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1 WHATCOM COUNTY COUNCIL
2 **Finance and Administrative Services Committee**
3

4 July 27, 2004
5

6 Committee Chair Sam Crawford called the meeting to order at 11:15 a.m. in
7 the Council Chambers, 311 Grand Avenue, Bellingham, Washington.
8

9 Present:

10 Dan McShane

11 Sharon Roy
12

Absent:

None

13 Also Present:

14 None
15
16

17 **COMMITTEE DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL**
18

19 **1. ORDINANCE AMENDING THE 2004 WHATCOM COUNTY BUDGET, 10TH**
20 **REQUEST (AB2004-276)**
21

22 ***Roy moved*** to recommend approval to the full Council.
23

24 Crawford stated he has questions on general fund funding of the forensic
25 room.
26

27 Dewey Desler, Deputy Administrator, stated this is a relatively small cost.
28 Among the things the Sheriff's Office requested, this provides effectiveness.
29

30 Crawford asked for an overview of the water resources fund item.
31

32 Bruce Roll, Water Resources Division Manager, stated a memo on Council
33 packet page 19 is for early action implementation activities tied to the Watershed
34 Management Plan. It includes public education, development of instream flow,
35 work toward a pilot for an instream flow regime for the Bertrand watershed,
36 Watershed Improvement District (WID) funding for instream flow and permitted
37 water use, Endangered Species Act (ESA) issues, watershed issues, and initiation of
38 a groundwater model. Utah State University (USU) is developing a conceptual
39 multilayer model, which is the starting point for this work. The size of the model
40 has yet to be defined.
41

42 Crawford referenced element four on Council packet page 19. The feedback
43 he's heard was that they're getting a single-layer model, and that wasn't sufficient.
44 They have now applied the groundwater modeling to a specific area. A third item is
45 integrating groundwater into the decision support system (DSS). He asked if this
46 addresses those concerns regarding the multi-layer modeling. Roll stated it does.
47 Groundwater models can't be done everywhere for everyone right away. Do some

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1 work on specific questions they want the groundwater model to answer, in terms of
2 management strategies. Move cautiously and be certain about what they're getting
3 when they contract for this work.
4

5 Crawford asked if some of this product they'll get will be applicable to other
6 areas. Roll stated it will. A lot of groundwater work was done already, including
7 assessment, a single well application model, and a groundwater fate transport
8 model for nitrates. This takes the multi-layer approach of developing an actual
9 model. Part of agreement with USU is that they prepackage and identify all the
10 data sets to use as the starting point of the model. That's what will be handed off
11 to the contractor.
12

13 Crawford asked if the funds requested are the remaining unspent water
14 resources dollars. Roll stated it is. This is the end of the funding. Future requests
15 will have to look at different funding sources. These are important elements of
16 implementation. They have leveraged \$300,000 from the WID and State. He
17 hopes to have people in the community who are willing to act and bring resources
18 to the table.
19

20 Desler stated they don't have the benefit of seeing other competing priorities
21 that might come up in the future. The Executive put this forward based on the
22 request of a number of associations about this project. Any additional requests
23 would have to compete with many other priorities because funding would have to
24 come from the general fund.
25

26 Roy stated the administration has prioritized this issue. She asked if the
27 shellfish issue is separate from water resource issues. Roll stated shellfish is a
28 water resource issue. People may claim ownership to what they're participating in.
29 A project to develop a long-term monitoring strategy for the entire water resources
30 inventory area (WRIA) includes the monitoring needs for Drayton Harbor and Birch
31 Bay. They are connected. By engaging farming communities and others, they're
32 dealing with Clean Water Act issues, including shellfish. Keep these groups focused
33 on the tasks at hand. Nurture and coordinate these interests, including shellfish,
34 flood, and salmon.
35

36 Roy stated it's important that the community understands these connections.
37 Roll stated there are many resources going to the community. They have to plug
38 the resources into the best tasks, not the interests.
39

40 It will take two to five years to go through the entire basin on instream flow.
41 They have spent years collecting the science for instream flows. They spent
42 another 1 1/2 years on an instream flow action plan. This is a critical juncture.
43

44 McShane stated he is very comfortable with elements one, two, and three.
45 He is still trying to figure out what they are getting from element four. Roll stated
46 some of that has yet to be defined. Until they have the package of existing
47 groundwater information from USU and know where they want to apply it, he can't

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1 answer that question. Now, this element was spawned from USU not being able to
2 do this work. Regarding any water resource issue, they are going to have some
3 type of model of the relationship between surface water and groundwater. He can't
4 say what specifically the model will be. In the next month or two, they'll have a
5 better handle on it. They have worked on identifying what it will cost.
6

7 Roll stated that on the groundwater piece, he will work with the Council on
8 any agreement for performing this work. The scope of work and contract will be
9 before the Council at a later date. They are going to implement in areas where
10 people are willing to bring other resources. This request will be to work with people
11 who are willing to act. In the case of the WID work, the County will create an
12 interlocal agreement with the WID to identify the work to be accomplished within
13 the budget. The same approach would happen with instream flow. That will come
14 forward to the Council at a later date.
15

16 Tom Anderson, Public Utility District (PUD) 1 Manager, stated make sure the
17 Council doesn't have the impression this is the end of the money needed to resolve
18 watershed planning issues. He appreciates the Council's support. The instream
19 flow piece lets them ask questions about users who don't have water rights, how to
20 get along with the tribes, and how to get along in a real world situation. They will
21 come up with controversial directions. Be aware of that. This piece of negotiation
22 will determine the likelihood of the path they are on, which is an alternative dispute
23 resolution to going to court.
24

25 Henry Bierlink, Agricultural Preservation, stated he agrees with Mr.
26 Anderson. This vote is validation of elements two and three and the drainage basin
27 management approach. They're going to do that all around. He's not sure what it
28 will look like, but the question is how to look at an area, such as a drainage area,
29 and put these things together holistically, with the local people involved, to deal
30 with all the issues. That's what the Bertrand watershed project will demonstrate.
31 He is asking that the County be a partner. Next year in the budget, there needs to
32 be an investment in the amount of \$100,000 to \$200,000 range to get these things
33 going.
34

35 McShane stated the element three contribution is \$100,000, but there is
36 other funding support totaling over \$500,000.
37

38 ***Motion carried unanimously.***
39
40

41 **COUNCIL "CONSENT AGENDA" ITEM**

42

- 43 **1. REQUEST AUTHORIZATION FOR THE EXECUTIVE TO ENTER INTO A**
- 44 **CONTRACT AGREEMENT BETWEEN WHATCOM COUNTY AND**
- 45 **FAIRBANKS ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES, INC. FOR A CLAM**
- 46 **RESTORATION FEASIBILITY STUDY AND SUBMERGED AQUATIC**

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1 **VEGETATION ASSESSMENT IN THE AMOUNT OF \$19,500 (AB2004-**
2 **280)**

3
4 *Roy moved* to recommend approval to the full Council.

5
6 *Motion carried unanimously.*

7
8 **2. REQUEST AUTHORIZATION FOR THE EXECUTIVE TO ENTER INTO A**
9 **PROFESSIONAL SERVICE CONTRACT BETWEEN WHATCOM COUNTY**
10 **AND CATHOLIC COMMUNITY SERVICES – RECOVERY CENTER FOR**
11 **OUTPATIENT SUBSTANCE ABUSE SERVICES (AB2004-281)**

12
13 *McShane moved* to recommend approval to the full Council.

14
15 *Motion carried unanimously.*

16
17 **3. REQUEST AUTHORIZATION FOR THE EXECUTIVE TO ENTER INTO AN**
18 **AMENDED PROFESSIONAL SERVICE CONTRACT BETWEEN WHATCOM**
19 **COUNTY AND JAN LOR, ADMINISTRATOR, FOR EMPLOYMENT**
20 **SERVICES TO PEOPLE WITH DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES IN THE**
21 **AMOUNT OF \$10,560 FOR A TOTAL AMENDED AMOUNT OF \$25,360,**
22 **EXTENDING THE CONTRACT TO JUNE 30, 2005 (AB2004-282)**

23
24 *Roy moved* to recommend approval to the full Council.

25
26 Crawford asked what they're doing.

27
28 Terry Hinz, Assistant Director, stated a local artist is working with two or
29 three clients to develop their skills to sell their artwork. This is a program the
30 County has done for awhile. It's funded through a State grant.

31
32 *Motion carried unanimously.*

33
34 **4. RESOLUTION ESTABLISHING CRP NO. 903005 AND AWARDING THE**
35 **BID FOR THE FROST ROAD SAAR CREEK BRIDGE NO. 242**
36 **CONSTRUCTION TO THE LOW BIDDER, AWARD CONSTRUCTION, INC.**
37 **IN THE AMOUNT OF \$618,308.26 (AB2004-283)**

38
39 *Crawford moved* to recommend approval to the full Council.

40
41 Roy asked why Councilmember McShane has been opposed to this project all
42 along.

43
44 McShane stated this is a sparsely populated area. He knows two people who
45 live on the road. It's not that far to drive around. The cost is pretty high for a road
46 that serves few people. There are alternative routes for people to go.

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1 Occasionally, the County may need to back away from certain projects. The
2 Engineering Division said some time ago that it had concerns about the funding.
3

4 Roy stated there is an issue of consistency. There is expensive infrastructure
5 for few people all over the county. It's a matter of public responsibility. They don't
6 ask each homeowner to chip in for a road.
7

8 Chris Brueske, Engineering Manager, stated they've discussed this issue with
9 the Council four or five times. The October 2002 engineer's report sums up the
10 issue best. The conclusion was that the Engineering Division felt it could close the
11 road without unacceptable traffic delays. However, the emergency response
12 agencies and school district want the road to remain open. Eleven of the 13 parcel
13 owners want the road left open. For the public safety issue, the Engineering
14 Division advocated this project all along. The bids came in six percent over the
15 engineer's estimate, which was pretty good. The project is on the annual road
16 program. They have done engineering. There is \$65,000 into the project right
17 now.
18

19 Crawford asked how the other bids were. Brueske stated they were all
20 higher. They are listed on Council packet page 88.
21

22 ***Motion carried 2-1 with McShane opposed.***
23

24 **5. RESOLUTION TO ELECT EXPENDITURES OF NATIONAL FOREST**
25 **RELATED SAFETY-NET PAYMENTS UNDER PL 106-93 (AB2004-284)**
26

27 Dewey Desler, Deputy Administrator, stated annually the County applies a
28 certain percentage of funding between Title 2 and Title 3. This year's decision is
29 consistent with the Council's decisions over the last several years, which were to
30 maximize Title 2 projects. A special advisory committee is composed of Whatcom
31 County representatives, Skagit County representatives, and interest groups that
32 propose projects for the funding.
33

34 ***McShane moved*** to recommend approval to the full Council. He's pleased
35 with the Title 2 projects that have come forward. They are drifting a little too
36 heavy toward education. One project before them is on the borderline of qualifying
37 for Title 2 funds. For another project that qualifies also for Title 3 funds, the idea is
38 to put Title 3 money into the that program, the Skye Program, in an amount of
39 about \$500,000. That equal amount of funding will fully fund the other project
40 from Title 2 that is borderline. Desler stated it would be useful to have a discussion
41 on this further.
42

43 ***Motion carried unanimously.***
44

45 **OTHER BUSINESS**
46
47

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1 Dewey Desler, Deputy Administrator, stated there are three things to
2 discuss.

3
4 First, in October, the administration will provide the Council with copies of
5 the 2005-2006 biennial budget. The Committee should start thinking about budget
6 hearings in October and early November.

7
8 Second, the administration has received requests from the Sheriff and Jail
9 about supplemental budgets that haven't come before the Council yet, related to
10 significant overtime expenditures for federal services at the airport and border.

11
12 McShane stated he has a memo about that for the Sheriff and Mr. Desler.
13 Desler stated he received a very large request for supplemental jail service
14 expenses. Another item is about acquisition of space to house sheriff operations at
15 the airport. He asked if there were any objections from the committee. It has no
16 funding source attached, other than the general fund.

17
18 Last, he asked if there are questions from the committee related to
19 emergency medical services (EMS). The public may be asking questions of the
20 councilmembers.

21
22 Crawford stated he hasn't had very much feedback. The public is still
23 absorbing the issue and is assuming that the fire districts will absorb the service.
24 Keep this in the public eye.

25
26 Roy stated she agreed with Councilmember Crawford about not getting
27 comments from the public on it. People are making assumptions that it's all going
28 to be okay, because that's how the newspaper represented it. Desler stated the
29 County currently spends \$1.35 million per year, and \$500,000 is in a reserve at the
30 City. The County also has hundreds of thousands of dollars in assets. In the 2005-
31 2006 budget, the administration is planning a \$200,000 per year reduction in the
32 cost of this service. The City of Bellingham is going to reduce its formal
33 expenditures around Medic One, but will maintain three units. Existing personnel
34 will staff a fourth unit. All departments would devote more time and resources to
35 basic life support (BLS) response. Currently, almost all responses are with an
36 advanced life support (ALS) unit. There will be more triage of the calls and
37 responses so there is less expense with ALS and more expense with BLS. He's
38 hearing that people are okay with that. There hasn't been a formal reaction at this
39 point. They may operate in that fashion for two years. In the meantime, they'll
40 have to get ready to do things with the fire districts and others. The precise plan is
41 still unclear. At some point, the administration may ask for appropriation authority.

42
43 McShane stated some of the fire districts seem to be optimistic.

44
45 Crawford stated there is an opportunity to change the service and to rework
46 the system, which may be a better system.

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1 *(Clerk's Note: End of tape one, side A.)*
2

3 Crawford stated the Washington Ambulance Association webpage is
4 informative. The provision for ALS in every county is done sometimes by fire
5 agencies, private agencies, or even a sheriff's department in one case. There are
6 many ways to provide the service.
7

8 McShane asked for more detail about the jail expenses. Desler stated the
9 Sheriff proposed setting up various regional sites. The administration supported it.
10 Not all the sites initially identified were established, and other sites may be
11 established. Now, there is a desire to lease space around the airport. The Sheriff
12 wants to move the traffic division out there.
13

14 About the jail issues, the County has tremendous obligations for very ill
15 people in the justice system. For every person in the jail, the County pays
16 hundreds of dollars for medical service. There are extensive requirements for
17 medication for inmates, which requires another supplemental budget request.
18 Some revenue is supposed to come from the cities. Even if people are eligible for
19 Medicaid, they lose eligibility when they go to jail, which is tremendously unfair.
20 The County must take on that responsibility.
21

22 McShane asked if these people cycle through the system all the time. Desler
23 stated many do. Problems can be mental health issues, diabetes, HIV, or many
24 other issues. When they leave the jail, the County is required to hand them a fresh
25 supply of medication. The County increased budgeted funds last year to cover
26 these demands.
27

28 McShane stated there is an issue of liability for the County, as well.
29

30 Roy stated she'd want to know their options when this comes before the
31 Council for a decision.
32

33
34 **ADJOURN**

35
36 The meeting adjourned at 12:10 p.m.
37
38
39

40 Jill Nixon, Minutes Transcription
41

42
43 ATTEST:

WHATCOM COUNTY COUNCIL
WHATCOM COUNTY, WASHINGTON
44
45
46
47

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1 _____
2 Dana Brown-Davis, Council Clerk

Sam Crawford, Committee Chair