

**RECORD OF THE PROCEEDINGS
SKAGIT COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

Thursday, September 28, 1989

9:00 a.m. Continuation of Public Hearing: 1990 Solid Waste Disposal Rates.

The Skagit County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on Thursday, September 28, 1989, with Commissioners Dave Rohrer, Ruth Wylie and W. W. Vaux present.

CONTINUATION OF PUBLIC HEARING: 1990 SOLID WASTE DISPOSAL RATES.

Mark Spahr, Public Works Director, opened the discussion with his presentation. He stated that he would endeavor to answer two questions which arose at the previous meeting: (1) What is the basis for the County's assumption of total tonnage increase for 1990, and (2) Provide an analysis of the fee schedule to substantiate the reasoning for a larger fee increase for private hauler tipping fees in comparison to compactor boxes. Mr. Spahr stated that it is difficult to provide a long term analysis because of the unpredictability of trends, but would attempt to project trends for 1990.

Mr. Spahr provided a graph which showed the current total waste stream, including all tonnage at Inman landfill and those landfills that have been closed, collected from 1982 through 1989. Using these figures, a projected tonnage of 55,128 was estimated for the year 1989. A second line showed projections made by R.W. Beck based on their assumption of a 1.5% annual growth rate, which was used to compute the tipping fees proposed at the meeting last week. Mr. Spahr stated that the actual growth rate for 1989 is 2.8%. The graph then showed projections for 1990 using the 1.5% annual growth rate. Comparison lines showed (1) projections using a growth rate of 3.0% (55,955 tons annually), (2) projections using a growth rate of 5.2% (a figure arrived at by reviewing growth over the past 5 years) (56,800 tons annually), and (3) projections using a growth rate of 10% annually (58,000 tons annually).

Mr. Spahr then related those statistics to tipping fee proposals. The Public Works Department's original proposal was \$50.09 per ton. Figuring a 3.0% increase, tipping fees would drop to \$49.68 per ton. At a 5.2% increase, tipping fees would be \$48.38 per ton, and at an extremely rapid growth rate of 10%, tipping fees would be \$46.22 per ton.

Regarding establishing a parity between compactor boxes and private haulers fees, Mr. Spahr stated that he used the presumption that 4 yards of waste equals 1 ton. He further concluded that 20% of the material disposed of at the incinerator is from compactors and pick up loads, and 80% is from municipalities or private haulers. He stated that presently, the per yard charge is \$4.50 and private hauler charge is \$35.00 per ton. If raised to \$5.00 per yard, the tonnage would raise to that proposed last week. If raised to \$6.00 per yard, tonnage could be reduced by \$1.00. If raised to \$7.00 per yard, there could be dollar for dollar reduction. At \$11.50 per ton, equal rate raises would occur.

Mr. Spahr pointed out that if the per yard rate was raised to \$11.50 per yard, the 20% disposal figure may drop, and the other 80% may be expected to make up for it.

Commissioner Vaux stated that the question that had arisen last week had been why the cities and private haulers should pay to subsidize the drop boxes. He declared that all drop boxes should be eliminated and the locations used for recycling collection centers. He stated that this would not deprive the citizens of service, as private haulers exist.

Mr. Spahr stated that Commissioner Vaux's idea is possible, but that it would require review of the impact to the public.

Don Bockelman, a citizen from Day Creek, established that if wastes do not go into the drop boxes, they may end up being dumped on County roads illegally.

Mayors Rice and Walley cited the expense of recycling centers. They questioned why the County should go ahead with a recycling plan when it is not due for two years. They recommended not hiring a recycling consultant or beginning a recycling plan at this time. Mayor Reep agreed and felt the cities were already doing their part to recycle. Mayor Walley further stated that two years from now the industry may be improved sufficient to warrant a recycling plan.

Commissioner Vaux declared that the County, Cities and private haulers agreed to approach solid waste through landfilling, incineration and recycling. The County has been following that plan. He stated that recycling is needed now in conjunction with the growth of the county or the landfill and incinerator will not be able to keep up.

Charlie Urbick of Skagit River Steel and Recycling stated that over the last two years his business has expanded greatly and they have been encouraging citizens to recycle. He stated that they have a large facility with current equipment and that they are doing a good business. He stated that we must work together to make people aware that recycling is available. Mr. Urbick explained the process for recycling plastics, at Chairman Rohrer's request.

Steve Hendrickson, also of Skagit River Steel and Recycling, stated that, when the County was having trouble with the metal separator at the incinerator, they attempted a pilot project at the landfill where they tried to separate metals via a conveyor belt apparatus. The project was discontinued, but Mr. Hendrickson stated that it would be a good way to reduce the waste stream through recycling, and that he has found a manufacturer who is willing to try taking it, if the metal is kept clean.

Terry Knudsen of Rural Sanitation stated that he has had a 27% increase during the first 9 months of 1989 over the first 9 months of 1988 (this includes having the Pacific Edge Mall become a new customer). He stated that he has been obtaining many new rural customers of late. He asked questions regarding the hazardous waste budget, which were answered by Bill Ness, Solid Waste/Environmental Engineer, and Mike Woodmansee, Budget/Finance Director.

Mr. Spahr responded to statements made regarding the recycling coordinator position. He stated that there are sizeable grants available from the Department of Ecology for recycling, and that the County and cities would stand to gain by hiring someone who could make the effort to obtain these grants.

Mr. Bockelman pointed out that glass and metals are more costly to incinerate because of their weight and the heat needed to burn them, so money would be saved by recycling them instead.

The costs of testing of top and bottom ash and of landfills was reviewed. Ash disposal was also briefly discussed.

Mr. Knudsen stated that he felt compactors should not be subsidized by private haulers, and that the disposal sites should be opened at 8:00 a.m. Mr. Spahr stated that if the sites are closed on Sundays, it is possible to extend the hours on other days.

Mike Woodmansee, Budget/Finance Director, explained that in reviewing the Solid Waste Budget expenditures for 1990, he finds that they are expenses we are currently incurring, which we have been paying for by borrowing from the County Road Fund. He pointed out that the tipping fees cited by Mr. Spahr have a \$4.00 difference from the highest to lowest, and that, should we opt for a figure which uses a growth rate of 10% or 5.2% and then discover that actual growth does not match those figures, we would be in danger of not being able to remain viable.

In answer to questions, Mr. Spahr stated that it is possible to create districts in unincorporated areas for garbage pick up, but, as Commissioner Vaux pointed out, this has only been done in a couple of cases successfully.

Commissioner Vaux maintained that the compactor sites be closed or the cost raised to create parity with the increases to private haulers. Commissioner Wylie argued against immediate closure, stating it would take time to phase the compactors out.

Mayor Walley pointed out that since March, the recycling program in Sedro Woolley has processed 400 tons of recyclables, including compost, but that the revenues received have accounted for less than 5% of the cost of operating the recycling program.

The group then discussed the growth trends in Skagit County, and there was general consensus that these would continue.

Mayor Reep then asked for a decision on the tipping rates. He recommended they be set at \$46.00 per ton.

Mr. Spahr made the recommendation from the Public Works Department that, using a growth rate between 2.5% and 5% and raising the compactor rates to \$6.00 per yard, the tipping fee be set at \$48.00 per ton.

Discussion ensued, and Mr. Woodmansee pointed out that the drawback to growth is that it creates a need to expand facilities.

Mayor Rice recommended a tipping fee of \$46.50 and per yard rate of \$7.00.

Commissioner Vaux made a motion to continue the public hearing to Monday, October 2, 1989, at 10:30 a.m., to allow the Board time to consider the recommendations made. Commissioner Wylie seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.

MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS.

Commissioner Vaux motioned to adopt the resolution authorizing a budget line item change in the amount of \$11,200.00 from the Part-Time Salaries fund of the Weed Control Department Budget to the Professional Services fund. Commissioner Wylie seconded the motion, which passed unanimously. (Resolution #12231)

ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Wylie motioned to adjourn the proceedings. Commissioner Vaux seconded the motion. The motion was carried unanimously.

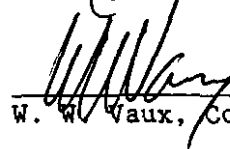
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
SKAGIT COUNTY, WASHINGTON



Dave Rohrer, Chairman



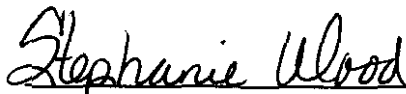
Ruth Wylie, Commissioner



W. W. Vaux, Commissioner



ATTEST:



Stephanie Wood, Clerk
Skagit County Board of Commissioners