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WHATCOM COUNTY COUNCIL  
**Special Committee Of The Whole**

December 2, 2008

Council Chair Carl Weimer called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m. in the Courthouse Conference Room #513, 311 Grand Avenue, Bellingham, Washington.

Present:

Barbara Brenner  
Bob Kelly  
Sam Crawford  
Seth Fleetwood  
L. Ward Nelson

Absent:

Laurie Caskey-Schreiber

**1. DISCUSSION WITH THE ADMINISTRATION REGARDING SITING AND CONSTRUCTION PLANNING FOR A NEW WHATCOM COUNTY JAIL AND OTHER COUNTY CAPITAL FACILITIES (AB2008-214A)**

***Crawford moved*** to go into executive session to talk about land purchases.

Dewey Desler, Deputy Administrator, stated the intent is to discuss site issues and options. Any Council action will be done in a regular Council session.

Randy Watts, Prosecutor's Office, stated they are in executive session to discuss site specific. Discussion may include the price.

***Motion carried 4-0 with Brenner and Fleetwood out of the room and Caskey-Schreiber absent.***

*(Clerk's Note: The Committee came out of executive session at 3:00 p.m. and moved to the Council Chambers. Councilmembers Fleetwood and Nelson left the meeting.)*

Dewey Desler, Deputy Administrator, submitted a binder of information *(on file)*.

David King, Stewart + King Architects, read from the presentation included in the binder of information. They have been working on the East Whatcom Regional Resource Center. They have worked with a citizens advisory committee and continue to talk with various participants. The project is to provide public services to the citizens of eastern Whatcom County. Many agencies would benefit from having facilities out there, including senior services, Head Start, medical facilities, and youth activities. They are in the midst of Balfour Village, but it's a stand-alone facility. The influence that Balfour Village should or shouldn't have is a variable. The site is development-friendly. There are no wetlands or other encumbrances to developing the site.

They have filled out the LEED checklist, but their emphasis is on how sustainability will benefit Whatcom County, not how many points they can collect. The main objective is to provide easy maintenance, help the environment, and have a low impact on resources.

They are considering three different routes to lay sewer lines from the water district. Two of those routes are over private property, so they are talking with Balfour Village about obtaining easements. At the same time, a lot line adjustment may benefit both Whatcom

1 County and Balfour Village. After the beginning of the year, they could go out to bid to  
2 bring water and sewer to the site.  
3

4 They are within two wellhead protection areas. The biggest concern is the type of  
5 fertilizer that might be used on the grass. Other than that, there would be no groundwater  
6 impacts. The sewer system would be a closed pipe system. He described the phased  
7 development plans for the various agencies.  
8

9 Desler stated the County would own the building and lease the space out to the  
10 tenants. The County can use the lease agreements and payments to justify borrowing  
11 money to pay their building cost.  
12

13 Crawford asked if there will be space for a library. King stated the structure is in  
14 place for that to happen.  
15

16 Kelly asked if the building is modular. King stated the facility would be constructed  
17 onsite.  
18

19 This is not the final version of the design. It is a design that accommodates  
20 everything. As the programs develop and become more specific, the design will evolve. He  
21 described possible other configurations.  
22

23 Brenner stated the area is very rustic, and the design is futuristic. King stated the  
24 public can provide input on the design. Now, the emphasis is on establishing the budget  
25 and a project schedule. This design is a placeholder for a final design. It is an economic  
26 design.  
27

28 Brenner asked if there is any chance to work with local builders in the area to see if  
29 anyone is willing to donate time and energy on this project. Desler stated the idea is worth  
30 exploring. This is just a report on the progress so far.  
31

32 King stated that with the difficult economic times currently, it appears to be an  
33 excellent time to bid a project. The County would benefit from catching the moment if they  
34 can get a bid out relatively soon.  
35

36 They could conceivably go out to bid to put in the sewer line in about two months. If  
37 it appears that the County will move ahead with a construction contract for the entire  
38 building, it may be advisable to hold off on putting in the sewer line until it can be  
39 incorporated into the larger building project.  
40

41 They don't yet know what the final project budget will be. A next step is to  
42 determine that budget, and then have the architects put together a final design and put  
43 together the bid documents. Allow about eight months for the design and ten months for  
44 construction, depending on the extent of the final project. They are in the process of  
45 reviewing easements and having discussions on lot line adjustments.  
46

47 Crawford asked the County's status on this financially. Desler stated the County has  
48 about \$4 million in grants and other resources. If they can get an arrangement with  
49 Interfaith, they can justify the \$5.25 million option. If the Council approves that, they can  
50 go after some Economic Development Investment (EDI) money to pay for the next option.  
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52 The medical facility is important, but the community is really calling for youth  
53 services and recreation because there are so many children out there.

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Brenner stated that a clinic is more important to her. Kids can't play if they're sick.

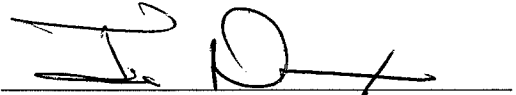
Crawford stated there are big employment problems in that area. He's concerned about sustaining the momentum of this project. He would not like to move on to other priorities once they have developed just the first phase. Desler stated they continue to seek and capture new funds to continue this project.

*(Clerk's Note: Councilmember Weimer left the meeting at 3:19 p.m. The Committee lost its quorum. Discussion continued with Councilmembers Brenner, Kelly, and Crawford. The rest of the meeting has been audiotaped.)*

**OTHER BUSINESS**

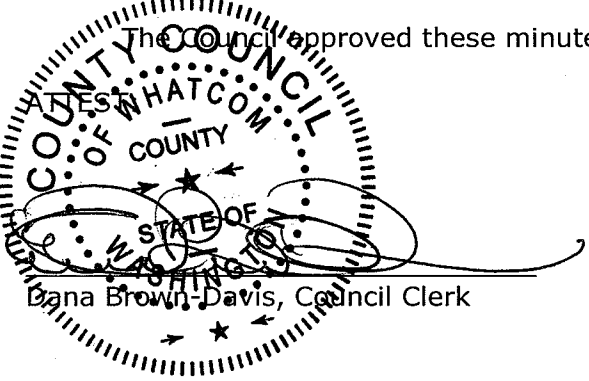
**ADJOURN**

The meeting adjourned at approximately 3:19 p.m.



Jill Nixon, Minutes Transcription

The Council approved these minutes on May 26, 2009.



WHATCOM COUNTY COUNCIL  
WHATCOM COUNTY, WASHINGTON



Carl Weimer, Council Chair