



WHATCOM COUNTY EXECUTIVE ORDER 2017-03

RECOGNIZING COUNTY AUDITOR'S ROLE IN THE ANNUAL STATE AUDIT AND DEFINING FINANCE MANAGER'S ROLE IN INFORMING THE COUNTY AUDITOR IN FINANCIAL REPORTING MATTERS

WHEREAS, Whatcom County Charter Section 3.52 states that the County Auditor ". . . shall audit County financial systems, records, and management procedures for compliance with recognized accounting principles and conformance to federal, state, and County laws, policies, and procedures . . ."; and

WHEREAS, the same Section 3.52 also states that the County Auditor ". . . shall insure the adequacy and standing of County finances through certification of an annual financial report"; and

WHEREAS, the Washington State Auditor's Office (SAO) plans and performs an annual audit to obtain reasonable assurance the County's financial statements are free from material misstatement; and,

WHEREAS, the County Administration will meet with the County Auditor semiannually to discuss issues related to financial internal controls and changes in financial reporting requirements; and,

WHEREAS, the County Auditor will be included in meetings with the SAO related to: 1) planning of the annual county audit and 2) post-audit detailed discussion of audit issues; and,

WHEREAS, the cost of the annual audit performed by SAO is significant, and should not be unnecessarily duplicated by further dedication of County resources to perform a function that is already being fulfilled by the SAO's work; and


WHEREAS, the Auditor retains the ability through the Charter to seek contract audit services if deemed necessary,

NOW, THEREFORE, BY virtue of the power vested in me by the home rule charter for Whatcom County, I hereby declare the following:

1. The Finance Manager will meet semiannually with the County Auditor to discuss issues related to financial internal controls and changes in financial reporting requirements.
2. The Finance Manager will work with the County Auditor to enable the County Auditor to participate in discussions with the SAO regarding the audit scope and audit findings. The Finance Manager will provide regular updates to the County Auditor as the annual audit progresses.

3. The County Auditor will be provided opportunity to suggest to the SAO county functions and/or transactions that in the County Auditor's opinion merit review by the State Auditor.
4. The Finance Manager will provide the preliminary Whatcom County Comprehensive Annual Financial Report to the County Auditor at the same time it is provided to the SAO.
5. The Finance Manager will provide a final Whatcom County Comprehensive Annual Financial Report to the County Auditor once the annual audit is complete. The Finance Manager will provide additional information requested by the County Auditor necessary for the County Auditor to certify that the Comprehensive Annual Financial Report presents fairly the adequacy and standing of Whatcom County's financial position.
6. The Finance Manager will continue to have the day-to-day contact with the SAO throughout the audit process.
7. The County Auditor will be provided opportunity to assist in follow-up efforts as deemed appropriate.

DATED this 17th day of July, 2017.



Jack Louws, Whatcom County Executive

Approved As To Legal Form:

Daniel L. Gibson 07/17/17
Civil Deputy Prosecuting Attorney (Date)