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WHATCOM COUNTY COUNCIL  
**Finance and Administrative Services Committee**

November 24, 2009

Committee Chair Sam Crawford called the meeting to order at 11:06 a.m. in the Council Chambers, 311 Grand Avenue, Bellingham, Washington.

**Present:** Sam Crawford, L. Ward Nelson and Bob Kelly.

**Absent:** None.

**Also Present:** Laurie Caskey-Schreiber, Seth Fleetwood, Barbara Brenner and Carl Weimer.

**COMMITTEE DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL**

**1. ORDINANCE AMENDING WHATCOM COUNTY CODE 3.37, SECTION 3.37.050 "USE OF FUNDS", TO INCORPORATE ADDITIONAL SUPPLANTATION LANGUAGE (AB2009-433)**

*Nelson moved* to recommend approval to the full Council. The voters were told that these funds would not supplant existing programs. Now the State is saying they can supplant other money, even though the public didn't vote on it.

Crawford stated he will support this, but it's disappointing to have to use a local tax instead of the State providing other funds. It seems like a bait and switch.

Brenner stated she won't support this item. She told people this would happen. They don't have to accept this language from the State.

Dewey Desler, Deputy Administrator, gave a staff report and answered questions. It's a useful tool to balance the budget.

Nelson stated he would support it, because it is their tax dollars and a decision that would ultimately have to happen at some point. However, they should discuss how and why these things happen. He is frustrated that they didn't present a plan to the public. They should apologize to the public.

The motion carried by the following vote:

**Ayes:** Crawford and Nelson (2)

**Nays:** Kelly (1)

**2. ORDINANCE AMENDING THE 2009 WHATCOM COUNTY BUDGET, TWELFTH REQUEST, IN THE AMOUNT OF \$97,959 (AB2009-434)**

Dewey Desler, Deputy Administrator, gave a staff report.

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

The motion carried by the following vote:

**Ayes:** Crawford, Nelson and Kelly (3)

**Nays:** None (0)

1 **3. ORDINANCE AMENDING THE 2010 WHATCOM COUNTY BUDGET, THIRD**  
2 **REQUEST, IN THE AMOUNT OF \$278,375 (AB2009-435)**  
3

4 Dewey Desler, Deputy Administrator, gave a staff report.  
5

6 The following people answered questions:

- 7 • N.F. Jackson, Superior Court Administrator, stated the 2010 budget did not  
8 include any funds for family treatment. They are spending no money right  
9 now.
- 10 • Peter Gill, Planning and Development Services, stated they received a grant in  
11 2009, but contracts for spending the grant will occur in 2010.  
12

13 Discussion included funding for drug court and family treatment and a grant for the  
14 Planning Department.  
15

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

18 The motion carried by the following vote:

19 **Ayes:** Crawford, Nelson and Kelly (3)

20 **Nays:** None (0)  
21

22 **4. ORDINANCE AMENDING WHATCOM COUNTY CODE (WCC) TITLE 3 TO**  
23 **ESTABLISH WCC 3.46, AFFORDABLE HOUSING INCENTIVE FUND (AB2009-**  
24 **421)**  
25

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

28 Crawford stated he is not in favor of creating a separate, new fund during this  
29 economic distress. Until they pull out of the declining general fund situation, don't create  
30 any new funds. He is frustrated with the State providing specific funding for specific  
31 purposes. They must remain flexible to address the immediate health and public safety of  
32 the residents.  
33

34 The following people answered questions:

- 35 • Paul Schissler, Kulshan Community Land Trust Executive Director
- 36 • Dewey Desler, Deputy Administrator  
37

38 Discussion included being eligible for other State and federal funding; creating a local  
39 housing trust fund; goals and recommendations of the Countywide Housing Affordability  
40 Taskforce (CHAT); whether the City of Bellingham has a mechanism for funding low income  
41 housing; whether this would be only for rural areas; securing funding to help the private  
42 sector produce affordable housing; the administration's recommendation, in light of its  
43 effort to reduce and consolidate funds; whether they need to create a separate fund or work  
44 within the existing accounting system, and; whether or not they should put restrictions on  
45 how they get funding for affordable housing.  
46

47 *Nelson moved* to amend to add language 3.46.040 "3. The Whatcom County  
48 general fund shall not be used to support the affordable housing incentive fund."  
49

50 The motion to amend carried by the following vote:

51 **Ayes:** Crawford and Nelson (2)

52 **Nays:** Kelly (1)  
53

1 Brenner suggested amending language in 3.46.030 "...to all ~~economic segments~~  
2 **qualified recipients** of the community..." and in 3.46.040(1), "...funds **and other types of**  
3 **donations** from sources that include..."

4  
5 Desler referenced a scrivener's error and suggested amending 3.46.030, "...housing  
6 services to the city **county**."

7  
8 The motion to approve as amended carried by the following vote:

9 **Ayes:** Crawford, Nelson and Kelly (3)

10 **Nays:** None (0)

- 11  
12 **5. REQUEST APPROVAL FOR THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE TO ENTER INTO A**  
13 **CONTRACT BETWEEN THE WHATCOM COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE AND THE**  
14 **WASHINGTON STATE MILITARY DEPARTMENT FOR FUNDING FOR FIRST**  
15 **RESPONDER TRAINING TO ENSURE LAW ENFORCEMENT IS PREPARED FOR**  
16 **THE 2010 OLYMPICS AND PARALYMPICS, IN THE AMOUNT OF \$57,500**  
17 **(AB2009-439)**

18  
19 *Nelson moved* to recommend approval to the full Council. He asked to know how  
20 much money has come into Whatcom County as a result of the 2010 Olympics.

21  
22 Discussion included how much grant money the Olympics has brought into Whatcom  
23 County and whether they will have to pay overtime to cover the shifts of those being sent to  
24 training.

25  
26 The motion carried by the following vote:

27 **Ayes:** Crawford, Nelson and Kelly (3)

28 **Nays:** None (0)

- 29  
30 **6. REQUEST APPROVAL FOR THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE TO ENTER INTO A**  
31 **CONTRACT BETWEEN THE WHATCOM COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE AND**  
32 **WASHINGTON STATE COMMERCE, COMMUNITY SERVICES DIVISION FOR**  
33 **WAGES AND BENEFITS FOR THREE OFFICERS; A HALF TIME PROSECUTOR**  
34 **AND .5 FTE RECORDS SPECIALIST POSITION FOR THE NW REGIONAL DRUG**  
35 **TASK FORCE, IN THE AMOUNT OF \$192,243 (AB2009-440)**

36  
37 *Crawford moved* to recommend approval to the full Council.

38  
39 The motion carried by the following vote:

40 **Ayes:** Crawford, Nelson and Kelly (3)

41 **Nays:** None (0)

- 42  
43 **7. REQUEST APPROVAL FOR THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE TO ENTER INTO A**  
44 **CONTRACT BETWEEN WHATCOM COUNTY AND WHATCOM COMMUNITY**  
45 **COLLEGE TO PROVIDE FOR FUNDING FOR ADULT BASIC EDUCATION AND**  
46 **GED CLASSES FOR PEOPLE RESIDING IN THE WHATCOM COUNTY JAIL, IN**  
47 **THE AMOUNT OF \$36,374 (AB2009-441)**

48  
49 *Kelly moved* to recommend approval to the full Council.

50  
51 The motion carried by the following vote:

52 **Ayes:** Crawford, Nelson and Kelly (3)

53 **Nays:** None (0)

1  
2 **8. REQUEST APPROVAL FOR THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE TO ENTER INTO A**  
3 **CONTRACT BETWEEN WHATCOM COUNTY AND WHATCOM HUMANE SOCIETY**  
4 **FOR ANIMAL CONTROL SERVICES, IN THE AMOUNT OF \$453,309.41**  
5 **(AB2009-442)**  
6

7 *Crawford moved* to recommend approval to the full Council. He is reluctant about  
8 this item and how much they spend on animal control. He will not vote for this item.  
9

10 The following people answered questions:

- 11 • Dewey Desler, Deputy Administrator
- 12 • Bill Elfo, Sheriff
- 13 • Laura Clark, Whatcom Humane Society Executive Director
- 14

15 Discussion included whether they can refer this item to the Committee of the Whole  
16 later today to discuss this as a budget item; whether the Humane Society is willing to  
17 reduce its services; cutting a specific amount or specific services; cutting the Humane  
18 Society completely for a year, using King County as the precedent, and then redesigning a  
19 program; County Sheriff responsibility to perform animal control; King County's changes in  
20 service; State animal control requirements of the County; Humane Society of America  
21 standards; whether the budget can be cut further, and; changes to the kennel licenses.  
22

23 The motion failed by the following vote:

24 **Ayes:** Nelson (1)  
25 **Nays:** Crawford (1)  
26 **Absent:** Kelly (1)  
27  
28

29 **COUNCIL "CONSENT AGENDA" ITEMS**  
30

31 **1. REQUEST APPROVAL FOR THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE TO ENTER INTO AN**  
32 **INTERAGENCY AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE WHATCOM COUNTY SHERIFF'S**  
33 **OFFICE AND WASHINGTON ASSOCIATION OF SHERIFFS AND POLICE CHIEFS**  
34 **FOR FUNDING FOR THE REGISTERED SEX OFFENDER ADDRESS AND**  
35 **RESIDENCY VERIFICATION PROCESS, IN THE AMOUNT OF \$143,603.87**  
36 **(AB2009-443)**  
37

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

40 The motion carried by the following vote:

41 **Ayes:** Crawford and Nelson (2)  
42 **Nays:** None (0)  
43 **Absent:** Kelly (1)  
44

45 **2. REQUEST APPROVAL FOR THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE TO ENTER INTO A**  
46 **CONTRACT BETWEEN WHATCOM COUNTY AND EBERLE VIVIAN FOR**  
47 **ADMINISTRATION AND CLAIMS PROCESSING FOR THE SELF-INSURED**  
48 **WORKERS COMPENSATION PROGRAM, IN THE AMOUNT OF \$37,000**  
49 **(AB2009-444)**  
50

51 *Crawford moved* to recommend approval to the full Council.  
52

53 The motion carried by the following vote:

1       **Ayes:**     Crawford and Nelson (2)  
2       **Nays:**     None (0)  
3       **Absent:**  Kelly (1)  
4

5   **3.     REQUEST APPROVAL FOR THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE TO AWARD BID #09-81**  
6   **TO THE LOW BIDDER, EBENAL GENERAL, FOR UPGRADES TO THE SHERIFF'S**  
7   **COMPOUND AT POINT ROBERTS IN THE AMOUNT OF \$240,870 (AB2009-**  
8   **445)**  
9

10       Dewey Desler, Deputy Administrator, gave a staff report. The amount budgeted to  
11       purchase a home was not enough. Bids came in at 50 percent or more higher than  
12       budgeted. Another idea is to install one new home and significantly upgrade the second  
13       home that's up there. They are going to install a new septic system to serve both homes.  
14       They will also construct a deck and carport. They are able to do that with less than  
15       \$240,000. Facilities says they may run into issues because they are right at the limit of  
16       funding. Hopefully they won't need to pay for contingencies, but he will request real estate  
17       excise tax (REET) I funds in the amount of \$25,000 to address any possible contingencies.  
18

19       Brenner stated the real estate market in Point Roberts has been flat. People have  
20       things sitting on the market that aren't selling. They still have to pay rent for the deputies  
21       until the homes are built. She asked if the Sheriff feels it would be worthwhile to postpone  
22       this. She asked how long the project will take.  
23

24       The following people spoke:

- 25       • Bill Elfo, Sheriff, stated it wouldn't be worthwhile to postpone the project.  
26       Information from a realtor and the Facilities staff indicate that home prices in  
27       Point Roberts are high on a per square foot cost. The concern about delaying  
28       the project is because they were only funded with rent money for the first six  
29       months of 2009. They submitted a supplemental budget request that was  
30       not recommended for approval to carry them over to 2010, until the project is  
31       complete. They are in a position of not having rent money for 2010. The  
32       only choice is to recall those deputies from Point Roberts, which creates an  
33       issue with the collective bargaining agreement. If they have to pull the  
34       deputies from Point Roberts, they are asking those deputies to find another  
35       place to live with very little notice and over the holiday. The Executive's  
36       Office anticipates that the project will be done by the end of the first quarter  
37       in 2010. He doesn't know if they will meet that deadline. Plan to pay rent  
38       until these homes are habitable.
- 39       • Mike Russell, Administrative Services Department, stated they should be able  
40       to complete this project during the first quarter of 2010. Their only concern is  
41       with permitting through the Planning Department. The septic system will cost  
42       \$26,000 and serve both homes.  
43

44       Discussion included the use of real estate excise tax (REET) funds; whether there will  
45       be enough REET funds to complete the East County Resource Center, and; possibly using  
46       economic development investment (EDI) funds to complete the East County Resource  
47       Center.  
48

49       Crawford stated the administration needs to maintain that septic system annually. It  
50       won't be cheap, and it must be done professionally.  
51

