

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

**VIRTUAL MEETING - VIEW ONLINE;
(CHERRY POINT DISCUSSION SCHEDULED FROM 3 - 5 P.M.)
(AGENDA REVISED 12.8.2020)
Tuesday, December 8, 2020**

12:45 PM

Virtual Meeting

COUNCILMEMBERS

Rud Browne
Barry Buchanan
Tyler Byrd
Todd Donovan
Ben Elenbaas
Carol Frazey
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 12:53 p.m. in a virtual meeting.

Roll Call

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

Absent: None

Special Presentation

Committee Discussion

1. [AB2020-219](#) Discussion and update on strategies and other items related to COVID-19 (Council and Health Board)

Erika Lautenbach, Health Department Director, briefed the Councilmembers on the following:

- An increase in COVID-19 case counts in the county
- The rate of cases in different age groups, areas of the county, and exposure settings
- Three deaths that were removed from the county's count due to a data processing error, and
- Vaccine planning and continued work on medical surge

Dr. Karlapudi, Chief Medical Officer of Peace Health Northwest, briefed the Councilmembers about the following:

- The COVID-19 disease itself and how it compares to the flu
- A visual insight into how things look at the hospital and how that works in coordination with in-hospital surge management, and
- The COVID-19 vaccine

He answered questions by Councilmembers and Satpal Sidhu, County Executive, about whether the 22 COVID-19 beds at the hospital are in a separate facility and how many beds they could expand to, the average length of stay for someone that is admitted to the hospital for COVID-19, whether there is trained staff ready if they needed to expand and staff 40 COVID-19 ICU beds, the usual precautions people should take even after receiving a vaccine, whether the hospital has adequate personal protection equipment (PPE), the treatment protocol in the hospital, whether this virus is anything like the H1N1 virus, whether we have learned how COVID-19

may impact us from how past viruses impacted the population, the fatigue level and exhaustion of hospital staff, whether there are more studies being done regarding transmission of COVID-19 in an outdoor setting, and whether the daily compilation report being done by the University of Washington on research articles can be made available to the public.

Lautenbach stated that they know ventilation is key and indoor settings where there is less air flow and ventilation create additional pieces of the recipe which makes transmission possible.

This agenda item was DISCUSSED.

Buchanan announced that AB2020-345 has been withdrawn from the agenda.

Other Business

The following people updated the Councilmembers on where the County currently stands with tiny homes and the Administration's recommendation to purchase shelter units from 360 Modular:

- Tyler Schroeder, Executive's Office
- Satpal Sidhu, County Executive
- Rob Ney, Administrative Services Department

They answered whether the Administration needs anything from the Council and whether they will go forward with procurement as soon as the City of Bellingham has identified the site and the operator, whether these units have an emergency exit like Pallet Shelter units, how long it would take to have 50 units set up, whether these can be broken down and moved or whether they are considered more permanent construction, what is keeping the people who are camping at the encampment in front of Bellingham City Hall from going to Base Camp, whether there is a need for both temporary and permanent shelter types, whether these units are stackable, whether they can be tipped over, whether colors can be chosen so that the units blend in, whether rodent infestation will be an issue, whether this could replace the Byron Street facility, and whether these structures could be used for isolation and quarantine.

Councilmembers continued to discuss the update and concurred that the Administration should move forward.

Committee Discussion and Recommendation to Council

Buchanan moved that people be allowed to speak regarding the first and third items in this agenda section. The motion was seconded by Donovan.

The motion carried by the following vote: 7-0

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

Nay: 0

1. [AB2020-565](#) Consideration of Hearing Examiners recommendation on preliminary long subdivision application filed by Governors Point Land LP (Governors Point subdivision)

The following staff briefed the Councilmembers and answered questions.

- Mark Personius, Planning and Development Services Department Director
- Amy Keenan, Planning and Development Services Department
- Ryan Ericson, Planning and Development Services Department

They answered questions on the language about the agreement expiring after 20 years but the setbacks and development being vested, whether public access to the 98 acres is not guaranteed and is dependent on the City of Bellingham and the water agreement it has with the development, the issue of no net loss, when net ecological benefit applies, and when no net loss applies.

Buchanan opened the meeting for public comment and the following people spoke:

- Rand Jack, Whatcom Land Trust
- Bob Carmichael, Attorney for Governors Point Land LP, spoke and answered whether access will just be from the beaches.

Donovan moved and Browne seconded that the Hearing Examiner Recommended Decision be RECOMMENDED FOR AFFIRMATION. The motion carried by the following vote:

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

Nay: 0

Absent: 0

2. [AB2020-566](#) Resolution affirming confidence in election results

Donovan briefed the Councilmembers on the Resolution and Councilmembers discussed the integrity with which the State and County election officials execute their role.

Buchanan moved that the Resolution be recommended for approval. The motion was seconded by Browne.

Councilmembers discussed the Resolution and whether they support the motion. After the discussion, Donovan stated he would like the Resolution to be withdrawn.

Buchanan withdrew his motion and the Resolution was withdrawn by the proposer (Donovan).

This agenda item was WITHDRAWN by the proposer.

3. [AB2020-546](#) Ordinance amending Whatcom County Code 2.98, Point Roberts Community Advisory Committee, to revise membership and meeting procedures to broaden representation and improve transparency

Browne moved that the Ordinance be recommended for adoption. The motion was seconded by Buchanan.

Browne moved to amend Exhibit A, Section 2.98.050 to change the notice period from two weeks to one week as follows:

The committee shall determine its meeting schedule, but shall meet at least quarterly providing at least ~~two-one~~ weeks' notice of all meetings and shall include the Agenda. Any item intended for a vote must be clearly and unambiguously defined on the agenda. The date of any meeting along with the agenda shall be published on the County Website a minimum of ~~two-one~~ weeks prior.

The motion was seconded by Kershner.

Buchanan opened the meeting to public comment and the following person spoke:

- Stephen Falk

Hearing no one else, Buchanan closed the comment period.

Byrd stated he would like to make this true of every committee and not just this advisory board.

Councilmembers continued to discuss the Ordinance.

Jill Nixon, Council Office, answered how the proposed amendment to this ordinance would affect boards, whether board members are required to be U.S. citizens, and whether all boards are required to post minutes.

Councilmembers discussed transparency, getting more input from the community on the advisory group, the desire in Point Roberts for change, and the motion.

Browne stated he would also like to add an effective date but Councilmembers voted on the original motion to amend first.

The motion to amend the notice period carried by the following vote:
Aye: 7 - Byrd, Donovan, Elenbaas, Frazey, Kershner, Browne, and Buchanan
Nay: 0

Browne moved to add an effective date of the Ordinance of March 31, 2021. The motion was seconded by Donovan.

The motion to amend carried by the following vote:
Aye: 7 - Donovan, Elenbaas, Frazey, Kershner, Browne, Buchanan, Byrd
Nay: 0

Byrd spoke about making the same requirements for all boards and committees and Councilmembers and Nixon discussed the procedure for that.

Browne's motion that the Ordinance be RECOMMENDED FOR ADOPTION WITH PROPOSED AMENDMENT(S) carried by the following vote:

Aye: 5 - Browne, Buchanan, Donovan, Frazey and Kershner

Nay: 2 - Byrd and Elenbaas

Absent: 0

Committee Discussion

1. [AB2020-345](#) Discussion of proposed Cherry Point amendments

This agenda item was WITHDRAWN.

Items Added by Revision

There were no agenda items added by revision.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 3:53 p.m.

ATTEST:

WHATCOM COUNTY COUNCIL
WHATCOM COUNTY, WA

Dana Brown-Davis, Council Clerk

Barry Buchanan, Council Chair

Kristi Felbinger, Minutes Transcription