

Whatcom County Council

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



Action Summary

Tuesday, March 24, 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); AGENDA REVISION 3.20.2026

COUNCILMEMBERS

Elizabeth Boyle
Barry Buchanan
Ben Elenbaas
Kaylee Galloway
Jessica Rienstra
Jon Scanlon
Mark Stremler

CLERK OF THE COUNCIL

Cathy Halka, AICP, CMC

COUNTY COUNCIL

CALL TO ORDER

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

MINUTES CONSENT

1. [MIN2026-023](#) Special Committee of the Whole for March 3, 2026

APPROVED BY CONSENT

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

Nay: 0

2. [MIN2026-024](#) Committee of the Whole Executive Session for March 10, 2026

APPROVED BY CONSENT

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

Nay: 0

3. [MIN2026-025](#) Regular County Council for March 10, 2026

APPROVED BY CONSENT

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

Nay: 0

4. [MIN2026-026](#) Committee of the Whole for March 10, 2026

APPROVED BY CONSENT

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

Nay: 0

PUBLIC HEARINGS

1. [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

HEARD PUBLIC TESTIMONY AND HELD IN COUNCIL**Aye:** 6 - Boyle, Buchanan, Elenbaas, Rienstra, Scanlon, and Stremler**Nay:** 1 - Galloway

Held in Council and public hearing held open until April 7th or 14th.

OPEN SESSION**CONSENT AGENDA****(From Council Finance and Administrative Services Committee)**

1. [AB2026-214](#) Request authorization for the County Executive to enter into an amended interlocal between Whatcom County and Washington State Department of Transportation to increase the grant in the amount of \$34,250

AUTHORIZED BY CONSENT**Aye:** 7 - Boyle, Buchanan, Elenbaas, Galloway, Rienstra, Scanlon, and Stremler**Nay:** 0

2. [AB2026-220](#) Request authorization for the County Executive to enter into an interlocal agreement between Whatcom County and Puget Sound Partnership to provide grant funding for the development of a source control business inspection program that complies with the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES), in the amount of \$100,817

THIS ITEM WAS CONSIDERED SEPARATELY BELOW

3. [AB2026-222](#) Request authorization for the County Executive to enter into an interlocal agreement between Whatcom County and the City of Bellingham for the County to provide administrative oversight to the City concerning Domestic Violence Perpetrator Opportunity for Treatment Services (DVPOTS) for a total amount of \$150,000

AUTHORIZED BY CONSENT**Aye:** 7 - Boyle, Buchanan, Elenbaas, Galloway, Rienstra, Scanlon, and Stremler**Nay:** 0

4. [AB2026-225](#) Request authorization for the County Executive to enter into a contract amendment between Whatcom County and the Washington State Military Department to relocate an All Hazards Alert Broadcast siren in the amount of \$45,000 for a total amended contract amount of \$45,000

AUTHORIZED BY CONSENT**Aye:** 7 - Boyle, Buchanan, Elenbaas, Galloway, Rienstra, Scanlon, and Stremler

Nay: 0

5. [AB2026-226](#) Request authorization for the County Executive to enter into a contract amendment between Whatcom County and Opportunity Council to purchase and distribute basic needs items to low-income families with children ages 0-5 in the amount of \$17,250 for a total amended contract amount of \$111,061

AUTHORIZED BY CONSENT

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

Nay: 0

6. [AB2026-227](#) Request authorization for the County Executive to enter into a contract amendment between Whatcom County and Whatcom Center for Early Learning to expand mental health support services to low-income children in the amount of \$289,854 for a total amended contract amount of \$688,563

AUTHORIZED BY CONSENT

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

Nay: 0

7. [AB2026-228](#) Request authorization for the County Executive to enter into a contract amendment between Whatcom County and Bellingham Food Bank to support operations for procuring/purchasing, warehousing and distributing food and other essentials to low and very low income families in the amount of \$500,000 for a total amended contract amount of \$1,945,000

AUTHORIZED BY CONSENT

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

Nay: 0

8. [AB2026-229](#) Request authorization for the County Executive to enter into a contract amendment between Whatcom County and Opportunity Council to expand services to eligible families through a Case Manager Position in the Single Entry Access to Services Program in the amount of \$46,000 for a total amended contract amount of \$86,000

AUTHORIZED BY CONSENT

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

Nay: 0

9. [AB2026-230](#) Request authorization for the County Executive to enter into an interlocal agreement between Whatcom County and the Washington State Department of Transportation to execute a Federal Aid Project Prospectus for the design phase of the Birch Bay-Lynden Road and Kickerville Road Intersection Improvements project in the amount of \$260,000

AUTHORIZED BY CONSENT

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

Nay: 0

- 10. [AB2026-236](#) Request authorization for the County Executive to enter into a contract amendment between Whatcom County and Lutheran Community Services Northwest to lease a facility intended for use as a severe weather shelter in the amount of \$32,000 for a total amended contract amount of \$98,455

AUTHORIZED BY CONSENT

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

Nay: 0

- 11. [AB2026-241](#) Request authorization for the County Executive to enter into an interlocal agreement between Whatcom County and Skagit County to Skagit County’s servers, in the amount of \$5,000

AUTHORIZED BY CONSENT

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

Nay: 0

CONSENT AGENDA CONSIDERED SEPARATELY

- 2. [AB2026-220](#) Request authorization for the County Executive to enter into an interlocal agreement between Whatcom County and Puget Sound Partnership to provide grant funding for the development of a source control business inspection program that complies with the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES), in the amount of \$100,817

AUTHORIZED

Aye: 5 - Boyle, Buchanan, Galloway, Rienstra, and Scanlon

Nay: 2 - Elenbaas, and Stremler

OTHER ITEMS

(From Council Finance and Administrative Services Committee)

- 1. [AB2026-114](#) Ordinance establishing the project budget for the Strawberry Point/Lake Whatcom Boulevard stormwater improvements, request no. 1

ADOPTED

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

Nay: 0

Enactment No: ORD 2026-011

2. [AB2026-134](#) Ordinance amending the project budget for the Courthouse Building Envelope Fund, request no. 7
- ADOPTED**
- Aye:** 7 - Boyle, Buchanan, Elenbaas, Galloway, Rienstra, Scanlon, and Stremler
- Nay:** 0
- Enactment No: ORD 2026-012
3. [AB2026-143](#) Ordinance establishing the Ferndale Senior Activity Center Improvements Fund and establishing an initial budget for the Ferndale Senior Activity Center Improvements Fund
- ADOPTED**
- Aye:** 7 - Boyle, Buchanan, Elenbaas, Galloway, Rienstra, Scanlon, and Stremler
- Nay:** 0
- Enactment No: ORD 2026-013
4. [AB2026-181](#) Ordinance amending the project budget for the Eagleridge Stormwater Improvements Project Fund, request no. 1
- ADOPTED**
- Aye:** 7 - Boyle, Buchanan, Elenbaas, Galloway, Rienstra, Scanlon, and Stremler
- Nay:** 0
- Enactment No: ORD 2026-014
5. [AB2026-183](#) Ordinance amending the project based budget for the Swift Creek Capital Projects Fund, request no. 3
- SUBSTITUTE ADOPTED**
- Aye:** 7 - Boyle, Buchanan, Elenbaas, Galloway, Rienstra, Scanlon, and Stremler
- Nay:** 0
- Enactment No: ORD 2026-015
6. [AB2026-200](#) Ordinance closing the Bellingham Senior Center HVAC Replacement Fund
- ADOPTED**
- Aye:** 7 - Boyle, Buchanan, Elenbaas, Galloway, Rienstra, Scanlon, and Stremler
- Nay:** 0
- Enactment No: ORD 2026-016
7. [AB2026-204](#) Ordinance amending the 2026 Whatcom County Budget, request no. 5, in the amount of \$741,113

ADOPTED

Aye: 5 - Boyle, Buchanan, Galloway, Rienstra, and Scanlon

Nay: 2 - Elenbaas, and Stremler

Enactment No: ORD 2026-017

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

ADOPTED

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

Nay: 0

Enactment No: ORD 2026-018

9. [AB2026-238](#) Resolution updating the appendix of the 2022 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) project list

SUBSTITUTE APPROVED

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

Nay: 0

Enactment No: RES 2026-010

(No Committee Assignment)

10. [AB2026-242](#) Request for motion to approve a letter to Representative Rick Larsen thanking him for his work to secure the release of federal Hazard Mitigation Grant Program funds from the Federal Emergency Management Agency

APPROVED REQUEST

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

Nay: 0

11. [AB2026-243](#) Assignment of a councilmember to serve on the Americans with Disabilities Act Compliance Committee

DISCUSSED AND MOTION(S) APPROVED

Motion approved 7-0 that they appoint Councilmember Boyle to serve on the Americans with Disabilities Act compliance committee.

12. [AB2026-244](#) Request for motion to approve a letter of support for a grant application to the Washington State Department of Transportation Safe Routes to School Grant Program for improvements around Alderwood Elementary School

APPROVED REQUEST

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

Nay: 0

ITEMS ADDED BY REVISION

1. [AB2026-255](#) 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

INTRODUCED FOR PUBLIC HEARING

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

Nay: 0

Motion approved 7-0 to introduce and set a public hearing for April 7th or 14th at the discretion of the chair to coincide with the other agenda items dealing with the same topic.

INTRODUCTION ITEMS

1. [AB2026-221](#) Receipt of application to a vacancy on the Justice Project Oversight and Planning (JPOP) Committee, criminal legal system user, applicant(s): Cesar Luna (Deadline for applications to this position is 10:00 a.m. Tuesday, April 7, 2026)

INTRODUCED

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

Nay: 0

2. [AB2026-232](#) Receipt of applications to a vacancy on the Planning Commission, District 4 or 5, Applicants: Lindsey Elenbaas, Gurdeep Bains, Jeremy Thompson (Deadline for applications to this position is 10:00 a.m. Tuesday, April 7, 2026)

INTRODUCED

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

Nay: 0

3. [AB2026-239](#) Receipt of Whatcom County Council strategic planning workshop meeting report

RECEIVED

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

Nay: 0

INTRODUCTION ITEM ADDED

1. [AB2026-259](#) Ordinance submitting to the qualified voters of Whatcom County a proposition authorizing a sales and use tax of one-tenth of one percent (0.1%) for criminal justice purposes, as authorized by RCW 82.14.345

INTRODUCED AS AMENDED FOR PUBLIC HEARING

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

Nay: 1 - Galloway

MOTION 1

Motion approved 6-1, with Galloway opposed, to introduce AB2026-259 Ordinance submitting to the qualified voters of Whatcom County a proposition authorizing a sales and use tax of one-tenth of one percent (0.1%) for criminal justice purposes, as authorized by RCW 82.14.345 as amended, and to hold a joint public hearing on April 14th.

MOTION 2

Motion approved 7-0 to amend Section 1. Submission to voters to change special election to primary or general so that it reads:

Section 1. Submission to Voters

Pursuant to RCW 82.14.345, there shall be submitted to the qualified voters of Whatcom County, at the next primary or general election as determined by the County Auditor, a proposition authorizing the County to impose a sales and use tax of one-tenth of one percent (0.1%) for criminal justice purposes.

MOTION 3

Motion approved 6-1, with Stremler opposed, to amend the ordinance to add a new whereas clause after the fifth whereas clause which reads:

WHEREAS, the Whatcom County Council intends that revenues from the new Sales and Use tax for criminal justice purposes be prioritized in the 2027-28 biennial budget for support to the Whatcom County Sheriff's Office for jail health and food services, support to the Whatcom County Sheriff's Office for lease payments for the new Sheriff's office, and support for labor costs necessary to maintain levels of service across County departments and offices eligible to use revenues under RCW 82.14.345; and

COMMITTEE REPORTS, OTHER ITEMS, AND COUNCILMEMBER UPDATES

(Motion from Committee of the Whole Executive Session)

[AB2026-237](#) Discussion of pending litigation with Chief Civil Deputy Prosecutor Thomas Seguire concerning opioid settlements and Whatcom County's participation in the "Six Remnant Defendants" Opioid Settlement Agreement [Discussion of this item may take place in executive session (closed to the public) pursuant to RCW 42.30.110. (1)(i)]

DISCUSSED AND MOTION(S) APPROVED

Motion approved 7-0 to authorize executive Satpal Sidhu to sign the Six Remnant Defendants Combined Participation form on behalf of Whatcom County as discussed in Executive Session.

Motion approved 7-0 to delegate authority to the executive to execute and sign participation forms related to future opioid settlements on behalf of the county, without further approval of the council.

ADJOURN