

Whatcom County Council Water Work Session

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



Minutes - Draft Minutes

Tuesday, November 16, 2021

10:30 AM

Virtual Meeting

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 10:34 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

This item was not discussed.

Discussion with WRIA 1 Planning Unit (Part 1)

Ander Russell, WRIA 1 Planning Unit, briefed the Councilmembers, referred to a letter sent to Council (on file in the Meeting Details) and answered whether they currently have a chair chosen from one of the groups or a paid facilitator who is paid to facilitate the meetings.

Satpal Sidhu, County Executive, spoke about the role of the Planning Unit, whether it should be redefined, whether it should function as an advisory committee to the Council on water issues, and whether the Watershed management plan should be integrated with the Comprehensive Plan.

Clerk's note: The discussion was paused to allow Public Works staff (who have been working on a flood response) to present the next item when they were available. See the continuation of this discussion after the Overview of Flood Control Zone District Budget item below.

Overview of Flood Control Zone District Budget

The following people presented and answered questions:

- Paula Harris, Public Works Department
- Gary Stoyka, Public Works Department

Stoyka answered how much of the water settlement allocation will go to technical studies and what the studies might be.

Satpal Sidhu, County Executive, spoke about water settlement funding from the State and the County for 2020 and 2021 and how funding might be handled for the future as they know more information.

Discussion with WRIA 1 Planning Unit (Part 2)

Councilmembers and Russell discussed how County staff will work with the Planning Unit to update the Watershed Management Plan and whether the Planning Unit should have a dual role and act as an advisory to the Council.

Satpal Sidhu, County Executive, spoke about defining the roles of the Planning Unit.

Fraze spoke about the Planning Unit having a facilitator from outside of their group, having an advisory role to the Council, and providing a list of what help they would need from staff.

Overview of WRIA 1 Data Hub

This item was not discussed.

Other Business

Satpal Sidhu, County Executive, updated the Councilmembers on the following:

- The Administration’s trip to Spokane has been canceled.
- The State has sent a person from the Army National Guard to look at concerns about the Ferndale Levy due to today’s flooding event.
- The Emergency Operations Center (EOC) is not struggling despite statements made to that effect.

Councilmembers discussed what the Special Council meeting is for tomorrow.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 11:31 a.m.

ATTEST:

WHATCOM COUNTY COUNCIL
WHATCOM COUNTY, WA

Dana Brown-Davis, Council Clerk

Barry Buchanan, Council Chair

Kristi Felbinger, Minutes Transcription