

RECORD OF THE PROCEEDINGS
SKAGIT COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Tuesday, May 1, 1990

9:00 a.m. Board of Health:

- 1) Public Hearing - Health Department Environmental Fees.
- 2) Introduction of New Employee.
- 3) Tuberculosis Status Report.

10:00 a.m. Public Hearing - Ordinance Regulating Security Alarms.

The Skagit County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on Tuesday, May 1, 1990, with Commissioners Ruth Wylie and Dave Rohrer present. Commissioner Vaux's absence was excused.

BOARD OF HEALTH:

- 1) Public Hearing - Health Department Environmental Fees.

John Thayer, Environmental Health Supervisor, gave information on the changes being proposed to the schedule of environmental health fees. He stated that 17 of the fees are not changing, while 34 are. In proposing these changes, the Health Department has attempted to recover some of the costs for providing services. Mr. Thayer briefly reviewed those changes to the food fees, providing a copy of the full environmental health fee schedule to the Board for review.

Mr. Thayer reviewed the following new categories:

- Chili/chowder cook-off inspection fee
- Food demonstrator inspection fee
- Modified atmosphere packaging inspection fee
- Mobile and temporary food booth reinspection fee

Mr. Thayer stated that a new fee for delinquent water samples will be charged to those maintaining a mobile water supply license. Other revised water lab fees were also reviewed.

Mr. Thayer indicated that a solid waste tipping fee surcharge increase from \$0.25 to \$0.36 per ton is proposed. Illegal dumping fees will be raised, at the Board's request, from \$50 to \$500 for the first offense, and from \$200 to \$1,000 for the second and subsequent offenses.

Fee increases were reviewed regarding permitting of camps and parks.

The following categories were proposed for changes or deletions:

- Cold food deli's will be combined with hot foot deli's
- Food establishment reinspection fees for second, third and fourth reinspections will be established
- Taverns serving food will be reclassified as small food establishments
- Wee site inspections will be charged at an hourly flat fee
- Private water reports will be charged at \$100 for a routine report and at an hourly fee for a complex report.

There being no public comment, Commissioner Rohrer motioned to close the public hearing at this point. Chairman Wylie seconded the motion, which carried and was so ordered. Commissioner Rohrer then motioned to adopt the proposed environmental health fees of the County Health Department, to become effective on June 1, 1990. Chairman Wylie seconded the motion, which carried and was so ordered.

2) Introduction of New Employee.

John Hadman, Environmental Health Specialist, was introduced to the Board. His employment with Skagit County began on April 9, 1990.

3) Tuberculosis Status Report.

Barb Meier, Public Health Nurse, explained that a recent active case of tuberculosis has been identified involving a man who was living in a homeless shelter in Skagit County for approximately three months. Ms. Meier explained that the Health Department has been working to identify persons who used the homeless shelter during that period to investigate the possibility of the transmission of the disease. Ms. Meier explained that tuberculosis is an airborne illness that can be transmitted through casual contact. Those most recently infected are at the greatest risk.

A total of 300 persons have been contacted during the Health Department's investigation, and Ms. Meier provided a summary of the investigation, noting that 45 contacts tested infected, with one child showing active disease. Forty-four adults and 23 children are receiving medication for the disease. Ms. Meier stated that approximately \$7,700 in nursing time over a two week period has been expended on this one case, and follow up costs are expected to total approximately \$5,000. Ms. Meier stated that the Health Department plans to seek grant funding for money to perform homeless shelter surveillance. Presently, homeless shelters keep no records on who receives aid, making location of clients very difficult. Several people whom shelter workers remember having possibly been exposed have not been located. With the grant funding, a system would be set up where records are kept at each shelter and new residents offered testing.

Ms. Meier gave information on tuberculosis and its treatment.

PUBLIC HEARING - ORDINANCE REGULATING SECURITY ALARMS.

Chairman Wylie waived the reading of the Notice of Public Hearing, as published in The Skagit Argus on April 10, 1990. She announced that Commissioner Vaux was unavoidably absent, and that because of this, the Board will receive testimony today, keeping the public hearing open until a subsequent time when Commissioner Vaux can review the tape recordings and be present for a decision.

Gary Frazier, Skagit County Sheriff, explained that the Sheriff's Office answers a substantial number of false alarm calls. Between September of 1989 and March of 1990, a time span particularly identified because of the availability of computer records of alarms, the Sheriff's Office responded to 204 alarm calls. Errors by the owners accounted for 66 of those calls, and only three of the calls were verified as being real emergencies. In April, 47 calls were answered with only 1 legitimate emergency occurring. Sheriff Frazier explained that each alarm call requires the response of two deputies, who are thus removed from regular patrol and the ability to respond to other emergencies. A security alarm ordinance would require those having alarms to address alarm malfunctions and deficiencies. Sheriff Frazier explained that after three alarms in any six month period, the Sheriff's Office would have the ability to assess the owner a \$50.00 fine. Sheriff Frazier gave additional supporting evidence for the ordinance, stating that some homeowners and business owners live out of the area, being inaccessible when there is alarm malfunction. Some alarm monitoring companies are also located out of the area, some even in other states, and have very little information to report to aid the police in responding to an alarm.

John Hunter, Chief of Field Services, explained that the purpose of the ordinance is not to generate revenue for the Sheriff's Office, but to educate alarm owners

so that false alarms can be decreased. He stated that at each false alarm, a notice will be posted at the home or business, explaining the new ordinance and requesting that any deficiencies be corrected. Chief Hunter explained that the Sheriff's Office will exercise judgement when counting false alarms, not counting those when an honest attempt is made to notify the responding officers when an alarm is accidentally tripped. Chief Hunter explained that a civil penalty can be assessed for the third alarm in any six month period which is found to be false. A criminal violation occurs when an individual installs an alarm which directly dials the dispatch center each time it is tripped without the prior permission of the Sheriff's Office, or when a person knowingly causes a false alarm.

Jerry Rindal of Barnett Implement, 1795 Highway 9 South, Mount Vernon, stated that Snohomish County has a security alarm ordinance. He stated that, because of the possibility of receiving a fine for responses to false alarms, he will probably change his alarm to ring into his home instead of to the Sheriff's Office. He remarked that, although he has had a number of break-ins, the Sheriff's Office has failed to apprehend any of the culprits.

Chief Hunter asked to be allowed the chance to talk with his employees before he disconnects his alarm, and Mr. Rindal agreed.

Don Nelson, 4964 East Division, Mount Vernon, explained that he has a home security alarm, and has experienced several burglaries. He was concerned over the possibility of being fined for false alarms. He felt that the term "fine" should be changed to "assessment" to avoid the stigma of having engaged in criminal behavior.

Pat Nelson, 4964 East Division, Mount Vernon, stated that the Sheriff's deputies' response time is so good that it is nearly impossible to make a call to report a false alarm before they arrive.

Chief Hunter related that the intent of the ordinance is to decrease false alarms. Individuals who made an effort to report false alarms would not be penalized.

Ray Nelson of Hoag Road stated that he lives in the City of Mount Vernon, where an alarm ordinance is already in place. He felt that the benefits of security alarms outweigh any losses due to wasted responses.

Chief Hunter pointed out that the City of Mount Vernon's Crime Prevention Office has noted a 50% decrease in false alarms since the adoption of their false alarm ordinance. Chief Hunter stated that the deputies respond "code", which means lights, sirens and high speed driving, to alarm calls. Almost every motor vehicle accident that has occurred involving the Sheriff's office has been during a "code" run. Some accidents have involved the public. In order to reduce the possibility of accidents, it is necessary to reduce the number of times deputies must run "code".

Gloria Nelson of Hoag Road complained that there was a lack of proper notification in the newspaper regarding the public hearing. She was concerned that her neighbors might not call in an alarm if they felt she might be fined.

When no further public testimony was given, Commissioner Rohrer motioned to continue the public hearing to Monday, May 7, 1990, at 2:00 p.m. Chairman Wylie seconded the motion, which carried and was so ordered.

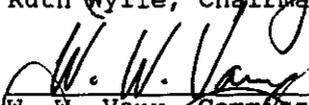
ADJOURNMENT:

Chairman motioned to adjourn the proceedings. Commissioner Rohrer seconded the motion. The motion was carried and so ordered.

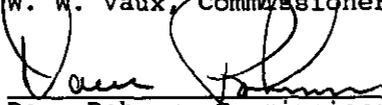
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
SKAGIT COUNTY, WASHINGTON



Ruth Wylie, Chairman

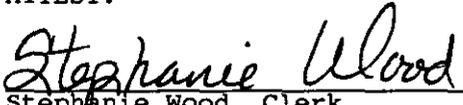


W. W. Vaux, Commissioner



Dave Rohrer, Commissioner

ATTEST:



Stephanie Wood, Clerk
Skagit County Board of Commissioners