

SKAGIT COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

MINUTES OF MAY 16, 1985 PUBLIC MEETING

The public meeting was convened at 10:00 a.m. on Wednesday, May 16, 1985 by Chairman William Vaux for the purpose of conducting deliberations on whether to adopt an ordinance declaring Skagit County a Nuclear Weapons Free Zone. Commissioners David Rohrer and Otto Walberg were also present.

Chairman Vaux announced that as promised on May 15th, the Commissioners would discuss the issue and render a decision. For discussion purposes, he indicated that he would make an opening statement and offer his opinion on how the Board should proceed.

Chairman Vaux stated that the Commissioners were not elected to make decisions based on assumptions, but on fact. In determining what the voters were saying in the General Election of 1984, the two documents of fact were Resolution #10185 and the wording on the ballot of Proposition 1. Chairman Vaux then read both of these documents into the record.

Chairman Vaux thanked the people for their conduct and patience during the two informal discussions and one public hearing on the Nuclear Free Zone issue and assured the audience that the Commissioners were not purposely using delay tactics to skirt the issue of adoption. He explained that the Resolution which was presented to the Board for consideration and adoption did not adequately reflect the contents of either Resolution #10185 or Proposition 1. It was his opinion that the Board was charged with the responsibility of determining the validity of the following items at issue.

The first issue was whether the declaration should be in Resolution or Ordinance form. Chairman Vaux stated that the language of Resolution #10185 mandated an Ordinance and he expressed regret that the language of Proposition 1 omitted this reference. The second issue involved whether components of nuclear weapons which might be manufactured in Skagit County should be banned. Chairman Vaux noted that the word component had not appeared in the ballot language and, thus, it was very clear that the voters could not have voted either for or against components. The third and fourth issues referred to slogans on county letterhead and signs posted along county highways with wording declaring Skagit County a Nuclear Weapons Free Zone. Chairman Vaux again stated that these two issues had not been in the language as presented on the ballot and had not been voted upon one way or the other.

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In conclusion Chairman Vaux stated that it had been implied that this measure was not fairly presented to the voters. He recalled when he attended several 1984 campaign forums, that not one person had even questioned this proposal or the language as presented. He commended the supporters of the initiative for their efforts, but emphasized that the opponents had some valid arguments pertaining to sign and letterhead requirements.

At this point Chairman Vaux read a Resolution approving an Ordinance declaring Skagit County a Nuclear Weapons Free Zone and the attached Ordinance into the record, with the section pertaining to signs deleted. Chairman Vaux reiterated his position that the facts of the situation support the Ordinance as read.

Commissioner Walberg stated that he appreciated the variety of comments and opinions expressed at the previous meeting and that it was his opinion also that Resolution 10185 mandated an ordinance. He said that the Free Zone issue was not about patriotism or cowardice and that the U.S. would not lose the ability to flex its military muscle. Referring to the adage that it was best to speak softly and carry a big stick, Mr. Walberg felt everyone knows America has a big stick and perhaps if we spoke softly, it would make people listen.

His inclination would be to not include components in the ordinance. However, he felt that signs would be appropriate since the Board could review the signs prior to their placement on county rights-of-way. Mr. Walberg stated that the only issue in question was the placement of signs and he would leave that decision to Commissioner Rohrer.

Commissioner Rohrer expressed his appreciation to the audience for their opinions. He stated that he could not support a nuclear weapons free zone in any way and he advocated a "big stick" philosophy. Based on this attitude, he said that he would vote no on the signs and on the ordinance itself.

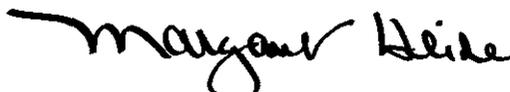
Commissioner Rohrer moved to reject declaring Skagit County a Nuclear Weapons Free Zone and to eliminate the sign requirements of the ordinance. Chairman Vaux noted that the motion dealt with two separate issues. Commissioner Walberg suggested that the sign issue should be decided first.

Commissioner Rohrer made a motion to remove the sign requirement from the proposed ordinance. Chairman Vaux seconded the motion. The motion carried 2-1 with Commissioner Walberg voting nay.

Chairman Vaux moved to approve the ordinance as read. Commissioner Walberg seconded the motion. The motion carried 2-1 with Commissioner Rohrer voting nay.

The meeting adjourned at 10:20 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

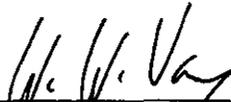


Margaret Heide, Secretary

ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Walberg motioned to adjourn the proceedings. Commissioner Rohrer seconded the motion. The motion was carried unanimously.

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
SKAGIT COUNTY, WASHINGTON



W. W. Vaux, Chairman

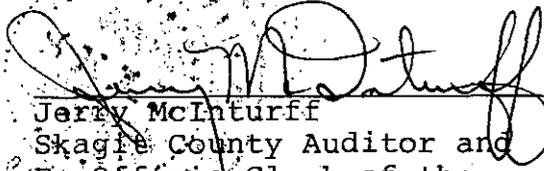


Otto M. Walberg, Jr., Commissioner



Dave Rohrer, Commissioner

ATTEST:



Jerry McInturff
Skagit County Auditor and
Ex-Officio Clerk of the
Board of Commissioners