



Snohomish County Council

General Legislative Session

Meeting Minutes

Council Chair Jared Mead
Council Vice-Chair Nate Nehring
Councilmembers: Sam Low, Megan Dunn, Strom Peterson

Wednesday, November 1, 2023

9:00 AM

**Jackson Board Room - 8th Floor
Robert J. Drewel Building
& Remote Meeting**

PRESENT:

Council Chair Mead
Council Vice-Chair Nehring
Councilmember Low
Councilmember Dunn
Councilmember Peterson
Heidi Beazizo, Council Chief of Staff
Jim Martin, Council Staff
Nicole Gorle, Council Staff
Deb Bell, Council Staff
Cynthia Foley, Council Staff
Lacey Harper, Executive's Office
Heather Curry, Equity Solutions
Jason Schwarz, Office of Public Defense
Kelly Snyder, Public Works
Doug McCormick, Public Works
Tom Teigen, Department of Conservation and Natural Resources
Debbie Eco, Clerk of the Council
Elena Lao, Deputy Clerk of the Council

**See names listed below of individuals providing public comment.*

A. Call to Order

Chair Mead called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. and provided instructions for those wishing to provide public comment in person and remote via Zoom.

B. Roll Call

The clerk called the roll and stated that all five members were present.

C. Pledge of Allegiance - Council Vice-Chair Nehring

Vice-Chair Nehring led the assembly with the Pledge of Allegiance.

D. Public Comments

The following individuals provided public comment relating to the 2024 Budget:

- Sarah Morgan, Take the Next Step, Co-Executive Director, provided information about the organization's family resource center and thanked Council for the continued support and funding.
- Sarah Lunstrum, Take the Next Step, Co-Executive Director, shared a testament on how the organization provides assistance directly impacting the community. She also thanked the Council for the support and funding.

Councilmember Low expressed appreciation to Take the Next Step and their work in the community.

E. Special Reports

1. Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Assessment [2023-1334](#)
- Heather Curry, Ph.D., Senior DEI Consultant, Equity Solutions

Lacey Harper, Executive Director, provided opening remarks.

Heather Curry, Ph.D., Senior DEI Consultant, Equity Solutions, provided a comprehensive presentation on the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Assessment for Snohomish County. She explained the project approach, findings and recommendations.

Brief discussion followed as Ms. Harper and Ms. Curry responded to questions relating to demographics information and funding for the Office of Social Justice.

F. Committee of the Whole**G. Resolutions**

1. Resolution 23-041, recognizing the second week of November as Kindness Week [2023-1302](#)

Chair Mead opened for public comment, and the following individuals spoke in support of the resolution:

- Molly Barnes, Monroe School District Board of Directors, thanked the Council for the resolution.

There being no other persons present wishing to speak on the resolution, Chair Mead called for a motion or discussion of the Council.

ACTION: Councilmember Low made a motion to approve Resolution 23-041. Vice-Chair Nehring seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

2. Resolution 23-042, recognizing November 2023 as Native American Heritage Month in Snohomish County [2023-1303](#)

Chair Mead opened the floor for public comment, and there being no persons present wishing to speak on the resolution, called for a motion or discussion of the Council.

ACTION: Vice-Chair Nehring made a motion to approve Resolution 23-042. Councilmember Dunn seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

H. Consent Agenda

I. Administrative Matters

J. Action on Items from Committee

1. Community Safety and Justice

- a. Motion 23-387, authorizing the release of funds of the Snohomish County Office of Public Defense conditioned in Amended Ordinance 22-059 [2023-1040](#)

Nicole Gorle, Senior Legislative Analyst, provided a staff report and explained the 2023 Budget condition for the Office of Public Defense.

Discussion followed and Jason Schwarz, Office of Public Defense Director, responded to questions relating to the funds expended by his office.

Vice-Chair Nehring requested for additional information and suggested continuing the motion to next week.

ACTION: Vice-Chair Nehring made a motion to continue Motion 23-387 to Administrative Session on Tuesday, November 7, 2023. Councilmember Low seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

2. **Finance, Budget and Administration**
3. **Health and Community Services**
4. **Planning and Community Development**
5. **Public Infrastructure and Conservation**
6. **Committee of the Whole**

K. Other Business

1. Council Budget Amendment Discussion - Jim Martin, Council Staff [2023-1332](#)

Jim Martin, Sr. Legislative Analyst, explained that today the Council will discuss the current council consensus amendment including budget notes and conditions as well as any individual amendments that may be included in the public hearing on November 8th. Mr. Martin noted that, at this time, the amendments are still proposed and do not represent the will of the Council, nor will they be voted on today. He explained further and proceeded with additional proposed amendments to the consensus list; he also said councilmembers will have the opportunity to add and/or remove proposed amendments to/from the consensus amendment if they wish to do so.

PROPOSED CONSENSUS AMENDMENTS:

- Vice-Chair Nehring spoke to the proposed amendment regarding the paving budget in Public Works. Kelly Snyder, Public Works Director, and Doug McCormick, Deputy Director/County Engineer, provided information related to operating expense, costs related to paint and road striping, and background information.

Ms. Snyder noted that she would have to come back with additional information for Councilmember Low related to cuts. Discussion ensued. Councilmember Peterson requested that this be removed from the consensus amendment.

- Vice-Chair Nehring spoke to the proposed budget note related to the Sheriff's Office staffing update. After responses from Mr. Martin to her questions, Councilmember Dunn said she was comfortable with it remaining on the consensus amendment. Councilmembers concurred.

Chair Mead commented and turned to Council for discussion on the individual amendments.

PROPOSED NON-CONSENSUS AMENDMENTS:

- In response to Councilmember Low' s request, Cynthia Foley, Legislative Analyst, spoke about proposed amendments related to affordable housing and behavioral health and responded to questions.

Councilmember Peterson asked to consider flexibility in the proposed budget note and explained there is a lot of work being done at the state level to create funding for the operation and maintenance for contamination and other issues in housing.

- Councilmember Peterson thanked Nicole Gorle, Sr. Legislative Analyst, for working on language around expert services money regarding electric home monitoring.

Chair Mead asked if the request was to place back on the consensus amendment and discussion ensued. Vice-Chair Nehring explained he hopes to support, but he would like to see how things go with fund balance before making his decision and preferred to keep off consensus.

- Councilmember Low spoke briefly about Lord Hill Park and public comment regarding the parking lot swap. He said he would be supportive of putting back on the consensus amendment. Chair Mead proposed to place back on the consensus amendment.

Deb Bell, Sr. Legislative Analyst, and Mr. Martin clarified for Council the proposed amendments related to Lord Hill Park and park rangers.

Responding to Councilmember Dunn, Tom Teigen, Conservation and Natural Resources Director, provided additional information about public process, public outreach, and parking lot background information.

Discussion ensued and Mr. Teigen responded to additional questions. The amendment was not returned to the consensus amendment.

- Councilmember Dunn inquired about District Court Staffing and said she would be supportive if someone could speak to it. Vice-Chair Nehring spoke to the proposed budget condition related to District Court-Therapeutic Court Staffing. Ms. Gorle provided clarifying information and discussion ensued. Vice-Chair Nehring explained that he is supportive but would like to wait and see where things are with fund balance before making a decision.
- Councilmember Dunn inquired about the OPD (Office of Public Defense) positions. Mr. Martin explained. Chair Mead stated he is not comfortable with placing it on consensus, at this time, but said he will research it further.

L. Public Meetings/Hearings

M. Executive Session

N. Adjourn

There being no further business, Chair Mead adjourned the Council for the day at 10:22 a.m.