

Whatcom County Council Water Work Session

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



Minutes - Draft Minutes

**Tuesday, February 15, 2022
10:30 AM
Virtual Meeting**

VIRTUAL MEETING - VIEW ONLINE

COUNCILMEMBERS

Barry Buchanan
Tyler Byrd
Todd Donovan
Ben Elenbaas
Carol Frazey
Kaylee Galloway
Kathy Kershner

CLERK OF THE COUNCIL

Dana Brown-Davis, C.M.C.

Call To Order

Council Chair Todd Donovan called the meeting to order at 10:31 a.m. in a virtual meeting.

Roll Call

Present: 6 - Tyler Byrd, Todd Donovan, Ben Elenbaas, Carol Frazey, Kaylee Galloway, and Kathy Kershner

Absent: 1 - Barry Buchanan

Announcements**Water Resources Update**

Gary Stoyka, Public Works Department, updated on the following:

- A proposed framework for the solutions table being worked on by Cascadia Policy Solutions and that will be shared in about another month
- Drainage Based Management activities for the South Fork, Bertrand-Schneider, and Drayton Harbor pilot basins and two technical studies (a groundwater/surface water interaction study and a study looking at fish needs in the tributaries to determine what kind of flows are necessary) identified by the Watershed Management Board
- The next phase of the work for the groundwater model to clean up the item brought up during the peer review and to start using the model

Stoyka and Chris Elder, Public Works Department, answered questions about whether the work that has already been done with the Pollution, Identification and Correction (PIC) Program gives us a head start with work in the Drayton Harbor pilot basin, making sure we do not lose focus on the fact that these are drainages and they need to actually function as such, what is going into the solutions table, and whether it will bring all the studies they are putting money into in one place to understand water over the whole County.

Clerk's note: Byrd joined the meeting at 10:42 a.m.

Stoyka continued his update on upcoming Watershed Management Board and Council Water Work Session meetings.

Proposed Stewart Mountain Acquisition

Chris Elder, Public Works Department, presented and answered whether the stream temperatures of the South Fork listed in the presentation are a forecast, whether this is on an existing plan or whether there is some history behind this project, whether managing the forest includes harvesting, whether the Forest Advisory Committee has seen this and whether they are providing input, whether the current owner of the property approached the County for this idea and who the owner is, whether there are any of these community forests in Whatcom County, whether this property would go into the County's parks system or whether Public Works would manage it, whether the Streamflow Restoration grant is funded from Engrossed Substitute Senate Bill (ESSB) 6091 funds, and whether the phased acquisition would prioritize the cheap areas that have already been cut or the areas that have more quality timber on them.

Fraze spoke about the Mt. Adams Community Forest and stated having a community forest helps reduce forest fires, helps manage the timbering, and helps with water quality, and there are a lot of great benefits for people in the community around it.

Overview of Salmon Recovery Plan Update

John Thompson, Public Works Department, presented and answered what the timeline will be for the public review process of the draft plan, and whether the areas with no dots on the limiting factors table in the presentation mean it is still to be filled in or whether it is saying there was no impact in those areas.

Fraze spoke about the need to be more aggressive with this and take bolder steps to make this plan work.

Discussion with WRIA 1 Planning Unit

The following people spoke about the role of the Planning Unit and engagement in broader watershed management planning efforts and answered questions about how to determine what planning to prioritize in terms of coordinating with the Comprehensive Plan:

- Gary Stoyka, Public Works Department
- Chris Elder, Public Works Department
- Ander Russell, WRIA 1 Planning Unit
- Dan Eisses, Birch Bay Water and Sewer District

Galloway spoke about the interest of Representative Debra Lekanoff from the 40th Legislative District in some of the coordinating of the Salmon Recovery Plan and Comprehensive Plan and an upcoming Senate hearing on

House Bill 1117 which incorporates salmon recovery into the Growth Management Act.

Other Business

There was no other business.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 11:59 a.m.

ATTEST:

WHATCOM COUNTY COUNCIL
WHATCOM COUNTY, WA

Dana Brown-Davis, Council Clerk

Todd Donovan, Council Chair

Kristi Felbinger, Minutes Transcription