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

4 April 26, 2005  
5

6 Committee Chair L. Ward Nelson called the meeting to order at 11:30 a.m. in  
7 the Council Chambers, 311 Grand Avenue, Bellingham, Washington.  
8

9 Present: Absent:  
10 Sam Crawford None  
11 Sharon Roy

12  
13 Also Present:  
14 Dan McShane  
15 Seth Fleetwood  
16  
17

18 **COMMITTEE DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL**  
19

20 **1. ORDINANCE AMENDING 2005 WHATCOM COUNTY BUDGET, REQUEST**  
21 **NO. 4 (AB2005-182)**  
22

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

25 Dewey Desler, Deputy Administrator, stated there is about \$3 million in the  
26 Conservation Futures Fund and they collect about \$838,000 per year for the fund.  
27 There was an appraisal of the property. It's being sold at a price less than the  
28 appraised price.  
29

30 ***Motion carried unanimously.***  
31

32 **2. ORDINANCE ESTABLISHING A \$50.00 PETTY CASH REVOLVING FUND**  
33 **FOR JUVENILE COURT ADMINISTRATION (AB2005-184)**  
34

35 ***Roy moved*** to recommend approval to the full Council.  
36

37 ***Motion carried unanimously.***  
38

39 **3. ORDINANCE ESTABLISHING A \$200.00 PETTY CASH REVOLVING**  
40 **FUND FOR THE COUNTY CLERK (AB2005-185)**  
41

42 ***Roy moved*** to recommend approval to the full Council.  
43

44 ***Motion carried unanimously.***  
45  
46

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1 **COUNCIL "CONSENT AGENDA" ITEM**

2  
3 **1. REQUEST AUTHORIZATION FOR THE EXECUTIVE TO ENTER INTO A**  
4 **PROFESSIONAL SERVICES CONTRACT BETWEEN WHATCOM COUNTY**  
5 **AND SHEARER DESIGN, LLC FOR DESIGN OF PREFABRICATED BRIDGE**  
6 **SYSTEM, IN THE AMOUNT OF \$60,506 (AB2005-192)**  
7

8 Nelson asked if the contractor is helping with the design, not building it.  
9

10 Chris Brueske, Engineering Manager, stated the contractor is doing the entire  
11 design. The existing bridge is not suitable for modern truckloads. The County  
12 could use existing Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT)  
13 designs, but no design can be installed without tailoring it to the particular needs.  
14 There are also issues about the equipment needs, what can be installed with  
15 existing or rented equipment, and the lifecycle of the bridge system relative to the  
16 cost. There will also be a cost-benefit analysis of the design.  
17

18 Nelson asked if the contractor will hold indemnity of the structure if it  
19 becomes flawed. Brueske stated the contract is a standard contract reviewed by  
20 legal counsel.  
21

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

24 ***Motion carried unanimously.***  
25

26 **2. REQUEST AUTHORIZATION FOR THE EXECUTIVE TO ENTER INTO A**  
27 **PROFESSIONAL SERVICES CONTRACT AMENDMENT BETWEEN**  
28 **WHATCOM COUNTY AND ART ANDERSON ASSOCIATES TO PROVIDE**  
29 **ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT IN BUILDING THE PROGRAM TO**  
30 **SUSTAIN AND IMPROVE THE LUMMI ISLAND FERRY SYSTEM, IN THE**  
31 **AMOUNT OF \$100,000, FOR A TOTAL AMENDED CONTRACT IN THE**  
32 **AMOUNT OF \$115,000 (AB2005-193)**  
33

34 Jeff Monsen, Public Works Department Director, stated he would speak on  
35 this and the next item. The agreement is for both engineering and administrative  
36 support as the County goes through the replacement process and a variety of dock  
37 issues. He doesn't anticipate using the entire dollar amount allowed in this  
38 contract. He hoped to use any remaining amount for additional support in looking  
39 at the Gooseberry Point dock relocation. The funds are from the road fund.  
40

41 Nelson asked what it means to have a master plan for the ferry system,  
42 including a schedule reflecting tasks, interdependencies, and parametric cost  
43 estimates. Monsen stated it means they will amend the 14-year ferry plan. As  
44 they look at dock relocation and the detail of the boat design, the next version of  
45 the 14-year plan, coming forward in one year, will have more detail for several  
46 years. This work is something that will have to be done, no matter what. There  
47 will be value in having this information.

1  
2       **Nelson moved** to recommend approval to the full Council.

3  
4       **Motion carried unanimously.**

5  
6   **3. REQUEST AUTHORIZATION FOR THE EXECUTIVE TO ENTER INTO A**  
7   **PROFESSIONAL SERVICES CONTRACT AMENDMENT BETWEEN**  
8   **WHATCOM COUNTY AND ELLIOTT BAY DESIGN GROUP FOR**  
9   **ENGINEERING SUPPORT SERVICES IN THE DESIGN AND**  
10   **CONSTRUCTION SUPERVISION OF A NEW PASSENGER VEHICLE**  
11   **FERRY, IN THE AMOUNT OF \$222,940, FOR A TOTAL AMENDED**  
12   **CONTRACT IN THE AMOUNT OF \$237,940 (AB2005-194)**

13  
14       *(Clerk's Note: See the above item for discussion.)*

15  
16       Jeff Monsen, Public Works Department Director, stated the contract is to  
17   design the boat and provide support services relative to docks. Elliott Bay was the  
18   company most qualified for designing the boat. The Art Anderson firm was chosen  
19   for support to make sure they get the greatest value. Elliot Bay was the design  
20   company for both Pierce County boats, is working with Skagit County to re-engine  
21   its boat, and the parent company of Elliott Bay designed the Whatcom Chief.  
22   Because of this firm's recent work with Pierce County, Whatcom County will derive  
23   benefit from that design work.

24  
25       Nelson asked if the contract is to decide on the boat design. Monsen stated  
26   they know the concept and have a decent estimate. The design will engage the  
27   community somewhat, but there is not a lot of cost to go through a public process.  
28   The majority of the cost is the below-deck engineering. The visual nature of the  
29   boat is cheap.

30  
31       Part of the reason Elliott Bay was selected is they have recent experience  
32   with hull design to minimize draft and wake.

33  
34       Roy asked if Mr. Monsen is confident that over 50 percent of the Lummi  
35   Island community is happy with the size of the replacement ferry. She has  
36   received comments from people who suddenly realized the bigger ferry would make  
37   fewer runs. She has an inkling that this may surface as an issue. Monsen stated a  
38   year ago, staff discussed these issues. They recognize that a boat of this size won't  
39   highly increase through-put. The Art Anderson firm would plan out those other  
40   through-put issues. He strongly recommends that the boat be replaced. A 35-car  
41   boat is the biggest they can put into the system and get a value in return. A  
42   smaller boat will not be able to take advantage of other system improvements in  
43   the future. This option provides the greatest value in the short-term and the  
44   greatest number of options in the long-term.

45  
46       Roy stated make sure the community understands that a bigger boat means  
47   fewer trips per day. Cycle time will go from 20 minutes to 30 minutes.

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1  
2 Nelson asked the criteria used to determine size and infrastructure support.  
3 Monsen stated they need to replace the boat, given its current capacity. They  
4 looked at how big the boat could be until they saw bigger cost increases for  
5 operation, manufacture cost, and long-term alternatives. Don't go bigger than a  
6 35-car boat. Some people will say it's not big enough. The goal is not to maximize  
7 through-put, but balance through-put with what the community wants.

8  
9 McShane stated the staff has worked this through carefully.

10  
11 **Nelson moved** to recommend approval to the full Council.

12  
13 **Motion carried unanimously.**

14  
15 **4. REQUEST AUTHORIZATION FOR THE EXECUTIVE TO AWARD BID NO.**  
16 **05-29 TO THE LOW BIDDER, WHATCOM BUILDERS, INC., FOR**  
17 **ANNUAL MISCELLANEOUS OVERLAY AND PRELEVEL PROJECTS, IN**  
18 **THE AMOUNT OF \$439,234.20 (AB2005-195)**

19  
20 **Crawford moved** to recommend approval to the full Council.

21  
22 **Motion carried unanimously.**

23  
24 *(Clerk's Note: The Committee took a break from 11:50 a.m. to 12:05 p.m.)*

25  
26  
27 **SPECIAL PRESENTATION (12:15 P.M.)**

28  
29 **1. ANNUAL REPORT BY THE COMMISSION AGAINST DOMESTIC**  
30 **VIOLENCE (AB2005-189)**

31  
32 Kathy Washatka, Commission Chair, stated she thanks the County Council for  
33 its financial support for the past six years. It allows the commission to operate and  
34 complete smaller projects. Last year's strategic plan outlined several projects it  
35 plans to complete over the next three years. Those larger projects require more  
36 funding. The annual report lists the projects they've completed this past year.

37  
38 Last year, they completed the first safety audit of the Bellingham Police  
39 Department, Sheriff's Office, 911 dispatch, and the jail. They have been working  
40 on the 66 recommendations from those audits. They were recognized and invited  
41 to Washington D.C. to participate in a think tank and share what they've learned  
42 from the safety audit.

43  
44 Their goal this past year was to complete the second audit phase of the  
45 Probation Department and Prosecution offices. They were not able to raise all the  
46 projects needed. That project is on hold. They are awaiting word on a large grant.

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1 Bill Elfo, County Sheriff, stated the audit examined the law enforcement  
2 response to domestic violence. The audit identified several areas in which  
3 improvements could be and are being made. These recommendations have  
4 resulted in several tangible changes to the policies and practices of the Sheriff's  
5 Office.

6  
7 One of the audit recommendations was the risk assessment tool. Deputies  
8 investigating domestic violence cases now collect additional information that  
9 identifies risk factors. This is helpful to the prosecutors, courts, child welfare, and  
10 service providers to triage cases and in handling these cases. With funding  
11 received, they were able to train all deputies in the use of this risk assessment tool,  
12 which is being institutionalized in the department.

13  
14 Another recommendation regarded getting information in the field on the  
15 history of domestic violence. The current system is archaic. Because of  
16 councilmembers' trips to Washington D.C. and work on the data integration project,  
17 they should see improvements.

18  
19 The Sheriff's Office has prioritized its data entry to work on domestic violence  
20 cases first.

21  
22 Other recommendations regarded dispatch and form changes. They are  
23 implementing those recommendations to the extent they can.

24  
25 There were also recommendations for the jail. A concern is the abuser  
26 getting out of jail and the victim not being timely notified. They have improved the  
27 system for collecting information and improved notification to victims.

28  
29 Another jail problem were inmates harassing victims over the telephone.  
30 They installed phone blocks to prevent that from happening as much as possible.  
31 The blocks have a 95 to 98 percent success rate.

32  
33 The corrections officers are training in domestic violence dynamics this year  
34 and next year.

35  
36 There were many intangible benefits from the audit. Service providers are  
37 coordinating and cooperating. It's a good system. He supports the audit process  
38 throughout the criminal justice system. He looks forward to audits for the  
39 Probation Department. The recommendations can benefit in other areas outside of  
40 domestic violence.

41  
42 Sue Parrott, Domestic Violence Commission Director, stated they worked  
43 with the Northwest Regional Council (NWRC) to start an elder and vulnerable adult  
44 abuse coalition. People aren't working well together on that issue. Not a lot of this  
45 type of abuse is reported. They want to increase awareness.

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1           They are working with the Family Care Network to institute a routine  
2 domestic violence screening as part of a computerized format that physicians will  
3 use. Physicians will do routine domestic violence screening. Victims are more  
4 likely to disclose if they're asked.

5  
6           The first Domestic Violence Commission achievement award went to Dorothy  
7 Place. They plan that process annually as part of Domestic Violence Awareness  
8 month.

9  
10          Much of the work done is in collaboration with others. She sits on many  
11 tasks forces and committees. Make sure the commission is a resource for the  
12 community. Success is based on that collaboration. The benchmarking report is an  
13 example of that collaboration. It collated data from the community to get a  
14 snapshot of the resources. The report included a statistical analysis on the data to  
15 adjust for population changes to accurately indicate increases and decreases. They  
16 added new data on the disposition of misdemeanor and felony cases and the time  
17 to disposition. They added a section on outcomes of perpetrator treatment. In the  
18 next report, they hope to add data on recidivism.

19  
20          Nelson thanked Ms. Parrott for the report. He was impressed with the  
21 statistics. They have gone a long way in demonstrating how this effort benefits the  
22 community.

23  
24          He'd like to see work on the misdemeanor element. The conviction rate  
25 seems low compared to felonies. He asked why that would be. Parrott stated the  
26 felony data is compiled by case. Misdemeanor data is compiled by charge. In a  
27 felony case, there could be three charges, and only conviction of one charge.  
28 Misdemeanors show all the charges. The Domestic Violence Commission is using  
29 data tracking systems that others have in place. That data is compiled from all the  
30 courts that have a system. There isn't any court that lumps misdemeanor cases by  
31 charge.

32  
33          Roy asked if the arresting deputy or prosecutor decides an incident is a  
34 felony or misdemeanor. Elfo stated the deputy makes the assessment as to the  
35 charge at the time the accused is booked into jail. Some cases charged as felonies  
36 are referred back to District Court or Municipal Court as a misdemeanor. Some  
37 misdemeanors are charged as felonies.

38  
39          Nelson stated there is a triage system in place for felony cases. They don't  
40 have a triage system for misdemeanor cases. About 50 percent are dismissed. He  
41 asked if there is a mechanism that can be put in place. Elfo stated it's a tracking  
42 system. It's common for the prosecutors to plea bargain a case. Charges might  
43 drop to malicious mischief or something else.

44  
45          Parrott stated there is going to be significant injury or evidence in felonies.  
46 With misdemeanors, there is less evidence that could lead to differences in how  
47 misdemeanors and felonies are processed.

1  
2 McShane stated phase II of the audit depends on a grant. He asked the cost.  
3 Parrott stated the cost includes both a consultant and staff time. The lowest grant  
4 amount submitted is about \$50,000. The original grant request was for more, to  
5 include the City of Blaine, the County Prosecutor's Office, the City of Bellingham,  
6 and District Court Probation. She is positive that the commission will receive the  
7 grant. It adds enhancements to the Sheriff's Office to buy equipment. The grant  
8 also allows a service provider to expand its on-call advocates to all law enforcement  
9 agencies in the county and train corrections staff and small city law enforcement  
10 agencies. It's a two-year grant.

11  
12 McShane asked if counseling is part of the restraining order, especially with  
13 misdemeanor cases. Parrott stated that if someone is convicted, the court orders  
14 the person to get an evaluation from a service provider, which will assess whether  
15 the person is a domestic violence offender. Couples counseling is not  
16 recommended if there is a history of domestic violence.

17  
18 McShane stated one of his questions is how to support people who need  
19 counseling.

20  
21 *(Clerk's Note: End of tape one, side A.)*  
22

23 Roy stated support for the person really depends on the quality of the judge  
24 and assessment professional. There is a wide range of ability to help people take  
25 the next step.

26  
27 Fleetwood stated it's wonderful this commission exists and is dealing with  
28 this issue. If they don't address root socio-economic structural cause, which is a  
29 social effect that exists in the country, people will punch each other occasionally,  
30 and there will be domestic violence. They are only going to nip at the edge of the  
31 problem this way. The federal government must address the root cause. Parrott  
32 stated the ultimate goal is to raise a generation of people who don't believe in  
33 domestic violence.

34  
35 **OTHER BUSINESS**

36  
37 There was no other business.

38  
39 **ADJOURN**

40  
41 The meeting adjourned at 12:43 p.m.  
42  
43

44  
45 \_\_\_\_\_  
46 Jill Nixon, Minutes Transcription  
47

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1 ATTEST:

WHATCOM COUNTY COUNCIL  
WHATCOM COUNTY, WASHINGTON

2

3

4

5

6

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
L. Ward Nelson, Committee Chair