

**WHATCOM COUNTY COUNCIL AGENDA BILL**

**NO. 2009 - 288**

<b>CLEARANCES</b>	<b>Initial</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Date Received in Council Office</b>	<b>Agenda Date</b>	<b>Assigned to:</b>
Originator:		6/2/2009		6/9/2009	Council
Division Head:					
Dept. Head:					
Prosecutor:					
Purchasing/Budget:					
Executive:					

**TITLE OF DOCUMENT:**

Resolution requesting implementing Executive Taskforce on Roeder Home Report

**ATTACHMENTS:**

SEPA review required?    (    ) Yes    (    ) NO SEPA review completed?    (    ) Yes    (    ) NO	Should Clerk schedule a hearing?    (    ) Yes    (    ) NO Requested Date:
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**SUMMARY STATEMENT OR LEGAL NOTICE LANGUAGE: (If this item is an ordinance or requires a public hearing, you must provide the language for use in the required public notice. Be specific and cite RCW or WCC as appropriate. Be clear in explaining the intent of the action.)**

Resolution requesting Whatcom County Executive to implement the recommendations of the Executive Taskforce on the Roeder Home Report beginning with the Roeder Home short term rent recommendations

**COMMITTEE ACTION:**

**COUNCIL ACTION:**

6/09/2009: Council Amended and Approved 7-0  
Res. 2009-038

**Related County Contract #:**

**Related File Numbers:**

**Ordinance or Resolution Number:** Res. 2009-038

**Please Note: Once adopted and signed, ordinances and resolutions are available for viewing and printing on the County's website at: [www.co.whatcom.wa.us/council](http://www.co.whatcom.wa.us/council).**

**SPONSORED BY: CONSENT**  
**PROPOSED BY: FLEETWOOD**  
**INTRODUCTION DATE: JUNE 9, 2009**

**RESOLUTION NO. 2009-038**

**REQUESTING WHATCOM COUNTY EXECUTIVE TO IMPLEMENT THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE EXECUTIVE TASKFORCE ON THE ROEDER HOME REPORT BEGINNING WITH THE ROEDER HOME SHORT TERM RENT RECOMMENDATIONS**

**WHEREAS**, the Roeder Home, in Bellingham, was built from 1903 to 1908 by Victor A Roeder, founder of the Bellingham National Bank, and the son of Bellingham's founder Captain Henry Roeder, and was designed by Alfred Lee, the same architect who designed Old Main and the Whatcom Museum of History and Art; and

**WHEREAS**, the Roeder Home was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1977 in recognition of the importance of the Roeder Home to the community and its historical significance to Whatcom County residents and visitors; and

**WHEREAS**, in 1971 Whatcom County was deeded the Roeder Home by Mrs. Elizabeth Keyes for public park purposes and the deed of gift by which Mrs. Keyes gave the home to the County requires that it be used "exclusively for the use and enjoyment of the public for park purposes or for use as a museum or historical site or other similar public use." and that said deed requires that the county return the building to the heirs if it is not used in this way; and

**WHEREAS**, In 1971 Mollie Faulkner was hired, by former County Park's Director Ken Hertz, as the first director of the Roeder Home Cultural Arts Program and established the home as a gathering place for artists, musicians and writers to share their knowledge and creative ability with both adults and children; and

**WHEREAS**, over time the program has become established as a venue offering classes in drawing, painting, weaving, photography and jewelry making, children's theatre, and guitar playing, to name only a few. Additionally, the program sponsored musical concerts and other musical events every Wednesday evening during the academic year since 1976; and

**WHEREAS**, for 38 years the Roeder Home had been the lively center of cultural arts in Whatcom County and has been an incubator for the arts hatching the creation of Allied Arts, the Kulshan Chorus, and Whatcom in Bloom. Many professional artists took or taught their first classes there and the Holiday Arts Sale developed as the pre-eminent arts and crafts show in the County, with sales of \$57,000 in 2008 accounted for a substantial portion of the total income of many of Whatcom County's top artists; and

**WHEREAS**, The Whatcom County Home Made Music Society provided free or low cost musical programming to the public by co-hosting concerts and music circles, hosted by volunteers for over 30 years and was a program praised by no less than the Head Emeritus of the Archive of Folk Culture, American Folklife Center of the Library of Congress, who said the Society's Roeder Home concert series is in the top 1 or 2 percentile of folk music venues in the United States and Canada; and

**WHEREAS**, in 2008 the economic downturn resulted in elimination of a full time staff person to administer the Cultural Arts Program resulting in the loss of, or reduction in, classes and concerts at the Roeder Home; and

**WHEREAS**, the County Executive and County Council have indicated that they would like the cultural arts programs and events at the Roeder Home to continue but that there is little or no money available for the County to fund the staff and programs at this time; and

**WHEREAS**, in response to interest in finding creative ways to maintain historic levels of programming at the Roeder Home the County Executive appointed a task force to examine ways in which the programs could be restarted; and

**WHEREAS**, the task force charge was to identify ways that the Roeder Home could be better utilized for a variety of activities and to recommend alternatives for sustainable program delivery and that towards that end the task force has completed recommendations for long-term management and, also, immediate short term implementation measures; and

**WHEREAS**, the members of the task force represented an extremely wide range of views and met weekly for three months to work through differences; and

**WHEREAS**, the Task Force completed its report and recommendations and provided it to the County Executive on March 23, 2009; and

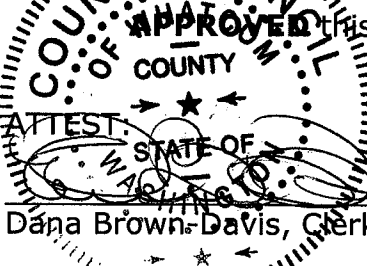
**WHEREAS**, the recommendations included two short term recommendations to be implemented that would allow programs and activities at very little cost to the County; and

**WHEREAS**, it is clearly in the best interests of the public welfare to implement these short-term recommendations; and

**WHEREAS**, members of the public have come forward to keep programming at the Roeder Home active through the use of volunteers for opening and closing, cleaning, fundraising, and offering programs, through this economic hard time;

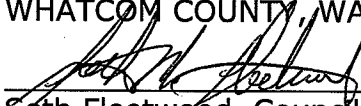
**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Whatcom County Council hereby respectfully requests the County Executive to implement the task force recommendations known as the "Roeder Home Short Term Rent Recommendations" and work on integrating recommendations contained in "Attachment A", "Proposal for Interim Programming for the Roeder Home".

APPROVED this 9th day of June, 2009.




Dana Brown-Davis, Clerk of the Council

WHATCOM COUNTY COUNCIL  
WHATCOM COUNTY, WASHINGTON

  
Seth Fleetwood, Council Chair

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

  
Civil Deputy Prosecutor

## **Attachment A**

### **Recommendation Part 1. Definition**

Regarding the County Parks facility rental plan, the definition of **commercial groups** excludes all-volunteer county based interest groups (examples are the Home Made Music Society, the Northwest Classical Guitar Society, and the Bellingham Ukulele Group ) who may or may not accept program specific donations for a performer or for offsetting rent.

The **current** definition of **Commercial** is: "*Individuals, groups or businesses who charge admission, class fees, sell tickets, food or other items, solicit funds or donations, offer other money making activities or promote a commercial business.*"

### **Recommendation Part 2. Rate**

The rental rate for daytime or evening programs shall be a flat fee of \$50.00 per activity, program or event. The flat rate will include weekday and weekend rentals. In the event that two groups request the home for the same time, preference will be given to the group that pays the regular rate.

### **Recommendation Part 3. Open Hours**

The Home should be open one morning or afternoon, and one evening per week, and that the times be set in collaboration with users to maximize the use of the Home by local volunteer groups with a history of meeting at the Home, and by any new volunteer groups that step forward during this interim time.

### **Recommendation 4. Volunteer Use**

It would be acceptable to use volunteers to open and close the Home if adequate training and support were made available. The volunteers will assist with cleaning and other maintenance, and will solicit donations for the Home from their members at each meeting. All such donations will be used specifically for expenses directly related to the Roeder Home.

### **Recommendation Part 5. Insurance**

For noncommercial, community associations or interest groups, eligible for the flat rate, separate liability insurance will not be required.

### **Recommendation Part 6. Term**

The recommendations regarding rents and open hours should continue until a new or existing nonprofit organization is managing programs or providing support for programs at the Roeder Home and creates its own rental rate structure.