



Whatcom County

COUNTY COURTHOUSE
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Agenda Bill Master Report

File Number: AB2025-120

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Assigned to:	Council Committee of the Whole			Final Action:	02/25/2025
Agenda Date:	02/25/2025			Enactment #:	ORD 2025-011
Related Files:					

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TITLE FOR AGENDA ITEM:

Ordinance amending Whatcom County Code 2.123, Forestry Advisory Committee, to expand the committee's purpose and adjust member terms

SUMMARY STATEMENT OR LEGAL NOTICE LANGUAGE:

None

HISTORY OF LEGISLATIVE FILE

Date:	Acting Body:	Action:	Sent To:
02/11/2025	Council	INTRODUCED Aye: 7 Buchanan, Byrd, Donovan, Elenbaas, Galloway, Scanlon, and Stremler Nay: 0	Council Committee of the Whole
02/25/2025	Council Committee of the Whole	RECOMMENDED FOR ADOPTION Aye: 4 Buchanan, Donovan, Galloway, and Scanlon Nay: 3 Byrd, Elenbaas, and Stremler	
02/25/2025	Council	ADOPTED Aye: 4 Buchanan, Donovan, Galloway, and Scanlon Nay: 3 Byrd, Elenbaas, and Stremler	

Attachments: Proposed Ordinance, Memo - FAC, Letter - WEC, Notice of Action Proposed on 2.11.2025

ORDINANCE NO. 2025- 011

**ORDINANCE AMENDING WHATCOM COUNTY CODE CHAPTER 2.123
FORESTRY ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

WHEREAS, The Forestry Advisory Committee was established by Ordinance 2013-014 on March 26, 2013 to review and provide recommendations to the council on issues that affect the forestry industry; and

WHEREAS, the Forest Resilience Task Force was established by Ordinance 2023-058 to develop a comprehensive Forest Resilience Plan with science- and evidence-based strategies and actions towards sustaining a thriving timber economy, restoring healthy forest ecosystems for fish and wildlife, addressing stream high and low flow issues, enhancing carbon sequestration and storage, promoting robust recreation opportunities, improving watershed health, improving wildfire, pest, and disease resistance, and increasing the overall resilience of Whatcom County's forests to climate impacts; and

WHEREAS, the Forest Resilience Task Force's work will culminate in the Forest Resilience Plan, and the committee will sunset on December 31, 2025; and

WHEREAS, there is a need for a council-appointed committee to advise the county on the ongoing work of managing forestland for multiple uses and outcomes as determined by the Forest Resilience Plan; and

WHEREAS, there is a complementary need for a council-appointed committee to advise the county council on the implementation of the Forest Management Plans for Lake Whatcom Park, Lookout Mountain, and Stewart Mountain Community Forest; and

WHEREAS, the Forestry Advisory Committee is best positioned to provide ongoing guidance to county leaders on a wider scope of issues related to forests and forestry and to track the progress of the county's related plans and priorities; and

WHEREAS, the members of the Forestry Advisory Committee currently include: eight members representing forest landowners and industry, including small forest landowners, commercial forest landowners, harvesters, forest product manufacturers; two citizens with forestry experience; and one representative of the Washington State Department of Natural Resources; and

WHEREAS, there is value in having diverse membership on the Forestry Advisory Committee in order to provide input to the county on a wide range of forest and forestry related issues including, but not limited to, forestry industry and economy, forest management, forest ecology, conservation, resilience, watershed health, and recreation; and

WHEREAS, the county will receive added value in providing increased communications between the council and the Forestry Advisory Committee by adding a non-

voting councilmember seat to the committee for 1-year term(s) as appointed by the council; and

WHEREAS, a majority of the current Forestry Advisory Committee members were appointed over the course of four months in late 2022, queuing up the committee for significant turnover in 2026; and

WHEREAS, it is beneficial to provide continuity to the Forestry Advisory Committee by recreating staggered terms that allow both experienced and new members to work together.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED by the Whatcom County Council that Whatcom County Code 2.123 is hereby amended as shown in Exhibit A of this ordinance; and

BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED by the Whatcom County Council that Forestry Advisory Committee terms shall be adjusted as follows:


Position	Term Ends (January 31st)
Small Forest Landowner #1	2026
Small Forest Landowner #2	2028
Commercial Forest Landowner #1	2027
Commercial Forest Landowner #2	2029
Harvester or silviculturist #1	2026
Harvester or silviculturist #2	2028
Community member with forestry, forest ecology, or forest management experience #1	2026
Community member with forestry, forest ecology, or forest management experience #2	2029
Forest Product Manufacturer #1	2027
Forest Product Manufacturer #2	2028

BE IT FINALLY ORDAINED by the Whatcom County Council that, in order to transition to the adjusted position terms schedule above, selected Forestry Advisory Committee incumbent members shall serve partial terms at the end of their current term as follows:

Position	Member	Original Term End (Jan. 31 st)	Partial term added	NEW Term starts (Feb. 1)
Small Forest Landowner #1	David New	2026	-	2026
Small Forest Landowner #2	Holly Koon	2026 (partial)	2/1/2026-1/31/28	2028
Commercial Forest Landowner #1	John Gold	2026	2/1/2026-1/31/27	2027
Commercial Forest Landowner #2	David Janicki	2026	2/1/2026-1/31/29	2029
Harvester or Silviculturist #1	Vacant (Q. Dills)	2026	-	2026
Harvester or Silviculturist #2	Matt McGee	2026	2/1/2026-1/31/28	2028
Community member with forestry, forest ecology, or forest management experience #1	Jed Dawson	2026	-	2026
Community member with forestry, forest ecology, or forest management experience #2	Tracy Petroske	2026 (partial)	2/1/2026-1/31/29	2029
Forest Product Manufacturer #1	Aubrey Stargell	2026	2/1/2026-1/31/27	2027
Forest Product Manufacturer #2	Susan David	2026	2/1/2026-1/31/28	2028

ADOPTED this 25th day of February 2025

ATTEST


Cathy Halka, Clerk of the Council

WHATCOM COUNTY COUNCIL
WHATCOM COUNTY, WASHINGTON


Kaylee Galloway, Council Chair

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

George Roche (by email 1.29.25/ksmith)
Civil Deputy Prosecutor

WHATCOM COUNTY EXECUTIVE
WHATCOM COUNTY, WASHINGTON


Satpal Sidhu, Executive

Approved () Denied

Date Signed: 2.26.25

EXHIBIT A

Chapter 2.123 FOREST ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Sections:

- 2.123.010 Established.
- 2.123.020 Purpose.
- 2.123.030 Function.
- 2.123.040 Membership – Term of office.
- 2.123.050 Organization – Meetings.
- 2.123.060 Committee staffing.

2.123.010 Established.

There is hereby established the Whatcom County forest advisory committee.

2.123.020 Purpose.

The forest advisory committee provides review and recommendations to the county council on issues that affect forest lands within Whatcom County, including those related to the timber economy, forest ecosystems, climate impacts, and recreation. The forest advisory committee also provides a forum for all sectors of the forest community to contribute to discussions on the future of forest lands in Whatcom County.

2.123.030 Function.

The forest advisory committee reports directly to the county council and collaborates with other appropriate advisory groups as necessary to carry out the following functions:

- A. Review and provide recommendations on zoning issues, comprehensive plans, subarea plans, regulation and annexation issues, forest management plans, the Climate Action Plan, the Comprehensive Parks, Recreation and Open Space plan, and other plans, policies, and proposals which directly affect forest lands, forest resilience, or forestry activities in Whatcom County.
- B. Establish, promote, and implement a comprehensive forestry protection and conservation program.
- C. Review, track, and provide expertise on the county's efforts related to forestry, forest management, and forest resilience, including on county-owned forest lands.
- D. Analyze and develop recommendations that will assist the county in addressing issues which affect forestry at the city, county, regional, state, and federal levels.
- E. Analyze and provide recommendations on proposed timber harvest and land management plans and projects occurring on state trust lands, federal forest lands, and other public lands within Whatcom County as requested by the county council.

2.123.040 Membership – Term of office.

A. The committee shall consist of 16 voting members and 1 nonvoting member as follows: two small forest landowners with forest land in Whatcom County, two commercial forest landowners or their representatives, two harvesters or silviculturists, two community members with forestry, forest ecology, or forest management experience, two forest product manufacturers (including a representative from at least one sawmill that receives wood from Whatcom County), and ex-officio representatives designated by each of the

following: the Department of Natural Resources, U.S. Forest Service, Lummi Nation, Nooksack Indian Tribe, Whatcom Conservation District, and Whatcom Land Trust; and one nonvoting member of the county council.

B. In appointing committee members, council should consider previous work and/or educational experience in relevant subjects including, but not limited to: forestry, forest management, forest engineering, forest economics, forest products, forest health, forest ecology, silviculture, reforestation, afforestation, conservation, environmental studies, science, and policy, natural resources, and/or climate science.

C. Terms will be four years and shall run with the position rather than the individual member.

D. Except for the ex-officio representatives, members shall not serve more than two consecutive full terms unless there is at least a one-year separation between terms.

E. Except for the ex-officio representatives, committee members shall be appointed by the county council. The council shall appoint members to specific positions. In the event of a vacancy before the end of the designated term, the council shall appoint an interim member to fill the remainder of the term for that position.

F. Whatcom County shall be the primary residence for all appointed members of the committee. The county council shall have the right to waive the residency requirement (WCC 2.03.090) for representatives of the commercial forest landowner and manufacturer positions on the committee. Whatcom County residency is a preference, but not a requirement, for ex-officio representatives as designated by their respective agencies or organizations.

2.123.050 Organization – Meetings.

Meetings of the committee shall be open and accessible to the public and shall be subject to the Open Public Meetings Act. The committee shall determine its own meeting schedule but shall meet at least twice per year. At every meeting, the committee will schedule an open session to take public comment on forestry issues. Written records of meetings, resolutions, findings, and recommendations shall be kept and such records shall be public. The committee shall adopt its own rules and procedures for the conduct of business. The committee shall elect a chairperson from among its members who shall preside at its meetings. The committee shall comply with Whatcom County Charter Section 4.20, Qualifications, and with Chapter 2.03 WCC, Boards and Commissions.

2.123.060 Committee staffing.

Whatcom County planning and development services department shall provide staffing for the committee. Whatcom County public works and parks and recreation departments shall be available upon request for topics relevant to their departments. The committee is authorized to request information from administrative departments through the county executive's office.