

## **BOUNDARY REVIEW BOARD FOR WHATCOM COUNTY**

Thursday, July 16, 2026

Hybrid, in-person and virtual meeting via Zoom  
Conference Room, Whatcom Council of Governments  
314 E. Champion St, Bellingham, WA  
1:00 p.m.

### **DRAFT MEETING MINUTES**

#### **PRESENT:**

BOARD MEMBERS: Bill Bliss, Constance Ohana, Chris Moench, and Gurdeep Bains.

STAFF: Greg Greenan, Board Attorney; Emily Moran, Chief Clerk of the Board; Lethal Coe, Clerk; and Anna Webb, Staff to Board Attorney.

GUESTS: Peter Ruffato, Attorney to the City of Blaine; Mike Harmon, Blaine City Manager; Tom Seguire, Attorney to Whatcom County; Doug Ranney, Whatcom County Public Works; Hugh Conroy, Whatcom Council of Governments Director; Julia Tellman, Cascadia Daily News; Ed; 'WC Prosecuting Attorney's' (via Zoom); 'kt' (via Zoom), Megan Holmes (via Zoom).

#### **WELCOME AND ROLL CALL**

Bill Bliss, Chair, called the Regular Meeting of the Boundary Review Board for Whatcom County to order at 1:00 p.m. All board members were present in-person.

#### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

None.

#### **REVIEW / REVISE AGENDA**

Tom Seguire, representing Whatcom County ('the County'), requested that the Board address a conflict of interest regarding Board member Gurdeep Bains, as his spouse serves on Blaine City Council. The Board discussed and requested counsel from Greg Greenan, attorney to the Board, who advised.

Peter Ruffato, representing the City of Blaine ('the City'), noted that in the event of recusal or resignation, the City will object to any decision of substance being made on BRB File #2025-02 without the mayor's Board appointment spot being filled per the County code.

Mr. Bains recused himself from any discussions relevant to BRB File #2025-02 and will consider a formal resignation before the following Tuesday to allow for a new appointment from the mayors group.

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM APRIL 1st, 2026 MEETING**

No revisions were suggested. Upon motion duly made, seconded, and passed, the April 1st, 2026 meeting minutes were accepted as written.

### **ELECTION OF A CHAIR AND VICE-CHAIR**

Upon motion duly made, seconded, and passed, the Board re-elected the existing Chair, Bill Bliss, and Vice Chair, Chris Moench.

### **DISCUSSION OF BRB FILE #2025-02 AND MOTION TO DISMISS AND LETTERS RECEIVED**

The Board, parties to the case, and respective counsel discussed BRB File #2025-02 (Blaine's proposed de-annexation). The parties agreed that an extension would be acceptable to decrease procedural pressure for noticing and additionally, to allow further conversations between the County and the City. Mr. Greenan noted that RCW 36.93.100 uses the terminology 'an extension' in the singular. Mr. Ruffato stated that the City would waive any future arguments that an extension wasn't appropriate because of the singularity of the term 'an extension' in the statute. Mr. Seguire stated the County's consent on this matter.

The Board agreed that an extension would be favorable and moved to grant the extension of the review period. The motion was seconded and approved, with Mr. Bains abstaining. The review deadline for BRB File #2025-02 was extended to December 15th, 2026.

The Board then moved, seconded and approved (with Mr. Bains abstaining) the scheduling of a Special Meeting on September 10th 2026 at 1:00 pm, at which time the Board may schedule a hearing date and any other relevant dates, should such be necessary.

### **REVIEW OF INCORPORATION PROCEDURE**

Emily Moran, Chief Clerk, shared that the Birch Bay Incorporation Association reached out to the Board and are planning to initiate their formal incorporation as a city soon. Clerks and Board members reviewed RCW 35.02 regarding incorporation proceedings.

### **OPEN FORUM**

No additional topics were raised.

### **ADJOURN**

Upon motion duly made, seconded, and approved, the meeting was adjourned at 1:54 pm.

Prepared and submitted by Emily Moran, Chief Clerk.

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Emily Moran, Chief Clerk of the Board

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Date

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Bill Bliss, Board Chair

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Date