

CLERK OF THE COUNCIL

Dana Brown-Davis, C.M.C.

COUNTY COURTHOUSE

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COUNCILMEMBERS

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Carol Frazey
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WHATCOM COUNTY COUNCIL

JULY 22, 2020

2:30 P.M. VIRTUAL MEETING

Discussion with city leaders to explore ways to collaborate to improve efficiency for the benefit of taxpayers (AB2020-304)

Introductions:

1. Discuss and confirm the mission of the group is to explore ways to maintain, even increase certain services to our communities in the face of declining revenues
2. Some existing government functions have already been successfully consolidated across the County such as Treasury management, Jail services and the Health Department. Can we better serve our constituents if additional government functions are consolidated?
3. Affirm we recognize that no matter the circumstances or organizations involved that discussions regarding consolidation almost always automatically creates uncertainty and resistance within the organizations impacted. We must respect the impact this sense of uncertainty has on our respective staff members but also respect our constituents expect us to explore all options available to maintain or even increase the level of services in this crisis. No matter how uncomfortable some of the discussion may be.

4. Which of functions would it be impossible to consolidate?

5. Which of functions could it be possible to consolidate?

6. Deciding what is worth consolidating:

- Measure and compare the Cost Per Constituent (CPC) of providing comparable services between member jurisdictions.
- Measure and compare the CPC of providing comparable services between member jurisdictions AND other, larger non-Whatcom jurisdictions.
- If the CPC is comparable between the local jurisdictions AND the average CPC is comparable to other larger non-Whatcom jurisdictions then it likely doesn't make sense to consolidate. However, if there is a material difference in the CPC then consolidation is an option we have an obligation to explore.

7. Items of what consolidation could look like:
 - Create a municipal services corporation "MSC", a special purpose LLC owned by all the participants in proportion to the number of constituents they are the primary provider of services to.
 - The MRC would primarily be staffed by employees from respective member governments
 - The MRC would be controlled by the respective member governments
8. If there is agreement to proceed, a facilitator would be hired, with financial management experience, to conduct research on ideas successfully employed in other counties and use these as an agenda to lead a series of six joint council discussions, and present a report with a list of joint councils' recommendations for possible areas for collaboration, no later than October 31, 2020.
9. Funding for the position would be shared by each of the participants in proportion to the number of constituents they are the primary provider of services to.
10. Consensus to proceed and possible next meeting dates.

List of Departments / Functions

1. Information Technology
2. Cyber Security
3. Equipment/Materials procurement,
4. Financial Software systems
5. Parks & Recreation
6. Public Works
7. Planning and Development
8. GIS
9. 911 Dispatch
10. Emergency Medical Services
11. Human Resources
12. _____
13. _____
14. _____
15. _____