Northwest Plateful.

Steve Swan, Pacific Northwest Plateful, presented on their organization.

Galloway moved to fund Pacific Northwest Plateful for \$115,000 out of American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds in the Food Security section. The motion was seconded by Buchanan.

Councilmembers discussed the motion with Bresler and Tyler Schroeder, Executive's Office. They discussed whether they should hear other requests first before voting on this, whether this would be putting the request on the list for future consideration or to actually approving to fund it, whether there is enough to fund multiple requests, the fact that the spending chart does not acknowledge any lapse from existing allocations, and whether this request should be considered with the biennium adjustment for ongoing funding and what effect that would have.

Schroeder stated if the Council moves forward with one-time ARPA funding, the Administration could work with the food banks to understand how to get a contract developed and a framework for potentially contracting into the future. Council could fund this request through ARPA for next year and then talk about structurally supporting the food bank and non-profits like this moving forward in the mid-biennium or the next biennium.

They discussed that the food banks are buying directly from farmers which is a win-win, and that they might look at the Community Development Block Grants to see if there is opportunity for funding the connection between the agriculture community and the food banks.

Councilmembers discussed the process for the additional community requests listed in the memo and the motion.

Galloway's motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 7 - Buchanan, Byrd, Donovan, Elenbaas, Frazey, Galloway, and Kershner

Nay: 0

Schott-Bresler answered when the Request for Proposal (RFP) would be going out for some sort of capital request for shelters and what the plan is for capital versus operating funding for Justice Project-related things.

Kershner stated there is not any ARPA funding that is dedicated to our senior population.

Kershner moved to add \$350,000 for the Christian Health Care Center for an emergency Information Technology and communication infrastructure update to the funding list. The motion was seconded by Elenbaas.

Councilmembers discussed the motion, whether details of the request are attached to the memo, how many people the requested funds would help, and whether they should hold the motion so that the organization can come to present to the Council.

Galloway moved to hold this motion until the organization is able to come to present. The motion was seconded by Donovan.

Councilmembers discussed the motion and in which committee a presentation should be scheduled. Buchanan suggested they keep the presentation in the Committee of the Whole.

Galloway's motion to hold carried by the following vote:

Aye: 6 - Byrd, Donovan, Frazey, Galloway, Kershner, and Buchanan

Nay: 1 - Elenbaas

Approximate Timestamp: 30:22

Councilmembers, Schott-Bresler, Schroeder, and Satpal Sidhu, County Executive, discussed a letter of request about residential electrification, all

of the requests under the Climate Action header (in the memo), whether ARPA funding will be used toward the Lummi Island Ferry and why it is not mentioned in the memo, and not losing ARPA funds if they go into the General Fund.

Elenbaas moved to include Mt. Baker School District's request for \$150,000 in ARPA funding. The motion was seconded by Kershner.

Councilmembers discussed the motion, looking again at the Council's letter to the Department of Natural Resources regarding management of State public lands and the pause of the Brokedown Palace sale, whether the funding to the school district can go toward something specific, whether it could be a loan, and not setting a precedence for supporting every beneficiary in every timber sale the State decides to pause.

Galloway moved to hold this until they can have a representative of Mt. Baker School District come to Council and present on their proposal. The motion was seconded by Frazey.

Councilmembers discussed the motion to hold Elenbaas' motion.

Galloway's motion to hold carried by the following vote:

Aye: 4 - Donovan, Frazey, Galloway, and Buchanan

Nay: 3 - Elenbaas, Kershner, and Byrd

Elenbaas moved to fund the East Whatcom Regional Center for \$150,000 to upgrade the kitchen to commercial standards. The motion was seconded by Kershner.

Schott-Bresler answered a question about who submitted this request, and she stated that it is one of the Administration's recommendations for ARPA funding.

The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 7 - Elenbaas, Frazey, Galloway, Kershner, Buchanan, Byrd, and Donovan

Nay: 0

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

Motion approved to fund Pacific Northwest Plateful for \$115,000 out of American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds in the Food Security section.

Motion approved to hold the motion to add \$350,000 for Christian Health Care Center for an emergency Information Technology and communication situation to the funding list.

Motion approved to hold the motion to include Mt. Baker School District's request for \$150,000 in ARPA funding until the Mt. Baker School District can come to present on their proposal.

Motion approved to fund the East Whatcom Regional Center for \$150,000 to upgrade the kitchen to commercial standards.

2. [AB2023-479](#) Discussion of an ordinance to amend WCC 2.145, Lummi Island Ferry Advisory Committee

Donovan stated the draft ordinance was amended as discussed in the last meeting (September 12, 2023). They have a placeholder in the last (“Be it finally ordained”) statement of the ordinance for how long a facilitator might work with the group so they need to figure that out.

Councilmembers discussed the time period for the facilitator.

Donovan moved to amend to have a date certain of six months in the Ordinance where it says,

" BE IT FINALLY ORDAINED by the Whatcom County Council that the County Executive and Public Works Department will coordinate to hire or contract for a facilitator for the Lummi Island Ferry Advisory Committee until _____ "

Donovan amended his motion to amend the last statement in the ordinance so that it reads:

" BE IT FINALLY ORDAINED by the Whatcom County Council that the County Executive and Public Works Department will coordinate to hire or contract for a facilitator for ~~the Lummi Island Ferry Advisory Committee until _____~~ six months.

The motion was seconded by Elenbaas.

Councilmembers and Satpal Sidhu, County Executive, discussed the motion

and whether there should be a sunset date for the facilitator.

Donovan withdrew his motion and **moved** to strike Lummi Island Ferry Advisory in the “Be it Finally Ordained” statement so that it reads: “... hire or contract for a facilitator for the committee.”

The motion was seconded by Kershner.

Councilmembers discussed that the group may then have a facilitator forever. Kershner suggested they just strike the whole last statement and let the Administration come to the Council with a proposal for a facilitator.

Satpal Sidhu, County Executive, stated the Administration will make a note and will make a proviso for a facilitator in the mid-biennium budget. Then it would not be in the ordinance.

Donovan withdrew his motion.

Kershner moved to strike the last “Be it Finally Ordained” clause. The motion was seconded by Byrd.

The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 7 - Frazey, Galloway, Kershner, Buchanan., Byrd, Donovan, and Elenbaas

Nay: 0

Kershner moved to amend Whatcom County Code 2.145.030 (D) in Exhibit A to change the first instance of the word “will” to “may” so that it reads:

D. The county council and the county executive ~~will~~may consider the committee’s recommendations and advice when making ferry-related decisions. The county council and/or county executive will make the final decisions on all ferry-related matters.

The motion was seconded by Frazey.

The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 7 - Galloway, Kershner, Buchanan, Byrd, Donovan, Elenbaas, and Frazey

Nay: 0

Clerk’s note: Time for the meeting ran out so the remaining agenda items

were not discussed.

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

Motion approved to strike the last Be it Finally Ordained clause in the ordinance.

Motion approved to change the first instance of the word “will” to “may” in Whatcom County Code 2.145.030 (D) so that it reads:

“The county council and the county executive MAY consider the committee’s recommendations and advice when making ferry-related decisions.”

- 3. [AB2023-583](#) Discussion of a resolution supporting the use of Economic Development Investment (EDI) funds for affordable housing

This agenda item was NOT ACTED UPON.

- 4. [AB2023-569](#) Discussion of councilmember proposed mid-biennium modifications to the 2023-2024 Whatcom County Budget (modifications approved by council will be submitted to the Administration per budget instructions)

This agenda item was NOT ACTED UPON.

Committee Discussion and Recommendation to Council

- 1. [AB2023-636](#) Discussion and approval of a letter to Senator Cantwell, Senator Murray, and Rep. Larson regarding the FEMA Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP)

This agenda item was NOT ACTED UPON.

Items Added by Revision

There were no agenda items added by revision.

Other Business

There was no other business.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 4:27 p.m.

ATTEST:

WHATCOM COUNTY COUNCIL
WHATCOM COUNTY, WA

Dana Brown-Davis, Council Clerk

Barry Buchanan, Council Chair

Kristi Felbinger, Minutes Transcription