

**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 24, 2026

9:55 AM

Hybrid Meeting - Council Chambers

**HYBRID MEETING - MAY BEGIN LATE - ADJOURNS BY 10:55 A.M.
(PARTICIPATE IN-PERSON, SEE REMOTE JOIN INSTRUCTIONS AT
www.whatcomcounty.us/joinvirtualcouncil, OR CALL 360.778.5010)**

COUNCILMEMBERS

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

CLERK OF THE COUNCIL

Cathy Halka, AICP, CMC

Call To Order

Committee Chair Jon Scanlon called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m. in a hybrid meeting.

Roll Call

Present: 7 - Elizabeth Boyle, Barry Buchanan, Ben Elenbaas, Kaylee Galloway, Jessica Rienstra, Jon Scanlon, and Mark Stremler

Announcements

Council "Consent Agenda" Items

Rienstra stated she had a question on Consent Agenda item # 3 (AB2026-156).

Consent Agenda Item #3 (AB2026-156)

Kayla Schott-Bresler, Executive's Office, answered why the interlocal says it does not require Council approval, and stated it is an error and requires approval because it is an interlocal agreement.

Scanlon stated that Consent Agenda item # 1 (AB2026-137) is a substitute.

Galloway moved to recommend approval of Consent Agenda items one through seven. The motion was seconded by Boyle. Councilmembers voted on the Consent items (see votes on individual items below).

1. [AB2026-137](#) Request authorization for the County Executive to enter into a Collective Bargaining Agreement between Whatcom County and Professional and Technical Employees, Local 17 for the period January 1, 2026 - December 31, 2028

Galloway moved and Boyle seconded that the SUBSTITUTE Contract be RECOMMENDED FOR AUTHORIZATION BY CONSENT. The motion carried by the following vote:

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

Nay: 0

2. [AB2026-154](#) Request authorization for the County Executive to enter into a grant agreement between Whatcom County and Washington State Department of Ecology for the 2025-2027 Biennial Stormwater Capacity Grant, in the amount of \$120,000

Galloway moved and Boyle seconded that the Agreement be RECOMMENDED FOR AUTHORIZATION BY CONSENT. The motion carried by the following vote:

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

Nay: 0

3. [AB2026-156](#) Request authorization for the County Executive to enter into an interlocal agreement amendment between Whatcom County and North Whatcom Fire and Rescue to extend the current contract for fire investigation services by one year

Galloway moved and Boyle seconded that the Interlocal be RECOMMENDED FOR AUTHORIZATION BY CONSENT. The motion carried by the following vote:

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

Nay: 0

4. [AB2026-160](#) 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 Lakeway Drive - City of Bellingham to Cable Street - Pavement Rehabilitation Project, County Road Project 925001, in the amount of \$251,000

Galloway moved and Boyle seconded that the Interlocal be RECOMMENDED FOR AUTHORIZATION BY CONSENT. The motion carried by the following vote:

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

Nay: 0

5. [AB2026-162](#) Request authorization for the County Executive to enter into an interlocal grant agreement between Whatcom County and the Washington State Department of Commerce to reimburse the 5% local match obligation required in the four FEMA Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) grants, in the amount of \$1,500,000 (Council acting as the Whatcom County Flood Control Zone District Board of Supervisors)

Galloway moved and Boyle seconded that the Contract (FCZDBS) be RECOMMENDED FOR AUTHORIZATION BY CONSENT. The motion carried by the following vote:

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

Nay: 0

6. [AB2026-163](#) Request authorization for the County Executive to enter into an interlocal cost reimbursement agreement between Whatcom County and the City of Lynden to support 30% design of Phase 1 of the Mouw Ditch early action project with pass-through funding from Floodplains through Design (FbD) 2023-25 grant, in the

amount of \$113,600 (Council acting as the Whatcom County Flood Control Zone District Board of Supervisors)

Galloway moved and Boyle seconded that the Contract (FCZDBS) be RECOMMENDED FOR AUTHORIZATION BY CONSENT. The motion carried by the following vote:

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

Nay: 0

7. [AB2026-164](#) Request authorization for the County Executive to enter into a contract amendment between Whatcom County and Whatcom Long Term Recovery Group to increase the project management task budget to assist homeowners participating in the Hazard Mitigation Elevation Grant Program, in the amount of \$80,000, for a total amount of \$200,000 (Council acting as the Whatcom County Flood Control Zone District Board of Supervisors)

Galloway moved and Boyle seconded that the Contract (FCZDBS) be RECOMMENDED FOR AUTHORIZATION BY CONSENT. The motion carried by the following vote:

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

Nay: 0

Committee Discussion and Recommendation to Council

1. [AB2026-145](#) Ordinance amending the 2026 Whatcom County Budget, request no. 4, in the amount of \$1,804,963

Randy Rydel, Administrative Services Department Finance Director, answered a question about the balances on the “Summary by Fund” and stated it was corrected in the “Substitute Summary by Fund,” but there is now a second substitute summary and a substitute ordinance for this date with further changes. He briefed the councilmembers on that version and stated the substitute for today fits within the new Charter guidelines in section 6.41. The Charter says that if the Executive's Office has not produced the quarterly report by six weeks past the end of the quarter, then they are only allowed to let the Council approve appropriations which constitute mandatory caseload, enrollment, inflation or other legally unavoidable costs not contemplated in the current budget and which must be expended prior to the beginning of the next budget cycle. He spoke about the four items that made it through in the substitute ordinance for today. He stated the next budget ordinance will have the items that fell off. He answered when the fourth quarter report would come out and stated he is aiming for March 24th.

Scanlon spoke about the items that did not make it into this budget amendment and Rydel answered questions about those. Scanlon said he would like to schedule a discussion about what they may want to do with this in the future.

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

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

Nay: 0

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

Scanlon stated this links to the discussion they just had on **AB2026-145** and is one of the items that was removed based on the new Charter amendment. He stated that possibly the best way forward with this item is to postpone it to a future meeting and he asked Director Rydel if he has a meeting date that he would propose for that.

Randy Rydel, Administrative Services Department Finance Director, stated he would suggest they revisit it on March 24th and will let them know ahead of time whether his department will be able to achieve that mark.

Scanlon moved and Rienstra seconded to recommend to postpone AB2026-114 to the March 24th Finance and Administrative Services Committee meeting.

He stated this motion will allow them to consider this ordinance establishing the project based budget with the budget supplemental that includes the stormwater improvement on the same date.

Scanlon's motion carried by the following vote:

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

Nay: 0

Motion approved to recommend to postpone AB2026-114 to the March 24th Finance and Administrative Services Committee meeting.

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

Scanlon moved and Boyle seconded to recommend that they postpone AB2026-143 to the March 24th Council Finance and Administrative Services Committee meeting. The motion carried by the following vote:

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

Nay: 0

Motion approved to recommend that they postpone AB2026-143 to the March 24th Council Finance and Administrative Services Committee meeting.

4. [AB2026-134](#) Ordinance amending the project budget for the Courthouse Building Envelope Fund, request no. 7

Scanlon moved and Boyle seconded to recommend that they postpone AB2026-134 to the March 24th Council Finance and Administrative Services Committee meeting.. The motion carried by the following vote:

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

Nay: 0

Motion approved to recommend to postpone AB2026-134 to the March 24th Council Finance and Administrative Services Committee meeting.

5. [AB2026-165](#) Resolution to declare county-owned structures located at recently acquired property at South Fork Park as worthless

Bennett Knox, Parks and Recreation Department Director, answered if there are pictures of the buildings they are declaring as worthless, and stated this has come before Council before and is associated with the Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO) grant for the Carrasco property, which was acquired in late 2023. They had shown photos in the executive session associated with the acquisition. The structures are not necessary to contemplate transition of the property to a trailhead location and removing them is part of the scope of work outlined in the grant.

Elenbaas spoke about the pictures not being included in the memo and stated the Council and public should be able to see what the County is deeming worthless.

Elenbaas moved that they hold this until such time that the pictures (of the structures) are added to the public record on this AB20206-165.

The motion was seconded by Stremler.

Elenbaas stated they could take action tonight if the pictures are added for

the meeting.

Cathy Halka, Clerk of the Council, spoke about how the Council could handle their vote this evening if this motion is made.

Satpal Sidhu, County Executive, stated the original intent with these structures when they acquired the property was that they would not be useful for us and would be demolished.

Councilmembers discussed the motion, and being able to see pictures of buildings in the future to see the difference between buildings deemed worthless as opposed to ones they want to keep, and Knox stated he is happy to provide photos.

The motion carried by the following vote:

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

Nay: 0

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

Motion approved that they hold this until such time that the pictures (of the structures) are added to the public record on this (AB20206-165).

Items Added by Revision

There were no agenda items added by revision.

Other Business

There was no other business.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 10:37 a.m.

ATTEST:

WHATCOM COUNTY COUNCIL
WHATCOM COUNTY, WA

Jon Scanlon-via email 3/11/2026

Cathy Halka, Council Clerk

Jon Scanlon, Committee Chair

Meeting Minutes prepared by Kristi Felbinger

SIGNED COPY ON FILE