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

4 November 22, 2005
5

6 Committee Chair L. Ward Nelson called the meeting to order at 11:03 a.m. in
7 the Council Chambers, 311 Grand Avenue, Bellingham, Washington.
8

9 Present:

10 Sam Crawford

Absent:

Sharon Roy

11
12 Also Present:

13 Laurie Caskey-Schreiber

14 Barbara Brenner
15
16

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

- 19 **1. ORDINANCE AMENDING THE 2005 WHATCOM COUNTY BUDGET,**
20 **REQUEST #12, IN THE AMOUNT OF \$923,766 (AB2005-430)**
21

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

24 *Motion carried unanimously.*
25
26

27 **COUNCIL "CONSENT AGENDA" ITEM**
28

- 29 **1. REQUEST AUTHORIZATION FOR THE EXECUTIVE TO APPROVE THE**
30 **PURCHASE OF AN ANNUAL SUPPLY OF EQUIPMENT LUBRICANTS**
31 **USING THE WASHINGTON STATE CONTRACT, IN AN AMOUNT TO**
32 **EXCEED \$35,000 (AB2005-433)**
33

34 *Nelson moved* to recommend approval to the full Council.
35

36 *Motion carried unanimously.*
37

- 38 **2. REQUEST AUTHORIZATION FOR THE EXECUTIVE TO ENTER INTO**
39 **CONTRACT AMENDMENT #1 BETWEEN WHATCOM COUNTY AND**
40 **COMPU-WORKS PACIFIC FOR THE WENET DATA INTEGRATION**
41 **PROJECT TO PROVIDE FURTHER PROJECT DEVELOPMENT AND**
42 **IMPLEMENTATION, IN THE AMOUNT OF \$95,807, FOR A TOTAL**
43 **CONTRACT AMOUNT OF \$287,957 (AB2005-434)**
44

45 Nelson asked if this would break the project down into more manageable
46 parts.
47

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1 Dewey Desler, Deputy Administrator, stated this is one phase of the project,
2 which is divided into different phases. This project is funded with some federal
3 funds. It's a key component of the criminal justice system. It is the highest
4 priority of the Law and Justice Plan.

5
6 *Nelson moved* to recommend approval to the full Council.

7
8 *Motion carried unanimously.*

- 9
10 **3. REQUEST AUTHORIZATION FOR THE EXECUTIVE TO ENTER INTO A**
11 **CONTRACT BETWEEN WHATCOM COUNTY AND COMPU-TECH, INC.**
12 **FOR THE DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF A NEW AND**
13 **ENHANCED AS/400 BASED CIVIL PAPER TRACKING SYSTEM FOR THE**
14 **WHATCOM COUNTY SHERIFF USING BORDER PROSECUTION GRANT**
15 **FUNDS, IN THE AMOUNT OF \$39,000 (AB2005-435)**

16
17 *Crawford moved* to recommend approval to the full Council.

18
19 *Motion carried unanimously.*

- 20
21 **4. REQUEST AUTHORIZATION FOR THE EXECUTIVE TO ENTER INTO A**
22 **CONTRACT BETWEEN WHATCOM COUNTY AND WILSON**
23 **ENGINEERING, LLC TO PROVIDE PLANS, SPECIFICATIONS AND**
24 **ESTIMATES FOR GENEVA AREA STORMWATER RETROFITS AND CABLE**
25 **STREET RECONSTRUCTION, IN THE AMOUNT OF \$247,220 (AB2005-**
26 **436)**

27
28 *Nelson moved* to recommend approval to the full Council.

29
30 *Motion carried unanimously.*

- 31
32 **5. REQUEST AUTHORIZATION FOR THE EXECUTIVE TO ENTER INTO A**
33 **CONTRACT BETWEEN WHATCOM COUNTY AND J. A. BRENNAN**
34 **ASSOCIATES, PLLC TO PROVIDE SERVICES NECESSARY TO DESIGN**
35 **AND INSTALL LANDSCAPE DEMONSTRATING WATERSHED-FRIENDLY**
36 **GARDENING PRACTICES AT BLOEDEL-DONOVAN PARK, IN THE**
37 **AMOUNT OF \$19,930 (AB2005-437)**

38
39 Crawford asked why the County is doing something at Bloedel-Donovan, a
40 city park.

41
42 Bruce Roll, Assistant Director, stated this is the best location for the
43 program. They've partnered with the City to use this site.

44
45 Crawford asked if the City is participating financially. Roll stated it is. The
46 City has agreed to maintain it once it is up and going.

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1 Caskey-Schreiber asked if half of the project is funded by a centennial grant
2 to the City. Roll stated the grant was to the County.

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

5
6 *Motion carried unanimously.*

- 7
8 **6. REQUEST AUTHORIZATION FOR THE EXECUTIVE TO ENTER INTO A**
9 **CONTRACT BETWEEN WHATCOM COUNTY AND RE SOURCES TO**
10 **PROVIDE FOR CONTINUATION OF A WASTE REDUCTION/RECYCLING**
11 **AND HOUSEHOLD HAZARDOUS WASTE HOTLINE TO WHATCOM**
12 **COUNTY RESIDENTS AND BUSINESSES, IN THE AMOUNT OF \$24,000**
13 **(AB2005-438)**

14
15 *Nelson moved* to recommend approval to the full Council.

16
17 *Motion carried unanimously.*

- 18
19 **7. REQUEST AUTHORIZATION FOR THE EXECUTIVE TO ENTER INTO A**
20 **CONTRACT BETWEEN WHATCOM COUNTY AND RE SOURCES TO**
21 **COORDINATE AGRICULTURAL PLASTICS COLLECTION AND**
22 **RECYCLING OPPORTUNITIES IN WHATCOM COUNTY, IN THE AMOUNT**
23 **OF \$18,065 (AB2005-439)**

24
25 Nelson stated this is a new contract to educate people in agricultural areas
26 about recycling certain products. Regarding feed sacks, there was always a
27 concern about the spread of disease. He asked if there was any discussion on how
28 the recycled sacks may spread diseases.

29
30 Bruce Roll, Assistant Director, stated there was no discussion about that
31 topic. This program is to remove and recycle the products, not to move them to
32 another location. He can bring this up as an issue to address. This is part of a total
33 of \$75,000 for starting new programs. The Health Department can evaluate the
34 risks.

35
36 Nelson stated make sure there is a mechanism in place to prevent rapid
37 transmission of disease.

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

40
41 *Motion carried unanimously.*

- 42
43 **8. REQUEST AUTHORIZATION FOR THE EXECUTIVE TO ENTER INTO A**
44 **CONTRACT BETWEEN WHATCOM COUNTY AND THOMSON WEST**
45 **PUBLISHING COMPANY FOR A THREE-YEAR SUBSCRIPTION FOR**
46 **ONLINE AND HARDBOUND LEGAL RESEARCH TOOLS FOR THE**

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1 **WHATCOM COUNTY LAW LIBRARY, IN THE AMOUNT OF \$13,492.92**
2 **ANNUALLY (\$40,478.76 OVER THREE YEARS) (AB2005-440)**

3
4 Nelson asked if they have to do this each year.

5
6 Dave McEachran, Prosecutor, stated this is a multi-year contract to increase
7 their ability to provide online research. It also reduces book costs. This is an
8 increased amount from what was budgeted. The legislature just increased the civil
9 filing fees from \$12 to \$17, so revenue will cover this cost. They will also ask to
10 increase their share of the filing fees from \$17 to \$20. This increased cost will be
11 covered by the additional revenue from the increased fees.

12
13 Nelson asked if they are currently using online research data and if the cost
14 is going up. McEachran stated they are using the online data and the cost is going
15 up. He introduced the acting law librarian.

16
17 Virginia Tucker, Acting Law Librarian, stated this contract makes more online
18 resources available, including practice materials, sample forms, and updated
19 treatises. More and more often, the public is trying to do their own research. This
20 package shifts resources to online. It also adds capacity so two computers can be
21 used at the same time instead of one. In addition, the hard copy materials they get
22 will now be discounted 50 percent, which will also save money.

23
24 Nelson asked about CD-ROM's purchased a while ago. Tucker stated most
25 services have now gone online, so they won't purchase any more CD's.

26
27 ***Nelson moved*** to recommend approval to the full Council.

28
29 ***Motion carried unanimously.***

30
31 **9. RESOLUTION TO SET HEARING TO SELL SURPLUS PROPERTY BY**
32 **AUCTION, REQ. #03-05 (AB2005-390B)**

33
34 ***Crawford moved*** to recommend approval to the full Council.

35
36 ***Motion carried unanimously.***

37
38
39 **OTHER BUSINESS**

40
41 Nelson stated the Council received a letter from the Glenhaven Community
42 regarding issues happening in the community. One issue expressed in the letter is
43 that there are only three officers who patrol all of Whatcom County, so response
44 would be delayed. When he joined this Council 12 years ago, he was told that
45 there are only three deputies on duty. The County population is 177,300. About
46 44 percent is in the unincorporated area. Whatcom County ranks about eighth or
47 ninth in the state in criminal justice service employees. Whatcom County is at

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1 1.181 officers per thousand in population. Many of the larger counties have a lower
2 amount. The number of deputies hired for patrol since 1993 is 20. He asked
3 what's going on. The Finance Committee may have to follow up on this issue.
4 What is happening with crime has an overall impact on law and justice costs.

5
6 Brenner asked if the comparisons include all criminal justice employees or
7 just the deputies.

8
9 Nelson stated the comparisons are just of patrol deputies.

10
11 Crawford asked if the question is how they can only have three patrol
12 deputies 12 years ago, hire 20 more deputies, and still have only three deputies on
13 duty per shift.

14
15 Nelson stated that is his question.

16
17 Crawford stated one concern of the letter was that the concentration of
18 population was greater in Sudden Valley, so there is an assigned deputy, but
19 because of the road closure, response is delayed.

20
21 Nelson stated he hasn't gotten to that concern in the letter yet. When there
22 are road closures, they should at least have the capacity to provide protection in
23 these communities.

24
25 Caskey-Schreiber stated she's glad this has come forward. Deputies have
26 said they are understaffed and the department needs more deputies in the east
27 County. Since she has been a councilmember, the Council has added deputies.

28
29 Kevin Moyes, Chief Deputy, stated he hasn't been in the administration since
30 1993, so he can't answer all of the question. He can't say where the 20 new
31 deputies have gone. However, there are a variety of reasons for the staffing. They
32 have changed patrols work four ten-hour shifts to have overlapping shifts. On day
33 shift and graveyard, there is a minimum of one sergeant and three deputies. On
34 swing shift, there is a minimum of one sergeant and four deputies. On any day, at
35 least five or six deputies are in court. Some of those deputies are in court on their
36 days off, while on vacation, or while scheduled for patrol.

37
38 Nelson stated they can be subpoenaed for court, but sometimes they can
39 provide written testimony. He asked if they have to be there in person. Moyes
40 stated they have to go to court if the prosecutor wants them there.

41
42 Another issue is the methamphetamine (meth) strike force team. The Sheriff
43 put a couple of the patrol deputies into the meth strike force team. How deputies
44 explain response to the public may not be clear to the citizens. There is also a
45 traffic unit. The number one complaint to the Sheriff's Office is speeding. They
46 took some of the patrol deputies to form a traffic unit with a supervisor that
47 oversees the unit.

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1
2 Nelson stated they hired three or four road deputies ten years ago. It was
3 supposed to pay for itself because of traffic tickets they generated.

4
5 Crawford stated traffic ticket revenue is up this year.

6
7 Moyes stated that since 9/11, things have changed. They have gotten more
8 calls for assistance. Over 100 people per month are turned away at the border and
9 then hang out in this area. They can't get into Canada. They are trying to go to
10 Alaska. The last couple of murders in Whatcom County were directly related to
11 people who were turned away from entering Canada and were hanging around
12 here.

13
14 Three patrol deputies is the minimum. Now, eight deputies are assigned to
15 the graveyard shift. Two sergeants are also assigned. By the time they count the
16 people who are off for vacation, training, or other reasons, the average number of
17 staff is one sergeant and four deputies.

18
19 Nelson asked if they're saying that the comment about three officers being
20 on patrol isn't accurate, because they also have the traffic unit, the meth task
21 force, and other deputies who could respond. Moyes stated that is correct, but
22 each of those units have a specific mission. The traffic unit's mission doesn't
23 handle possible break-ins, for example.

24
25 Nelson stated he would be interested in hearing about the shift and patrol
26 structure, particularly for the East County. He asked for a presentation.

27
28 Brenner asked if the sergeant is on patrol also. Moyes stated the sergeants
29 are on patrol.

30
31 Nelson stated the Council may need an education process. Moyes stated the
32 calls are more violent than they used to be. More weapons are involved in assaults
33 and domestic violence. That requires that more than one deputy respond. One
34 recent domestic violence call required 12 deputies.

35
36 Crawford asked about the number of satellite stations and if they help.
37 Moyes stated they do help. Some don't have the needed computer access. He
38 listed the locations of the stations. All are at fire stations around the county.

39
40 Crawford asked about the citizens' concern about the bridge being out.
41 Moyes stated it is tough. The deputy who is stationed in Sudden Valley also covers
42 the southeast quadrant patrol area of the county. To adjust for the bridge being
43 out, they have to send someone down the freeway to Cain Lake unless a deputy is
44 on Highway 9 and can divert to respond to a call from that area. It takes a couple
45 hours to drive that route.

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1 Brenner stated there will be a request for more deputies for the meth task
2 force.
3

4 Nelson stated the Council must look at what the community looks like and
5 compare it with other communities, keeping in mind that this community isn't the
6 same as other communities. He thanked Chief Moyes for talking to the
7 councilmembers and asked for a future presentation on how deputies are
8 dispatched.
9

10
11 **ADJOURN**
12

13 The meeting adjourned at 11:35 a.m.
14
15

16 _____
17 Jill Nixon, Minutes Transcription
18

19
20 ATTEST:
21

WHATCOM COUNTY COUNCIL
WHATCOM COUNTY, WASHINGTON
22
23

24
25 _____
26 Dana Brown-Davis, Council Clerk

L. Ward Nelson, Committee Chair