

RECORD OF THE PROCEEDINGS
SKAGIT COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Tuesday, July 27, 1993

1:00 p.m. - 2:00 p.m. Discussion - Criminal Justice Funding.

The Skagit County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on Tuesday, July 27, 1993, with Commissioners Robert Hart, Robby Robinson and Harvey Wolden present.

DISCUSSION - CRIMINAL JUSTICE FUNDING.

Discussion was requested by Stan Sass, Police Chief for the City of Mount Vernon, regarding the possibility of imposing a .1% sales tax recently authorized by the State Legislature to support criminal justice activities. This sales tax increase could be imposed on a vote of the Board, without a ballot measure. In a compromise move during the last legislative session, the State Legislature approved an extension of a Criminal Justice Funding package for an additional year, and authorized this sales tax as well.

Chief Sass explained that for the last few years, the State's Police Chiefs and Sheriffs Association has worked to implement mechanisms to financially support law enforcement activities. Chief Sass stated that the County and cities do receive funds from Motor Vehicle Excise Tax (MVET) monies to offset traffic patrol costs; however, Chief Sass stated that this does not amount to much at only a bit over \$30,000 for his agency. Chief Sass advocated implementing the .1% sales tax authorized by the Legislature. He indicated that many with whom he has spoken feel that the recently proposed Initiatives 601 and 602 which, if passed, would severely restrict increases in public taxing ability and government expenditures, would not affect this .1% sales tax proposal. Chief Sass's contacts indicate that the language in the initiatives does not preclude the .1% additional sales tax, and Mike Woodmansee, Budget Director, agreed.

Mr. Woodmansee stated that if I-601 or I-602 passes, it is likely that the MVET funding source criminal justice agencies have previously enjoyed may be cut. Chief Sass countered that the MVET monies have not accounted for a large amount of his budget; however, the .1% sales tax would very positively impact his budget.

Commissioner Hart stated that he would base his opinion on the .1% sales tax on the wishes of the electorate. He pointed out that in a climate where I-601 and I-602 seem to be flourishing, whether they are good measures or not, it would not appear that an additional hike in the sales tax would be popular. However, it may be necessary to go out to the public for input to determine whether support exists.

Chief Sass stated that if public hearings could be held, he was certain that the police chiefs and the sheriff would stand beside the Board as they gather public comment.

Commissioner Wolden agreed with gathering public comment, as did Commissioner Robinson.

Mount Vernon Mayor Reep appreciated the Board's wish to learn the public's sentiment.

The Board commiserated with Chief Sass regarding the additional burdens placed upon the police department without adequate funding to offset the costs.

Returning to the subject of public meetings, Commissioner Wolden suggested that each city council hold a public meeting to determine interest. The Board, he stated, would be willing to hold a public hearing of their own following each city's report on the outcome of their public hearing.

The three mayors present, Mayor Reep, Burlington Mayor Henery, and Sedro Woolley Mayor Stendal agreed that community meetings in each city are feasible. They agreed to perform these meetings starting in September.

Also present for the discussion were Sedro Woolley Police Chief Dave Cooper, Concrete Marshall Ed Rogge, Deputy Prosecutor Garl Long, Skagit County Sheriff Gary Frazier, Burlington City Administrator Phil Messina, Sedro Woolley City Clerk Robin Hertlien, Indigent Defense Coordinator Gray Foster, Barb Leander and Bonnie Bowers, Skagit County Sheriff's Office, Burlington Lieutenant Bill VanWeiringen, and Susan Barrett of the Skagit County Public Defender's Office.

It was also suggested that each public hearing be advertised to make it clear to the public that a tax issue is being considered.

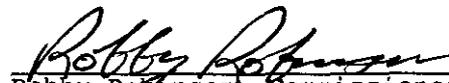
ADJOURNMENT:

Commissioner Robinson motioned to adjourn the proceedings. Commissioner Wolden seconded the motion. The motion was carried unanimously.

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
SKAGIT COUNTY, WASHINGTON

 8/2/95

Robert Hart, Chairman

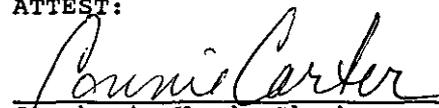


Robby Robinson, Commissioner



Harvey Wolden, Commissioner

ATTEST:



Stephanie Wood, Clerk
Skagit County Board of Commissioners

