

1 **WHATCOM COUNTY CHARTER REVIEW COMMISSION**

2 Record of Proceedings

3 Regular Meeting of January 12, 2015

4
5 **1. CALL TO ORDER**

6
7 Commissioner-elect Ben Elenbaas called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. in
8 the Garden Level Conference Room, 322 N. Commercial Street, Bellingham,
9 Washington.

10
11 **2. ROLL CALL**

12
13 Present: Ken Bell, Todd Donovan, Chet Dow, Ben Elenbaas, Joe Elenbaas,
14 Yvonne Goldsmith, Wes Kentch, Cliff Langley, Eli Mackiewicz, Richard May, Jon
15 Mutchler, Barbara Ryan, Eileen Sobjack, Thomas Stuen, Alie Walker

16
17 Absent: None

18
19 **3. OPENING AND WELCOME**

20
21 Carl Weimer, Whatcom County Councilmember, welcomed the commissioners
22 and thanked them for their service on the Commission.

23
24 **4. OATH OF OFFICE**

25
26 Debbie Adelstein, Whatcom County Auditor, administered the oath of office.

27
28 The Commission recited the Flag Salute.

29
30 **5. ELECTION OF PERMANENT COMMISSION CHAIR BY ROLL CALL VOTE**

31
32 The Commissioners introduced themselves and described their backgrounds.

33
34 Stuen nominated Ben Elenbaas. The nomination was seconded.

35
36 The nomination carried unanimously without debate.

37
38 **6. ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIR BY ROLL CALL VOTE**

39
40 Stuen nominated Jon Mutchler. The nomination was seconded.

41
42 Goldsmith nominated Joe Elenbaas. The nomination was seconded.

43
44 Donovan nominated Barbara Ryan.

45
46 Ryan declined the nomination.

47
48 The Commission appointed Joe Elenbaas 10-5 with debate.
49

1 **7. ELECTION OF SECRETARY BY ROLL CALL VOTE**

2
3 Sobjack nominated Chet Dow. The motion was seconded.

4
5 Joe Elenbaas moved to appoint Chet Dow by acclamation.

6
7 The motion carried unanimously with no debate.

8
9 **8. DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ELECTION OF OTHER COMMISSION**
10 **OFFICERS**

11
12 The Commission discussed the possibility of appointing a treasurer and a
13 parliamentarian. The Commission will allow the County Council staff to manage the
14 Commission's budget. Following discussion, the general consensus was that it was
15 not necessary to elect a parliamentarian.

16
17 **9. DISCUSS AND APPROVE RULES OF ORDER**

18
19 Mutchler moved to adopt Roberts Rules of Order. The motion was seconded.

20
21 Joe Elenbaas moved to amend the motion to adopt Roberts Rules of Order,
22 with the addition that the Chair automatically seconds all motions by any member.
23 The motion was seconded.

24
25 The motion to amend failed 1-13-1, Joe Elenbaas in favor and Ben Elenbaas
26 abstained, with debate.

27
28 The main motion to adopt Roberts Rules of Order carried unanimously with
29 debate.

30
31 *(Clerk's Note: Discussion of this item continued later in the meeting.)*

32
33 **10. OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS AND OPEN PUBLIC RECORDS: COMPLIANCE**
34 **AND TRAINING REQUIREMENTS**

35
36 Jill Nixon, Commissioner Clerk, explained the options for the Commissioners
37 to complete the Open Public Training Act requirements.

38
39 **11. DISCUSSION OF COMMISSION BUDGET**

40
41 Dana Brown-Davis, Clerk of the Whatcom County Council, explained the
42 available budget and anticipated costs.

43
44 Mutchler moved that commissioners may be reimbursed for travel at the rate
45 of \$.40 per mile if they wish. The motion died for a lack of a second.

46
47 Mutchler moved to reimburse travel expenses per County policy. The motion
48 was seconded.

1 The Commission discussed the definition of reasonable out-of-pocket
2 expenses, allowing the commissioners to decide individually whether or not to
3 submit their expenses, and County policy for reimbursement of expenses.

4
5 Mutchler withdrew his motion.

6
7 The Commission discussed the procedure for requesting more funds for the
8 Commission budget if necessary.

9
10 Joe Elenbaas moved to approve the assignment of potential funds to the
11 Commission as an amount that is sufficient for the Commission. The motion was
12 seconded.

13
14 The motion carried unanimously with no debate.

15
16 **12. DISCUSS AND APPROVE REGULAR MEETING SCHEDULE AND**
17 **LOCATION(S)**

18
19 The Commission discussed options for meeting locations and staff time
20 requirements.

21
22 Donovan moved to schedule public comment at the beginning of each
23 meeting. The motion was seconded.

24
25 Mutchler moved to amend the motion to establish a public comment time
26 limit of three minutes per speaker and allow the Chair to extend the speaker's time
27 at his discretion. The motion was seconded.

28
29 The motion to amend carried unanimously with debate.

30
31 Ryan moved to amend the motion to limit the total comment time to 30
32 minutes. The motion died for a lack of a second.

33
34 Stuen moved to limit the number of speakers on one side of one topic. The
35 motion died for a lack of a second.

36
37 The Chair restated the motion as amended to schedule public comment at
38 the beginning of each meeting, with a time limit of three minutes per speaker, and
39 allow the Chair to extend the speaker's time at his discretion.

40
41 The main motion as amended carried unanimously with debate.

42
43 Ryan moved to meet the first and third Mondays of each month. The motion
44 was seconded.

45
46 Bell moved to amend the motion to meet the second and fourth Mondays of
47 each month. The motion was seconded.

48
49 The motion to amend carried unanimously with debate.

1 Bell moved to amend the motion to specifically begin regular meetings at
2 6:30 p.m. The motion was seconded.

3
4 Mackiewicz stated the fourth Monday in May is Memorial Day. The motion
5 should specify that the Commission will not meet on any Monday holidays. The
6 request was seconded.

7
8 The motion to amend carried unanimously with debate.

9
10 The Chair restated the main motion as amended, for the Commission to meet
11 on the second and fourth Mondays of each month at 6:30 p.m., except any national
12 holiday that falls on a Monday.

13
14 The motion carried unanimously with debate.

15
16 The Commission discussed when and where the Commission should meet at
17 various locations around the county and sending an invitation to local elected
18 officials.

19
20 Mackiewicz moved that the first meeting each month, which occurs on the
21 second Monday of the month, be held in the Civic Center Garden Level Conference
22 Room. The motion was seconded.

23
24 The motion carried 14-1, Mutchler opposed, with debate.

25
26 Bell moved to hold the next meeting on January 26, 2015 at the Civic Center
27 Garden Level Conference Room. The motion was seconded.

28
29 The motion carried unanimously with no debate.

30
31 **13. OTHER BUSINESS**

32
33 Joe Elenbaas moved invite the County elected officials and encourage them
34 to come to a meeting as early in the process as possible. The motion was
35 seconded.

36
37 The Commission discussed possibly expanding the invitation list to all elected
38 officials in the county, including elected officers of special districts, appointed
39 County department heads, and other County staff.

40
41 The motion carried 14-1, Goldsmith opposed, with debate.

42
43 Mackiewicz moved to send a letter to all County staff mentioned in the
44 Charter to invite them to attend and speak to the duties delineated in the Charter.
45 The motion was seconded.

46
47 The motion failed 1-13-1 with Joe Elenbaas in favor and Ben Elenbaas
48 abstained, with debate.

1 Bell moved to invite all elected officials in the County, including all special
2 district elected officials, to come speak before this commission early in the process.
3 The motion was seconded.

4
5 The motion carried 12-1-2, with Ben Elenbaas opposed and Donovan and
6 Kentch abstained, with debate.

7
8 Donovan moved to limit the invitations specifically to the elected city mayors
9 and elected city councils. The motion was seconded.

10
11 The motion carried unanimously with no debate.

12
13 *(Clerk's Note: Discussion of this item continued later in the meeting.)*

14
15 **9. DISCUSS AND APPROVE RULES OF ORDER**

16
17 *(Clerk's Note: Discussion continued from earlier in the meeting.)*

18
19 The Commission discussed the number of members required to have a
20 quorum and to vote during a meeting.

21
22 May moved to specify that a quorum be ten commissioners and that votes be
23 passed by a majority of the commissioners present at the meeting.

24
25 The Commission discussed whether Roberts Rules of Order and law allow less
26 than a majority of the total body to approve motions.

27
28 The Chair ruled the motion out of order.

29
30 Joe Elenbaas moved to take a brief recess. The Commission concurred.

31
32 May amended his motion to specify that a quorum be ten commissioners and
33 that votes be passed by a majority of all the commissioners.

34
35 The motion failed 5-10 with Mackiewicz, May, Ryan, Stuen, and Walker in
36 favor with debate.

37
38 **13. OTHER BUSINESS**

39
40 *(Clerk's Note: Discussion continued from earlier in the meeting.)*

41
42 The Commission invited public comments.

43
44 Max Perry stated the Commission meetings should include a sound
45 amplification system so people can hear better what is being said.

46
47 Karen Brown stated there should be clarification on the different departments
48 between executive and legislative branches, that there is better communication,
49 and that one doesn't ride over the other. Create language that is forthcoming from
50 this body for an improvement.

1
2 Greg Brown stated he's looking forward to this process and hopes it goes
3 well.
4

5 The Commission discussed the process for proposing amendments, finalizing
6 the meeting schedule as an agenda item for the next meeting, scheduling a recess
7 halfway through the meetings, and the possibility of specifying a meeting end time.
8

9 The Chair stated that the commissioners from each district can coordinate
10 with each other and suggest appropriate and available meeting locations within
11 their district.
12

13 **14. ADJOURN**

14 Bell moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded.
15

16 The motion carried unanimously.
17

18 The meeting adjourned at 9:30 p.m.
19

20 The Commission approved these minutes on January 26, 2015.
21
22

23
24 

25 _____
26 Jill Nixon, Recording Secretary
27

28
29 

30 _____
31 Chet Dow, Commission Secretary
32

33


_____ Ben Elenbaas, Commission Chair