

DISCLAIMER: This document contains the Whatcom County Council or Committee minutes, as approved. However, unless an attested signature page is attached, they are not the final approved minutes.

1 criminal and civil issues. He has experience as a police officer. She is impressed
2 that Mr. Grant has two advanced degrees, including a Master's Degree and a
3 Doctorate. Mr. Grant did the best job in the interview talking about issues related
4 to the court and possible solutions. He displayed thinking outside of the box and
5 did an excellent job.
6

7 Brenner stated she agreed that all candidates are incredibly outstanding.
8 She feels strongly about her support for David Rhea. The Council is thrown into a
9 public process. She respects the public process. She doesn't want to substitute
10 herself for the public process. Mr. Rhea would be an excellent place-keeper. She
11 received many phone calls from people who say what a fair guy Mr. Rhea has been.
12 That is very important to her. She's comfortable with whomever becomes judge.
13 She's not comfortable giving anyone a leg up on the next election when they're all
14 of the same exact stature. Mr. Rhea is the best person to continue until they have
15 the next public election.
16

17 Caskey-Schreiber stated she agreed that the candidate pool is excellent.
18 They would all make excellent judges. She appreciates Mr. Rhea giving the Council
19 an option that is palatable. However, Mr. Grant would make a fantastic judge. To
20 avoid the perception that the Council is making a biased decision, she put Mr. Grant
21 under more scrutiny. She was very impressed during the interview that he
22 communicated innovative ideas and marketed himself as a fair person who will
23 always fall back on the law and not his personal opinions of something. That's the
24 best thing they can do for Whatcom County. Deliver a competent judge who can
25 continue the track of service for the County. David Grant is that person. She has
26 grown to know him over the years. She could have lost respect for his abilities, but
27 her respect has grown and grown. His future is unlimited. He's very competent.
28 Anyone who has an opportunity to work with him will recognize that. Don't punish
29 him because he has worked with the Council.
30

31 Crawford stated the Council had a productive conversation after the
32 interviews. It is appropriate at this time to acknowledge that the majority is in
33 favor of David Grant. He will make an excellent judge, as will the others. However,
34 they need to move on. The courts deserve an appointment. He will change his
35 vote to David Grant. He encouraged the other councilmembers to do so, so there is
36 a unanimous vote. That doesn't change the way he feels about the other
37 candidates, one of whom was his first choice. It's time to move on. Mr. Grant will
38 do an excellent job.
39

40 Fleetwood stated he had hoped there would be a process in place to deal
41 with this situation. He strongly supports Warren Page. All applicants passed the
42 test of fairness and impartiality. Each councilmember had to come up with how
43 much weight to give each criteria, in their own minds. The interview itself shouldn't
44 be given extraordinary weight. Consider the information in the packets. Mr. Page
45 has a breadth of diversity of references. When he weighed that with his
46 experience, he choose Mr. Page as his favorite. All the applicants have great
47 capacity and will do a great job.

1
2 McShane stated that David Grant is the new interim District Court Judge
3 because Councilmember Crawford changed his vote to David Grant.
4

5 **2. WORK SESSION ON THE COMPREHENSIVE PARKS AND RECREATION**
6 **OPEN SPACE PLAN (AB2004-363)**
7

8 Mike McFarlane, Parks and Recreation Department Director, stated they are
9 in the beginning stages of working on the Comprehensive Parks and Open Space
10 plan. The plan was last updated in 1989. The plan is required for funding. Not
11 having a valid plan has been a hindrance in terms of acquiring matching grant
12 funds for acquisition and development of parks. The original intent was to include
13 the plan in the County's master facilities plan, but it was pulled. He is asking for a
14 plan to address parks and recreation development in the county for 20 to 50 years.
15 Out of the plan will come policy changes. Having dealt with the Comprehensive
16 Plan and levels of service, the plan will address those issues and bring forward
17 changes to the Comprehensive Plan. A steering committee will meet weekly and
18 there will also be a public process. First, he wants to address the Council and
19 Planning Commission to discuss concerns and issues.
20

21 Tom Beckwith, Beckwith Consulting Group, et al, submitted information (*on*
22 *file*). He discussed his background and team members. There are 18 tasks
23 grouped based on their emphases. The first task is a retreat with the Council and
24 Planning Commission, which is what they are doing now.
25

26 The second task is an inventory of sites and facilities. They do a lot of
27 outreach in task four. During that task, they want to find out the agendas of
28 interested parties, what is working, and what is not working, and what they foresee
29 for the future.
30

31 Tasks five and six have to do with the dynamics of population changes,
32 future demand, and future financial information. They will have to anticipate those
33 conclusions over the next five to 20 years. The question is how to respond to
34 changes.
35

36 They will lay out some alternatives that are possible, then create draft plan
37 elements. They will bring user group representatives in to look at different
38 elements of the plan.
39

40 Tasks 14 through 16 will create an implementation strategy. The most
41 important task is task 15, which is a mail out and phone back survey. The survey
42 will include choices on the proposals and the financial implications. The summary
43 asks what the priorities are, the financial strategy they should use, and how much
44 people are willing to pay for. From that, they will develop a priority list and
45 financial plan with voter support. Through task 15, they have been able to get very
46 specific with those questions.
47

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1 Crawford asked if they would have a hard time getting people to respond.
2 Beckwith stated they will survey people who are interested in doing the survey.
3 They've found in the past that many people want to participate. It's a popular
4 subject. The survey is extremely useful. Without the survey, the plan could be
5 based on advocacy or would not be too conservative. That won't work.
6

7 Roy asked if the survey is done by people who know how to develop
8 representative samples of the county residents. There is a very diverse
9 community. Beckwith stated the opinion sampling group has worked with him for
10 the last 26 years to do 35 surveys. It is the largest group in the State of
11 Washington. They've done such surveys for cities in Whatcom County.
12

13 Roy stated she is concerned about amalgamating all the data in the county.
14 They might get a different picture if they looked at what people from different areas
15 of the county want. Attend to those different regional responses. Beckwith stated
16 they would look at each of the subgroups.
17

18 The survey can provide some big surprises. For instance, the highest thing
19 on the survey may be wildlife conservation and trails development. However, it's
20 been different in different counties. Open space and wildlife have been the things
21 what most people are interested in.
22

23 People are willing to pay for those attributes if they can measure how they
24 are paid for and exactly where the money is going to go. They've been able to test
25 a variety of different ways to pay for parks.
26

27 Roy stated this sounds wonderful. It looks like they've done a lot of work
28 before they get to that point, including creating an implementation plan. That
29 seems backwards. It seems the survey ought to come before the planning.
30 Beckwith stated task five also involves survey. They like to do the scientific,
31 registered voter survey last. They've done other plans where they do the survey
32 first. They found that issues come up later. It's more effective to use the hard
33 survey approach at the end, and the soft survey at the beginning. Public
34 involvement will occur throughout the process.
35

36 Roy stated she would like a list of the steering committee members and who
37 the members represent. She also would like to know where the meetings will take
38 place. The underlying issue for her is whether this process will be inclusive of all in
39 the county. Beckwith stated the steering committee has about 24 members,
40 including city, county, state, and private representatives. The committee is
41 designed to be as representative as possible. They haven't yet scheduled meeting
42 locations.
43

44 Quantifying the County's roles and responsibilities is a key component of the
45 plan. Over the years, the definition of parks and leisure has expanded to almost
46 everything that isn't work or a job. It's about quality of life. Identify the factors
47 that determine whether an environment, facility, or program is regional, local, or a

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1 special service. Once the regional and local services are determined, determine the
2 level of service (LOS) for each, who their sponsors are, and what their funding
3 levels will be.

4
5 The Growth Management Act (GMA) says they must have a funding strategy
6 to fit the LOS. He's found that they have to project the consequences out for
7 twenty years, and then back off to find a financial strategy that is effective for the
8 six years.

9
10 The steering committee members created a list of all the park, recreation,
11 and open space issues.

12
13 *(Clerk's Note: End of tape one, side A.)*

14
15 Beckwith continued to state that some of the major components of the issues
16 identified by the steering committee include habitat and open space, distribution of
17 parks between rural and urban areas, revenue and stability of the parks system,
18 maintenance and funding, and a plan that is opportunistic and flexible.

19
20 Fleetwood asked if the issue of preservation of open space habitat includes a
21 process to identify those places. Beckwith stated it does. The working process
22 would be to identify those areas.

23
24 He asked the Council to add to the list of issues.

25
26 Fleetwood asked if long-range implementation could be more difficult
27 because they have so much open space to begin with, which makes it difficult to
28 rate highly for grant programs. Beckwith stated grant monies are drying up
29 drastically for park and recreation uses. At the State level, the grants are based on
30 the maximum benefit for the maximum number of people or strategic opportunities
31 for which they can package other grant resources. For example, the Foothills trail
32 has been funded with several different grant sources, but it has not gotten any
33 money for traditional parks. That's what they will see locally. Grants will not fund
34 the facilities, but this plan will make them competitive in selecting areas. Trails and
35 open space corridors are easier to get money for. If something has wide public
36 support, don't use general fund money on it. Go out and ask the public for funding
37 for it.

38
39 Lee Springgate, Point Wilson Group, discussed the history of the King County
40 parks system. He liked that Whatcom County is taking a good, long, hard look at
41 its role, vision, and financing strategy for parks for the next ten to 20 years.
42 Whatcom County has a lot to learn from King County.

43
44 Roy stated she likes the idea of evaluating and prioritizing the land they
45 have. It's a weakness locally. She asked who in King County would be responsible
46 for bringing in commercial sponsors to support parks. She asked who convinces
47 the commercial businesses to put up a sign in a park. Beckwith stated the Parks

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1 Director and Parks Manager has that responsibility. They are still trying to make
2 that idea work. Many jurisdictions are deciding where the user has a greater
3 responsibility to pick up a share of the cost and where it is in the public's interest to
4 support with taxes. They can identify what is a private good and what is a public
5 good.

6
7 Brenner asked if they are finding that user-ship is going down. Beckwith
8 stated it is not going down dramatically. That did happen with the State parks.

9
10 McShane stated the State's decision of public good versus the private good
11 seemed to be a blanket policy. Some parks were being used by a select group of
12 individuals. Beckwith agreed. They shouldn't be so uniform in the application of
13 that policy.

14
15 Brenner asked why King County approved a levy for only four years.
16 Beckwith stated the reason was because of the almost uniform distress to local
17 governments. King County felt it should check in with voters after four years. A
18 time limit was a recommendation of the committee and a result of the survey.

19
20 Brenner asked if there is a sunset on the conservations future fund levy.

21
22 McShane stated there isn't.

23
24 Beckwith asked the councilmembers to submit any issues they want to add
25 to the list.

26
27 Caskey-Schreiber asked for a list of steering committee members and
28 notification of time and place of the steering committee meetings.

29
30
31 **ADJOURN**

32
33 The meeting adjourned at 11:41 a.m.

34
35
36
37 _____
Jill Nixon, Minutes Transcription

38
39 The Council approved these minutes on January 11, 2005.

40
41 ATTEST:

WHATCOM COUNTY COUNCIL
WHATCOM COUNTY, WASHINGTON

42
43
44
45
46
47 _____
Dana Brown-Davis, Council Clerk
