

Whatcom County Council (Special)

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



Minutes - Draft Minutes

**VIRTUAL MEETING (TO PARTICIPATE, SEE INSTRUCTIONS AT
www.whatcomcounty.us/joinvirtualcouncil OR CALL 360.778.5010);**

MEETING START TIME REVISED TO 12:45 P.M.

Thursday, August 5, 2021

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 12:46 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

Announcements

Special Order of Business

1. [AB2021-474](#) Interviews of District Court Judge applicants

Councilmembers and Cathy Halka, Council Legislative Analyst, discussed how to go about asking the questions.

Frazey moved to have Council staff call out the questions. The motion was seconded by Kershner.

The motion carried by the following vote:

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

Out of the meeting: 1 - Elenbaas

They discussed what to do in the ten minutes following the interview questions for each candidate.

Byrd moved to do up to 8 minutes of follow-up questions and 2 minutes of closing statements. The motion was seconded by Browne.

The motion carried by the following vote:

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

Out of the Meeting: 1 - Elenbaas

Halka asked if they needed assistance with timing the interviews.

Clerk's note: Elenbaas joined the meeting at 12:52 p.m.

Chris Quinn discussed with Councilmembers whether this meeting was being broadcast live to the public and the applicants and whether the meeting should not be broadcast live to be fair to all the applicants.

Byrd moved to request that applicants log off and then join the meeting at their set time and that they not watch the other interviews. The motion was seconded by Kershner.

Dana Brown-Davis, Clerk of the Council, gave input on how they might proceed in light of how meetings are recorded and broadcast.

Councilmembers discussed the motion.

The motion failed by the following vote:

Aye: 2 - Byrd and Kershner

Nay: 5 - Donovan, Elenbaas, Frazey, Browne, and Buchanan

The Councilmembers held six 20-minute interviews with the following District Court Judge applicants:

- Lisa Keeler
- Royce Buckingham
- Melissa Nelson
- Jeffrey Lustick
- Angela Anderson
- Shoshana Paige

Council staff asked the following questions of each candidate in identical order:

1. What do you believe are the central attributes of a good judge?
2. Why do you believe you possess those qualities and what experience do you possess that demonstrates those qualities?
3. What ideas do you have for office and caseload management of the district court?
4. What is the most cost-effective thing the County could do to maintain or enhance the effectiveness of the district court?
5. What role should district court judges have in regards to establishing budget priorities with the County Council and the law and justice system in the County?
6. What changes would you like to make to District Court that could

help the people you will be interacting with each day?

After the six interview questions asked by staff, Councilmembers asked each candidate follow-up questions and candidates were allowed to give a closing statement.

After all of the interviews, Halka gave a summary of the next steps, and she and Councilmembers discussed the process for voting.

This agenda item was DISCUSSED.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 4:11 p.m.

ATTEST:

WHATCOM COUNTY COUNCIL
WHATCOM COUNTY, WA

Dana Brown-Davis, Council Clerk

Barry Buchanan, Council Chair

Kristi Felbinger, Minutes Transcription