

Lake Whatcom Stormwater Utility Advisory Committee

Business Rules, Procedures, and Ground Rules

~~June 6, 2018~~ Amended August 1, 2018

The Lake Whatcom Stormwater Utility Advisory Committee, established by Whatcom County Council through Resolution 2018-008 on March 27, 2018, adopts the following business rules, procedures, and ground rules.

BUSINESS RULES AND PROCEDURES

1. Purpose and Scope

The committee will represent future rate payers in the Lake Whatcom Stormwater Utility Service Area and advise Whatcom County Public Works staff and the Whatcom County Council on recommended rate structure options and a funding mechanism. Council will make the final determination of the Lake Whatcom Stormwater Utility rate structure and funding mechanism. The committee shall dissolve upon Whatcom County Council adoption of a rate structure.

2. Participation

a) Committee - The committee consists of five voting members appointed by Whatcom County Council plus one non-voting representative of the Whatcom County Council.

Committee members provide a formal citizen input route to Whatcom County Council relating to the Lake Whatcom Stormwater Utility. In the event of a resignation or vacancy, the open position will be advertised and the position filled by County Council appointment.

b) Staff - Whatcom County Public Works and its consultants will provide staff support for meetings and technical assistance conducting the rate study. A representative from the City of Bellingham has been invited to participate to offer additional technical assistance and information related to the city's stormwater utility.

c) Public – All meetings are open to observers, media representatives, and other interested parties. Meetings are subject to the Washington State Open Public Meeting Act, Chapter 42.30 RCW. Comments by observers may be submitted in writing or orally at designated public comment periods. Observers' comments may also be invited during the session at the discretion of the chair.

3. Committee Member Role and Responsibilities

a) All committee members have equal voice and status.

a) Members agree to obtain guidance from their constituents and communities so that they can accurately represent the view and interest of their constituents and communities. They will communicate information learned at meetings and will provide information regarding decisions to their constituents.

- b) Committee members who speak outside of the meetings will speak for themselves and express their own views. They will not represent an official committee point of view unless expressly authorized by the committee.
- c) All official communications from the committee must be reviewed by the committee prior to release, unless general guidance has been provided by the committee for the communications content and one committee member is assigned to provide final review prior to release.
- d) All committee members agree to abide by the ground rules as established by the committee.

4. Officers

- a) Election - The committee shall elect a chairperson and vice-chairperson from among its members. Officers will serve for the duration of the committee. In the event of a vacancy in the office of chairperson, the vice-chairperson automatically becomes the chairperson. A vacancy occurring in the office of vice-chairperson is filled by election of a replacement. A vacancy in an office automatically occurs upon the second consecutive unexcused absence of an officer from the regular meetings.
- b) Officer Duties - The chairperson has the responsibility of presiding at committee meetings including: encouraging members to abide by the adopted ground rules, working with staff to place items on the agenda, calling special meetings, canceling meetings, excusing members for valid reasons from attendance, and serving as the spokesperson for the committee. The vice-chairperson assumes the responsibilities of the chairperson in his/her absence. The vice-chair shall have the power to perform all duties of the chair in his/her absence.

5. Quorum and Decision Making

- a) Quorum - Three members of the advisory committee shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.
- b) Decision Making – Committee members will make decisions by consensus. This means that all members can live with and support the decision. If one member cannot live with the decision, consensus is blocked. If the committee decides that a consensus decision will not be reached on a particular issue, a roll call vote of the members shall be taken. A simple majority shall prevail.
- c) Minority Opinion - Any committee member or committee members may file a minority opinion for the record. The minority opinion shall include the specific issue, decision which is opposed, and a rationale for the minority opinion. When possible, preferred alternative language or options should be included in the minority report. Members supporting the minority report shall be listed in the report.

6. Meeting Organization and Administration

- a) Meeting Schedule – Meeting dates are set according to committee member and staff availability, posted on the Whatcom County website, and posted to the Whatcom County

Public Works stormwater calendar.

b) Meeting Time – Committee meetings will start promptly and end at the times scheduled. The regular meeting time is 5:030 – 7:30 p.m.

c) Attendance - Due to the short-term duration of this committee, regular attendance of committee meetings is important and expected. If a committee member cannot attend a meeting, he/she will notify the chairperson in advance and follow up to seek information on meeting materials missed from staff. Repeated unexcused absences may be addressed at the discretion of the chairperson.

d) Order of Business:

- roll call
- determination of quorum
- [approval or modification of agenda](#)
- approval or modification of previous meeting summary
- ~~open session for public comments on issues related to the meeting agenda and Lake Whatcom Stormwater Utility~~
- staff reports and issue paper discussion
- committee discussion, deliberations, and decision making
- [open session for public comments on issues related to the meeting agenda and Lake Whatcom Stormwater Utility](#)
- ~~second open session for public comments~~
- decision summary and action item review
- agenda items for next meeting
- adjournment

d) Meeting Summaries and Records - Meeting summaries will be prepared by Whatcom County Public Works Department staff or their consultant. Written and audio recordings of meetings, findings, and recommendations shall be kept and available as a public record.

e) Meeting Notice – Meeting notice, including draft agenda, will be emailed to committee members and posted to the Whatcom County website stormwater calendar at least one week prior to the next meeting.

7. Amendment

These rules and procedures may be amended by a majority vote of the committee provided no proposed changes are in conflict with any applicable code, law, or ordinance.

Ground Rules

Examples to consider from other Advisory Committees

1. **We agree to respect others' values, interests, and viewpoints**, and recognize that they are as legitimate as our own. We agree that every idea has merit.
2. **We agree to suspend assumptions and listen carefully**, ask questions for clarification, make statements that attempt to educate or explain, and stay involved.
3. **We agree that it is ok to disagree**. We expect a variety of opinions. We want to have an open discussion of the issues and ideas.
4. **We will not criticize the view of others** or attempt to persuade them.
5. **We agree that one person should speak at a time**; everyone will have the opportunity.
6. **We will not interrupt** except to indicate that we cannot hear a speaker.
7. **We will stay focused on the issues**, situations, and tasks, not on individuals, during our time together.
8. **We agree to arrive at each meeting** on time and prepared.
9. **We agree to use consensus decision-making**. When consensus is not possible the procedure included in the Business Rules will be applied.