

# **Whatcom County Council as the Health Board**

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



## **Minutes - Final**

**Tuesday, February 4, 2020**

**10 AM**

**Council Chambers**

### **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 10:04 a.m. in the Council Chambers, 311 Grand Avenue, Bellingham, Washington.

**Roll Call**

**Present:** 6 - Rud Browne, Barry Buchanan, Tyler Byrd, Carol Frazey, Ben Elenbaas and Kathy Kershner

**Absent:** 1 - Todd Donovan

**Public Session**

The following people spoke in support of the Child and Family Action Plan:

Vince Foster, Unity Care Northwest board member  
April Barker,  
Monica Burke on behalf of herself and of Monica Koller  
Jennifer Moon  
Ken Gass, M.D.

**Child and Family Action Plan Presentation**

[AB2020-070](#) Presentation Regarding Child and Family Action Plan

Carol Frazey introduced the presentation and referred to a handout (on file) submitted by the presenters providing extra letters of support.

The following people presented:

Rachel Lucy, outgoing Chair of the Public Health Advisory Board  
Debbie Ahl, Mt. Baker Foundation Executive Director  
Emily O'Connor, Lydia Place Executive Director

The presenters summarized the proposed next steps for the County to implement the recommendations on packet page 5. They asked Councilmembers to adopt the plan and to commit to the next steps.

The following people answered questions:

Heather Flaherty, Chuckanut Health Foundation  
Regina Delahunt, Health Department Director  
Rachel Lucy, Peace Health  
Sterling Chick, Health Department  
Emily O'Connor, Lydia Place  
Astrid Newell, Health Department

Councilmembers discussed and asked questions about how helping a child now using the recommended plan will help that child overcome the obstacles in the longrun without addressing the root causes of the obstacles; addressing those root problems such as literacy and housing; finding ways to fund the solutions, such as Economic Development Investment (EDI) funds, that don't take resources from other programs; looking at zoning restrictions that keep businesses from housing childcare facilities; what data is being used to track the effectiveness of the plan should it be adopted; why Lynden has a lower rate of child abuse and neglect (packet pg. 33) than the other cities; looking at broader causes and solutions to child and family issues that don't necessarily cost money; how trauma affects children and adults; and looking at the history behind the data trends presented in the packet.

***Frazey moved*** to adopt the Child Family Action plan. The motion was seconded.

Councilmembers discussed a suggestion that the PHAB and Health Department reach out to the for-profit businesses in the community for support, looking for ways to address the issues holistically and ways that do not require money, and addressing other current needs causing barriers first before following the recommendations of the plan.

The motion carried by the following vote:

**Aye:** 5 - Browne, Buchanan, Elenbaas, Frazey, and Kershner

**Nay:** 1 - Byrd

**Absent:** 1 - Donovan

***Buchanan moved*** to formally commit to the following four proposed next steps for the County to implement the plan's recommendations on packet page five:

1. Request the Office of the County Executive assess infrastructure and budget needs required to realize commitment to an integrated focus on child and family well-being across county government departments.
  - a. Receive from the County Executive a proposed infrastructure model to implement, aiming toward establishment of an "Office of Child and Family Well-being" or other structure that will embed a focus on children and families across county government.
  - b. Request that biennial budget proposals be submitted to support actions contained in this Action Plan, with a focus on housing, child care, and

behavioral health care.

2. Develop an ordinance to create a county task force, or other official county committee, with high-level staffing and resources to ensure that diverse community partners are informed, coordinated, and included in the implementation of this Action Plan, make additional recommendations, and regularly report progress to the County Council.

a. Using the highly effective Incarceration Prevention and Reduction Task Force as a model, the task force will include representatives from government, community organizations, and families. The task force will focus on tracking and furthering progress of community efforts to achieve the desired results for children and families.

3. Support and actively participate in fiscal analysis in early 2020 to identify existing and potential funding streams for child and family programs. Potential new funding streams may include a future bond, levy, taxes, federal funding, etc.

4. Fulfill prior commitments to resource and fund two critical efforts, including:

a) adoption of culturally and linguistically appropriate services and trauma-informed approaches in all County departments; and

b) development of a culturally and linguistically responsive health navigation system for families seeking information and assistance with health and social services.

The motion was seconded and Councilmembers discussed the motion, and the recommendations, including the formation of a new task force.

The motion carried by the following vote:

**Aye:** 5 - Browne, Buchanan, Elenbaas, Frazey, and Kershner

**Nay:** 1 - Byrd

**Absent:** 1 - Donovan

**This agenda item was PRESENTED AND DISCUSSED and two motions were approved.**

### **Director's Report**

Regina Delahunt, Health Department, gave a brief update and stated this is her last Health Board meeting before her retirement. Councilmembers thanked her for her service to the County and the community. She

introduced the Health Officer Update.

### **Health Officer Update on Coronavirus (2019 nCoV)**

Greg Stern, Health Department Health Officer, briefed the Council on the Coronavirus and how the Health Department is responding to it. His report included a description of the Coronavirus, the transmissibility and severity of the illness it causes, how the virus can be detected and how that detection translates to how transmissible it is, current statistics of how the virus is spreading, control measures the Health Department is taking, and coordination efforts with other agencies and organizations. He stated there have been no confirmed cases in Whatcom County.

He and Regina Delahunt, Health Department Director, answered questions about Health Department communication efforts to manage public awareness and angst and to sort out facts vs myths, what the RO "R naught" value (the measure which tells the number of people who become infected by one case) is, whether the virus is transmittable before a person exhibits symptoms, the survival rate of the virus outside the host, and the survival rate of those who contract the virus.

### **Other Business**

There was no other business.

### **Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 12:07 p.m.

The County Council approved these minutes on February 25, 2020.

ATTEST:

WHATCOM COUNTY COUNCIL  
WHATCOM COUNTY, WA

\_\_\_\_\_  
Dana Brown-Davis, Council Clerk

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Barry Buchanan, Council Chair

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Kristi Felbinger, Minutes Transcription

SIGNED COPY ON FILE