

**MINUTES OF THE PUBLIC MEETING OF THE
BELLINGHAM-WHATCOM PUBLIC FACILITIES DISTRICT
THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 20, 2025**

CALL TO ORDER

Dunham Gooding, President, called the meeting to order at 12:00 p.m.

- **ROLL CALL**

Members present: Dunham Gooding (President), Bruce Tabb, Loraine Boland, Mark Asmundson, and Sati Mookherjee.

Members absent: Brent Walker

City Staff Present: Mayor Lund, Andrew Asbjornsen, Carol Rofkar, Heather Aven, Maria Coltharp, and Tara Sundin

Also Present: John van Keppel

OPEN PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

Mayor Lund addressed the members and explained how the City of Bellingham is handling the appointments to the various Boards and Commissions, as well as the rationale for the changes.

BUSINESS

1. Financial Update:

Andrew Asbjornsen suggested that the Board consider refinancing the PFD bonds alongside the bonds needing to be refinanced for the What-Comm Building. He indicated that would be happening in early 2026 – and stated that if interested, staff could bring a resolution before the members for consideration in January. He reviewed the potential cost savings that could be had over the next couple of years.

There was support for doing both processes at the same time to save on cost.

2. Presentation – Whatcom Museum:

Maria Coltharp provided a presentation on the history of the museum. She also shared the mission and the vision of the Whatcom Museum. She spoke to the statistics of some of the collections that have been featured, as well as the different spaces they were featured in.

Maria Coltharp shared some of the events that occur throughout the year at the Lightcatcher and highlighted the fact that this site is an education hub, an events center and a children's museum with an interactive gallery. She also shared some of the visitor statistics and the economic impact the Whatcom Museum has on the community.

Tara Sundin shared an overview on the partnership of the City of Bellingham, the Foundation of the Museum, and the Public Facilities District with regard to the operating, funding and lease agreements.

Carol Rofkar spoke to how the City of Bellingham supports the Museum through maintenance and custodial operations. She discussed the different capital needs needed from the most urgent, ones that are 5-10 years out, as well as others that won't be necessary for about 10-15 years.

Tara Sundin stated that the PFD will be talking about next steps to create a strategy for how the assets will be paid for over the next several months.

For the Good of the Order and Announcements:

A special meeting will be added in January 2026 to review and adopt the resolution related to the bond sale.

Next regular meeting: February 19, 2026

ADJOURNMENT

Dunham Gooding adjourned the meeting at 1:30 p.m.

Following the meeting, the Museum's Acting Director Maria Coltharp led a tour of the Museum's archives to provide the PFD board members a sense of the large scale and diversity of the holdings.

Respectfully submitted,
Heather Aven, Administrative Supervisor

Final Minutes Approved:

Dunham Gooding, President