

# **Whatcom County Business & Commerce Committee**

1801 Roeder Avenue ■ Bellingham, WA 98225 ■ wcbcc@portofbellingham.com ■ (360) 715-5118

## **WCBCC September Meeting Minutes (9/16/24)**

### **WCBCC Members Present**

Dan Dunne, WCBCC Chair  
Debbie Ahl, Healthcare Industry  
Ryan Allsop, Other For-Profit  
Pam Brady, Energy  
Paul Burrill, Food Processing  
Clark Campbell, Recreation  
Pete Dawson, Commercial Real Estate  
Casey Diggs, WCBCC Co-Chair

Mayor Greg Hansen  
Troy Muljat, Other For-Profit  
Brad Rader, Agriculture  
Sarah Rothenbuhler, Other For-Profit  
Tyler Schroeder, Port of Bellingham  
CJ Seitz, Higher Education  
Heather Steele, Public K-12 Education  
Whatcom County Councilmember Mark Stremmer  
Russell (RB) Tewksbury, Internet Technology

### **WCBCC Members Absent**

Mayor Kim Lund  
Whatcom County Executive Satpal Sidhu

Matthew Green, Higher Education  
Chris Trout, Manufacturing  
Dana Wilson, Marine Trades

### **Non-Members/Public Present**

Chris Behee, Port of Bellingham Commissioner Ken Bell, Lance Calloway, Barbara Chase, Anna Dealy, Andrea Doyle, Jasmine Fast, Rob Fix, Peter Frazier, Sarah Gardner, Brady Gustafson, Shaun Henson, Mayor Scott Korthuis, Jenny Hagemann, Whatcom County PUD Commissioner Atul Deshame, Graham Hill, Mauri Ingram, Lindsey Johnstone, Jennifer Kutcher, Rob Lee, City of Bellingham Councilmember Michael Lilliquist, Derek Long, Blake Lyon, Kristine Miller, Jennifer Noveck, Guy Occhiogrosso, Kori Olsen, Hannah Ordos, Scott Pelton, Les Reardanz, Margaret Reich, Andrea Ruback, Paul Schissler, Gina Stark

### **Call to Order**

WCBCC Chair Dan Dunne called the meeting to order at 11:00 a.m.

### **Approval of the Minutes**

Clark Campbell moved, seconded by Ryan Allsop, to adopt the meeting minutes from August 19, 2024. Motion passed.

### **Whatcom County Business and Commerce Committee (WCBCC) General Business**

WCBCC Chair Dan Dunne updated the committee on the structure of WCBCC meeting recordings:

- Zoom recording link will be emailed post-meeting to all individuals on the WCBCC distribution list (full committee + members of the public)

## **WCBCC September Meeting Minutes (9/16/24) – cont'd**

### **Whatcom County Business and Commerce Committee (WCBCC) General Business (cont'd)**

- Meeting notes with a broad overview of discussions will continue to be provided to WCBCC committee members for review + approval prior to the following meeting
- A staff person from Birch Equipment will email a full meeting transcript to the WCBCC distribution email address w/in two weeks post-meeting

### **Washington State Legislative Update**

Washington State Senator Sharon Shewmake provided the following legislative update:

- Passed the “Missing Middle.” Provided guidance to mayors and city council members on required components of the city’s comprehensive planning update (due Dec. 2025)
- Worked on more flexible living agreements such as co-living during the last session
- Placed guidelines on “commercial conversions,” converting non-utilized office buildings to residential
- Reviewed the technical assistance provided at the state level for federal housing grants
- Allocated more funding to the Office of International Relations and Protocol to work closer with businesses in British Columbia, Canada

### **Port of Bellingham Economic Development 2022-2023 Report**

Tyler Schroeder, Director of Economic Development with the Port of Bellingham, presented the 2022-2023 Port of Bellingham Economic Development Report on behalf of the Regional Economic Partnership. The presentation included the Regional Economic Partnership’s vision, funding structure, alignment + progress on goals contained within the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (2022-2026), and highlights of partnerships within Team Whatcom. Tyler stated the economic development team is working on a dashboard and data metrics to highlight work completed in the future; Expected dashboard completion is the end of 2025.

### **Chapter 2: Land Use Memorandum, Whatcom County Comprehensive Plan**

Tyler Schroeder, Director of Economic Development with the Port of Bellingham, presented the updated memorandum detailing recommendations related to Chapter 2: Land Use of the 2025 Whatcom County Comprehensive Plan. Recommendations included: Land capacity, buildable lands, LAMRIDs, wetland mitigation banks, incentive programs, regulatory systems, capital facilities, and the balance between housing and industrial zoning associated with it.

### **Approval of Chapter 2: Land Use Memorandum, Whatcom County Comprehensive Plan**

Debbie Ahl moved, seconded by Troy Muljat, to approve the Land Use Memorandum on behalf of the Whatcom County Business and Commerce Committee, providing recommendations to Whatcom County Council on the 2025 Whatcom County Comprehensive Plan. Motion passed unanimously. Memorandum submitted to Whatcom County Council, 9/18/24.

### **Adjournment**

With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 12:36 p.m.