

RECORD OF THE PROCEEDINGS
SKAGIT COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Thursday, September 19, 1985

MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS

3:30 p.m. Continued Discussion of Nuclear Free Zone - Leif Burkland.

The Skagit County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on Thursday, September 19, 1985, with Commissioners Vaux, Walberg and Rohrer present.

MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS

Robert Taylor, Administrative Officer, presented the following items:

1. Commissioner Rohrer motioned to approve Warrant #38614 in the amount of \$178,613.56. Commissioner Walberg seconded the motion. The motion was carried unanimously. (R-36)
2. Commissioner Rohrer motioned to approve Warrant #6159 in the amount of \$168,959.27. Commissioner Walberg seconded the motion. The motion was carried unanimously. (C-45)

CONTINUED DISCUSSION OF NUCLEAR FREE ZONE - Leif Burkland.

Chairman Vaux explained that this meeting was not a public hearing, but a continued discussion from Tuesday, September 17, 1985. He noted that Leif Burkland, on behalf of Skagit Citizens United for a Strong America (SCUSA), had presented petitions containing 25 additional signatures to be added to the 900 signatures presented Tuesday, September 17, 1985.

Dero Forslund, of Rockport, requested everyone salute the flag. The flag salute was conducted.

Chairman Vaux asked Mr. Burkland if the aim of the petition is to repeal the Nuclear Weapons Free Zone Ordinance, which was adopted by the Board in May, 1985.

Mr. Burkland felt the Nuclear Weapons Free Zone Ordinance was in conflict with the statement in the petition.

Commissioner Walberg asked for additional clarification. He felt the statement on the petition was unclear.

Mr. Forslund, also a member of SCUSA, read the proposed statement, as approved

by Tom Moser, Skagit County Prosecuting Attorney, as follows:

Would you favor an ordinance prohibiting all actions that give aid and comfort to our enemy, and/or interfere with interstate commerce, and/or the provisions of common defense?

Commissioner Walberg felt the wording "aid and comfort to our enemy" needed further definition. He suggested the ballot issue include their intention to repeal the Nuclear Weapons Free Zone Ordinance.

Mr. Forslund stated that it would be the Board's duty to repeal the ordinance, once the advisory ballot passed.

Joy Werner, of Anacortes, spoke in favor of the proposed ballot issue. She felt the Nuclear Weapons Free Zone Ordinance weakens our country.

In answer to a question from Commissioner Walberg, Ms. Werner suggested the ballot issue be worded as follows:

- Nuclear Weapons Free Zone Ordinance
- Strong America

She explained that the voter could check one of the two choices.

Dick Ruble supported and explained the proposed ballot issue in detail. He stated that he spoke with two attorneys who said the Nuclear Weapons Free Zone Ordinance is illegal.

Jim Hill, spoke in favor of the ballot issue. He noted that those who signed the petition knew it would deal with many issues, including pornography and the Nuclear Weapons Free Zone Ordinance.

Zell Young, of Mount Vernon, stated that he was all in favor of the advisory ballot, although he questioned the wording. He placed on exhibit a large bolt from the proposed Bacus Hill nuclear power plant.

Jack Grill defined psychological warfare as a tool used to brainwash Americans into surrendering to the Russians.

Commissioner Walberg stated that these same statements were heard in May of 1985 by this Board. He asked what wording should be used on the advisory ballot issue. He also asked what percentage of votes will be considered a majority, and thus pass the issue.

Cathy Savage stated that she felt the proposed wording on the petition was unintelligently worded. She hoped it appeared on the ballot as written and she would vote for it.

Virginia Darvill advocated the following wording:

Do you want the Nuclear Weapons Free Zone Ordinance repealed? Yes or No

Ms. Darvill also suggested that a vote of more than 61.9 percent for the issue should be required to pass the issue.

Robbie Robertson agreed with Ms. Darvill. He felt the total number of votes on a percentage basis of the population should also be considered. He noted that the voter turnout should have to at least be the same if not more than the election in which the Nuclear Weapons Free Zone Ordinance issue was presented.

Bob McCauley, of Oak Harbor, spoke in favor of the ballot issue and in opposition to the Nuclear Weapons Free Zone Ordinance.

Once again, Commissioner Walberg requested a clear statement of how the issue should appear on the ballot and the percentage of majority to mandate the issue.

Mr. McCauley stated that perhaps the issue should be presented exactly as approved by the Prosecuting Attorney.

At this time, the Board concurred that a measure would be on the November ballot directed toward this issue.

Chairman Vaux added that this Board will come up with a set of guidelines which will be followed for future ballot issues.

Mr. McCauley requested that only SCUSA members be allowed to participate in the wording of the ballot issue.

Grace Hubbard felt the issue as written was very misleading. She asked that the issue be placed on the ballot again, as it was last year, with percentages exceeding last year's percentages required to repeal the ordinance.

Robbie Robertson asked that the issue be worded to repeal the ordinance should it pass. He suggested that a vote which exceeded the last majority turnout would then mandate the change.

Mr. Forslund stated that Tom Moser, Skagit County Prosecuting Attorney, approved the original wording this day. He noted that Mr. Moser will not be available tomorrow.

Discussion followed regarding definition of "aid and comfort to our enemy."

Commissioner Rohrer suggested one citizen from each side and one commissioner

meet tomorrow to decide on the wording.

Ken Ward, of Stanwood, stated that the Board could simply rescind the Nuclear Weapons Free Zone Ordinance. He felt this ordinance prevents his defense in Snohomish County.

Don Van Etten stated that he didn't feel the average citizen understood the wording on the previous ballot issue. He suggested the issue be placed back on the ballot.

Barbara Evans Cram stated that the matter should be placed on the ballot exactly as it was the first time for a second vote of the people.

Mrs. Forslund requested the Board leave the wording as it is and not wait until tomorrow.

Mr. Forslund explained the wording which he stated was approved by the Prosecuting Attorney.

Robbie Robertson asked if it would be possible to explain what the Board intended to do after the vote.

Commissioner Walberg stated that this proposed verbage would be just as confusing as the previous ballot issue. He suggested the issue should read as follows:

Should the Skagit County Board of Commissioners repeal the Nuclear Weapons Free Zone Ordinance? Yes or No

Mr. Forslund stated that the people petitioned the Commissioners to put this issue to the vote of the people. He felt it was not the duty of the Commissioners to change the wording of the issue.

Mr. Ruble stated that if passed, this ballot issue would prevent such an unlawful ordinance from being adopted in the future.

Cathy Savage stated that she would vote for the issue as it is written; however she is also a supporter of the Nuclear Weapons Free Zone Ordinance.

Zell Young asked how the ordinance can be construed as illegal if it has never been tried in court.

Robbie Robertson suggested two issues be placed on the ballot:

1. Repeal the Nuclear Weapons Free Zone Ordinance; and
2. Support a strong America.

Jim Hill stated that the petitioners are asking that the Board give the people of Skagit County an opportunity to pledge their allegiance to their country.

Commissioner Walberg read the wording of the ballot issue, as requested by members of SCUSA:

Would you favor an ordinance prohibiting all actions that give aid and comfort to our enemy, and/or interfere with interstate commerce, and/or the provisions of common defense?

Robbie Robertson asked if a "yes" vote would mandate the Commissioners to repeal the Nuclear Weapons Free Zone Ordinance?

Commissioner Walberg answered "no."

Commissioner Rohrer answered "yes."

Commissioner Walberg stated that the Prosecuting Attorney has also approved his wording:

Should the Nuclear Weapons Free Zone Ordinance be repealed? Yes or No

Discussion followed regarding what action will be expected of the Board following the outcome of the advisory ballot.

Cathy Savage stated that the issue as worded states that a citizen cannot be an American and be for the Nuclear Weapons Free Zone Ordinance also.

Robbie Robertson requested the issue be placed on the ballot as written.

Commissioner Walberg asked what this ballot issue will accomplish besides costing the County money.

Deanne Emerson supported the use of Commissioner Walberg's suggested wording, because it is clear and easily understood.

Debbie Aldrich stated that she is proud to be an American, but also supports the Nuclear Weapons Free Zone Ordinance.

Bob McCauley suggested the Board sign a statement informing the citizens of their belief, and then repeal the Nuclear Weapons Free Zone Ordinance because it is in direct conflict.

Jack Grill suggested the following wording for the ballot issue:

In view of the USSR's nuclear superiority, do you favor a Nuclear Free Zone as pertaining to the defense of our country? Yes or No

Mrs. Wave McLucas noted that this whole process is taking too long.

Commissioner Walberg suggested a two phase approach:

1. The advisory vote would read: "Should the Skagit County Board of Commissioners repeal the Nuclear Weapons Free Zone Ordinance? Yes or No."
2. With regard to the question of how many citizens in Skagit County believe in a strong America, Commissioner Walberg suggested this matter be handled at a later date.

Mr. Forslund stated that SCUSA wants more than to repeal the Nuclear Weapons Free Zone Ordinance. They want to find out where the Skagit County citizens stand on the issue of a strong America.

Jim Hill pointed out that SCUSA did not ask that the Nuclear Weapons Free Zone Ordinance be on the ballot. They want the statement on their petitions on the ballot now, not later.

Deanne Emerson stated that she resented being called un-American because she favors the Nuclear Weapons Free Zone Ordinance.

Zell Young suggested the Board put the issue on the ballot as it is written.

Robbie Robertson again stated that the issue is whether or not the people want the Nuclear Weapons Free Zone Ordinance repealed.

Mrs. Forslund stated that SCUSA's proposed ballot issue would not be enforceable. It would only reaffirm patriotism.

Discussion ensued among Chairman Vaux, Commissioner Walberg and Commissioner Rohrer.

Commissioner Rohrer motioned to require a 60 percent, or super majority, of the votes cast to be in support of the ballot issue in order to pass the issue. Commissioner Walberg seconded the motion. The motion was carried unanimously.

Commissioner Rohrer motioned to place the issue, as petitioned, on the November general election ballot.

Chairman Vaux felt that the Board didn't have the right to change the wording of the ballot issue as presented.

Commissioner Walberg stated that he had no problem with the wording of the issue, however he felt the interpretation was still unclear. He stated that

it was unwise to spend \$5,000 on the ballot issue and still not know exactly what the people want. Commissioner Walberg felt the wording needed to be changed in order to give the Commissioners clear direction on what the people voted for.


Discussion followed regarding the number of votes needed to validate the issue.

Commissioner Rohrer amended his previous motion to require 20,000 votes on the ballot issue in order to validate the issue. Chairman Vaux seconded the motion. The motion to place the issue, as petitioned, on the November general election ballot, with a 60 percent majority vote required to pass the issue, and 20,000 votes on the ballot issue required to validate the issue, was carried with votes from Chairman Vaux and Commissioner Rohrer. Commissioner Walberg voted against the motion. (Resolution #10607)

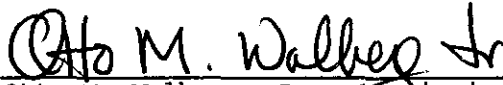
ADJOURNMENT

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

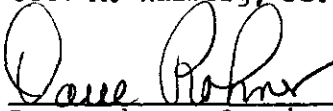
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
SKAGIT COUNTY, WASHINGTON



W. W. Vaux, Chairman

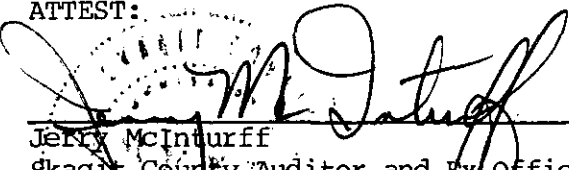


Otto M. Walberg, Jr., Commissioner



Dave Rohrer, Commissioner

ATTEST:



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