Whatcom County
Council Water Work Session

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

Minutes - Final

VIRTUAL MEETING - VIEW ONLINE

Tuesday, October 20, 2020
10:30 AM
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 10:30 a.m. in a virtual meeting.

Roll Call

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

     Absent: None

Water Resources Update

Gary Stoyka, Public Works Department, and Satpal Sidhu, County Executive, updated the Councilmembers on the following:

The Department of Ecology (DOE) has recommended that the Nooksack Basin be one of two basins that adjudication proceedings begin with and submitted a budget request to the Governor's Office for pre-adjudication work. The County Executive is working on a settlement proposal to present to all of the parties in Whatcom County which would be involved in a global settlement of water rights and will get documents to the Council before the next Council meeting.

Stoyka answered questions about whether Whatcom County has a choice if the DOE recommends adjudication and he described the next steps of the process. If the Governor and the Legislature go along with funding it, the adjudication will proceed. If it is approved, the local negotiation process can still go forward. He answered whether the Public Utility District (PUD) is staying neutral on the process of adjudication.

He continued to update Councilmembers on:

- The Regional Water Supply plan led by the PUD
- A grant for Drainage Basin Management
- Getting a contractor in place to do a peer review of the groundwater model that was completed in 2019 and what the groundwater model will accomplish
- The Conservation District is rolling out a domestic water use efficiency program and is planning to develop a program next year for outreach and education
- Recent and upcoming Meetings related to water resources

2021 Flood Control Zone District Budget

The following staff presented (on file):

Paula Harris, Public Works Department, presented on the flood components of the flood budget and answered whether there is a central place that citizens can go to report drainage problems, and whether it is the Parks Department that would deal with beaver dam problems in Silver Lake.

Gary Stoyka, Public Works Department, presented on the Natural Resources components on the flood budget and answered whether there is a way to tell what the revenue sources are for the various programs, what dollar amount is required to be maintained in the flood budget, whether the plan for some of the 250,000 for water planning would be to hire someone for the settlement process, what the philosophy is about spending more money on education and outreach than on enforcement, and whether river monitoring data is online.

He also answered a question about where complaints about solid waste disposal should be directed.

Harris spoke about grant funding for Floodplains by Design.

Updates to Lake Whatcom Homeowners Incentive Program (HIP)

Ingrid Enschede, Public Works Department, gave a presentation (on file). She and Gary Stoyka, Public Works Department, answered why funds spent on advertising cannot be used toward one or two single large-scale projects to get the most for the money, whether there is a timeline to start working with the homeowner's association, and how much of the budget is for compliance monitoring and enforcement.

Clerk's note: Buchanan left the meeting at 11:58 a.m. so Byrd adjourned the meeting.

Other Business

There was no other business.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 12:01 p.m.

The County Council approved these minutes on November 10, 2020.

ATTEST:

                                      WHATCOM COUNTY COUNCIL
                                      WHATCOM COUNTY, WA

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Dana Brown-Davis, Council Clerk   Barry Buchanan, Council Chair

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Kristi Felbinger, Minutes Transcription

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