

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

Monday, September 24, 1990

10:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m. Public Works Department - Mark Spahr, Director:

- 1) Signatures - City/County Agreement and Petition to the Utilities and Transportation Commission for the Garden of Eden Road Railroad Crossing.
- 2) Resolution - One-Day Road Closure for Sulfur Springs Road #0427.
- 3) Discussion - Scope of Work - Long Range Ferry Plan.
- 4) Miscellaneous.

CONSENT AGENDA.

MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS.

The Skagit County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on Monday, September 24, 1990, with Commissioners Ruth Wylie, W. W. Vaux, and Dave Rohrer present.

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT - MARK SPAHR, DIRECTOR:

- 1) Signatures - City/County Agreement and Petition to the Utilities and Transportation Commission for the Garden of Eden Road Railroad Crossing.

Mr. Spahr explained that, following a 1988 compilation of a prioritized array of railroad crossings that lack signalization, the first four crossings identified were approved for funding by the Federal Government in a 90%-10% matching grant. To consummate this grant agreement, Mr. Spahr requested signature on accompanying agreements.

The Board approved for signature a County Railway Agreement for Federal-Aid Safety Projects Highway-Railway Grade Crossing Warning Devices Project #RRP-2029(17) (Contract #00634) and a Petition to the Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission for installation and maintenance of active warning devices (Contract #00635).

- 2) Resolution - One-Day Road Closure for Sulfur Springs Road #0427.

Commissioner Rohrer motioned to adopt the resolution declaring the closure of Sulfur Springs Road east of Big Lake on Wednesday, October 3, 1990, from 7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., to install a new 36 inch culvert for drainage improvement. Commissioner Vaux seconded the motion, which passed unanimously. (Resolution #12661)

- 3) Discussion - Scope of Work - Long Range Ferry Plan.

Mr. Spahr explained that at last week's Board meeting, the Board had directed the Public Works Department to develop a scope of work for the development of a long range ferry plan. The scope was to detail the responsibilities of the County staff and a consultant proposed to be hired by the County. Mr. Spahr provided each Board member with copies of the proposed scope, as well as a copy of RCW 36.54.015, which deals with the County's obligations for operation of ferries.

Mr. Spahr pointed out where RCW 36.54.015 requires counties to develop a 14 year ferry plan. Skagit County's last plan was finished in 1977. In addition to the requirements of the RCW, the Department of Transportation (DOT) and County Road Administration (CRAB) Board have required Skagit County to file

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with them a report of the County's anticipated capital revenue needs for the future operation of the ferry. Mr. Spahr stated that he has submitted to the DOT and CRAB Board some preliminary data, estimating the anticipated revenue needs at \$400,000. Mr. Spahr indicated that he feels compelled to ask for the services of a consultant to complete firm capital revenue estimates, as well as to develop a comprehensive long range ferry plan, because of the marked increase in the ridership growth rate experienced over the past two years. Mr. Spahr noted that prior to 1988, the ridership growth rate was logged at 4%, 1988-89 showed an increase to an 8% growth rate, and in 1990, a ridership increase of 12% has been documented so far.

Mr. Spahr related that he does not feel that this marked growth rate signifies a growth "spike", but did discuss with the Ferry Advisory Committee the possibility of decreases in growth should certain factors occur over the next year. One factor that may have an impact on parking, as well as the passenger car count, is the passage of the ballot issue that would create a public transportation system. Additionally, if a grocery store should choose to locate on Guemes Island, many trips would presumably be eliminated.

Mr. Spahr stated that the Ferry Advisory Committee never-the-less realizes that there is excess demand upon the ferry at this time and will, in the near future, be recommending the increase in the number of daily trips the ferry makes. Even with an increase in trips, the maximum number of cars per hour that the ferry can transport leads the committee to believe that there will be a shortfall in the capacity of the present system that must be anticipated and planned for.

Mr. Spahr then reviewed the tasks documented in the Public Works Department's proposed scope of work as follows:

- Task #1 Community involvement program to identify issues surrounding ferry transportation. Analysis of issues.
- Task #2 Data collection (task shared by County staff, consultant and Ferry Advisory Committee). May take the form of a survey/questionnaire.
- Task #3 Analyze existing ridership, travel patterns, land use and proposed development.
- Task #4 Project future ridership.
- Task #5 Analyze the capacity of the ferry and schedule when and if the service level will become unacceptable.
- Task #6 Develop mitigation measures.
- Task #7 Develop recommendations.
- Task #8 Develop cost estimates.
- Task #9 Draft a plan.
- Task #10 Finalize the plan.

Mr. Spahr indicated that the development of the plan would take a similar course as that of the Public Transportation Plan compiled in 1990 by a consultant/staff cooperative effort, at a total cost of \$25,000. The ferry plan would cost approximately \$45,500 because it requires more detail than the transportation plan, which addressed mostly the financial feasibility of a system. Mr. Spahr stated that there is a possibility that up to \$6,000 could be subtracted from the total cost if tasks #2 and #3 are partially or wholly deleted.

Mr. Spahr reported that he has discussed with the Assessor and the Planning Department the possibility of obtaining data regarding residential versus non-residential property ownership, as well as the level of habitability of the existing residences and the status of vacant property. This information is available within County data bases.

Chairman Wylie asked whether the information requested by the DOT and CRAB Board is for the benefit of the Legislative session beginning in January.

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Mr. Spahr responded that the information is due in mid-November, therefore, it will be available for the legislative session. Mr. Spahr also informed the Board that a WAC regulation was just passed that requires publicly owned ferry fares to be approved by the DOT 60 days prior to their effective date, a fact that will figure heavily in the setting of fares in the future.

Commissioner Vaux pointed out that, curiously, with both the public transportation plan and this plan, the consultants have estimated the cost of their services at exactly the amount that is available for the project.

Commissioner Rohrer stated his opposition to the hiring of a consultant, favoring the hiring of additional staff.

Chairman Wylie stated that the County needs to be a good neighbor to the City of Anacortes. She stated that this issue does not concern just the residents of Guemes Island and the County ferry administration; it involves all of the taxpayers as well, because they help to subsidize the ferry system. She stated that it is an emotional issue, and that a plan is needed.

Commissioner Vaux suggested that the Board put a limit of \$20,000 on the consultant fees and if the firm that has been chosen refuses to negotiate on this amount, reject that firm and proceed to the next choice. He felt that staff work could make up the difference in the lesser amount allotted for the plan.

Commissioner Rohrer stated he would agree with this plan.

Jim Dugan, Ferry Advisory Board member, stated that the most important issue, to him, is the acquisition of property on the Anacortes side for parking.

Glen Beal stated that the Ferry Advisory Committee saw the ferry plan as having two separate components; one of meeting the demands of the CRAB Board and DOT for a capital revenues estimate, and a second component being comprehensive long range plan. He stated that it is the position of the Ferry Advisory Committee that the CRAB Board and DOT be satisfied first, while the comprehensive plan component be undertaken in a project of one year's duration to adequately study the ridership of the system and take a complete picture of the needs.

Max Benjamin, another Ferry Advisory Committee member, agreed with Mr. Beal that the committee did ask Mr. Spahr that the two components be separated and the plan itself be developed over a longer period.

Commissioner Vaux remarked that ridership information from May through September would be critical to the study because of the increase in ridership during those times.

Mr. Spahr stated that the proposal of the Public Works Department is to mail questionnaires to non-resident property owners, hoping to poll the summer population in this way. He did admit, however, that this plan would not poll the summer guest and visitor population. Mr. Spahr did state, however, that it is essential to have a plan in place as soon as possible to address the long-term needs of the ferry. He stated that he must advise the Board that the Public Works staff is committed to other more important issues at this time that do not include a ferry plan. Although the Public Works Department has the ability to develop a plan, and feels it is imperative that a ferry plan be developed, the ferry plan is not enough of a priority to warrant pulling staff from other higher priority projects.

Raleigh Jones stated that it was the consensus of the Ferry Advisory Committee, as well as 150 residents present at an earlier meeting, that the DOT and CRAB Board should be satisfied first, and that additional time be spent in developing the long range ferry plan.

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Commissioner Vaux asked Mr. Spahr if the Public Works Department could generate what is required by the CRAB Board and DOT without the help of a consultant.

Mr. Spahr responded that this is possible, but that he is concerned for the accuracy of the data because at this point only surface data is available. Many unknowns exist that could greatly impact the estimate submitted to the State agencies. He stated that the ferry funding awards are given to the system that documents the most need. Mr. Spahr felt that Skagit County could stand to lose much if an uninformed cost estimate is submitted.

Discussion ensued between Mr. Spahr and Commissioner Vaux regarding what information could be obtained by a consultant in the next six weeks before the information is due to the DOT and CRAB Board.

Chairman Wylie and Commissioner Vaux pointed out that by waiting, a questionnaire could be mailed with the tax statements which are mailed in February. This notion was briefly discussed with the audience.

Commissioner Vaux finally stated that he does not believe that the hiring of a consultant at this point will greatly change the figures that will be submitted to the DOT and CRAB Board in six weeks, and that he does believe that long range planning data should be collected over a period greater than six weeks. He motioned to put the hiring of a consultant for long range planning "on hold" indefinitely, and to consider the hiring of a consultant again only after holding a caucus of all involved parties.

Commissioner Rohrer seconded Commissioner Vaux's motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

4) Miscellaneous.

- A. The Board approved for signature a contract with Associated Sand and Graven Company, Inc., to perform all work associated with the improvement and reconstruction of 2.72 miles of Old 99 North #5051. (Contract #0636)
- B. Commissioner Vaux motioned to adopt the resolution calling for a public hearing to consider the lease of County property located adjacent to the Marblemount Road Department Shop, approximately 3/4 mile east of Marblemount, more commonly known as the Marblemount Preschool. Commissioner Rohrer seconded the motion, which passed unanimously. (Resolution #12662)
- C. Mr. Spahr explained that the Public Works Department is in urgent need of updating the County road standards reference booklet. The booklet that is presently being used is somewhat inadequate in light of the new provisions in ESHB 2929 and in view of the growth in development of subdivisions of late. He stated that the Public Works Department would like to hire a contractor to obtain and review other cities' and counties' road standards booklets and help Robin LaRue, Design/Construction Engineer, to compile a combined booklet by the year's end.

Mr. LaRue stated that the booklet was first developed in 1983, and has not been changed since. He gave examples of the needs for a revised manual.

Mr. Spahr discussed the credentials of the individual who is recommended. He stated that, although this task is important to the functioning of the department, it does not rate a high enough priority to warrant removing staff from other projects to work on this one.

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Commissioner Vaux motioned to approve the contract with Myron Anderson and Associates to provide labor in the updating of the County's Road Standards Booklet. Commissioner Rohrer seconded the motion, which passed unanimously. (Contract #00637)

CONSENT AGENDA:

Commissioner Rohrer motioned to adopt the Consent Agenda for September 24, 1990, with the exception of Item #2. Commissioner Vaux seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

* Public Works Department:

1. Signature - Resolution authorizing \$559,638.00 in construction funds for the Old 99 North Road county road project #5051-5. (Resolution #12665)
2. ~~Out of State Travel Request for Jeff Monson and Don King to attend the "Ash III Conference" on ash utilization and stabilization held in Arlington, Virginia November 12-15, 1990. Registration, air fare, accommodations and meals: \$1,850 each.~~

* Petitions for Property Tax Refunds:

3. Edward Childs, 1606 7th Street, Anacortes, WA 98221, in the amount of \$525.84, due to a senior citizen exemption. (010590)
4. Herbert Braun, 511 Broad Street, Mount Vernon, WA 98273, in the amount of \$471.21, due to a senior citizen exemption. (010690)

* Commissioners' Office:

5. Record of the Proceedings from September 11, 1990.
6. Record of the Proceedings from September 13, 1990.
7. Record of the Proceedings from September 17, 1990.
8. Record of the Proceedings from September 18, 1990.

MISCELLANEOUS.

- A. Vouchers audited and certified by the auditing officer as required by R.C.W. 42.24.080, and those expense reimbursement claims certified as required by R.C.W. 42.24.090, have been recorded on a listing which has been made available to the Board.

As of this date, September 24, 1990, the Board, by a majority vote, did approve for payment those vouchers included in the above-mentioned list and further described as follows:

- 1) Manual Warrant #MW028-59263 in the amount of \$400. (C40-90)
- B. The Board approved for signature an application for a Federal Assistance Action Grant for the Retired Senior Volunteer Program for the period from January 1, 1991, through December 31, 1991, in the amount of \$77,237.

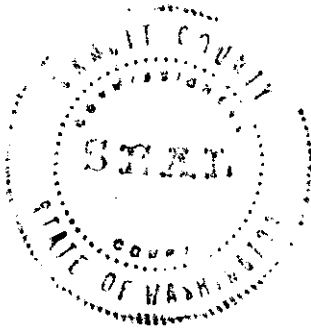
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- C. In accordance with action previously taken, the Board approved for signature the resolution approving forest practice policies for Skagit County. (Resolution #12663)
- D. In accordance with action previously taken, the Board approved for signature the resolution abolishing the Guidelines and Policies Pertaining to the Division of Agricultural Land. (Resolution #12664)

ADJOURNMENT:

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

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
SKAGIT COUNTY, WASHINGTON





Ruth Wylie, Chairman

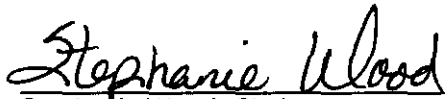


W. W. Vaux, Commissioner



Dave Rohrer, Commissioner

ATTEST:



Stephanie Wood, Clerk
Skagit County Board of Commissioners