

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

**Wednesday, May 18, 1994**

- 8:30 a.m. - 9:30 a.m. Executive Session - Personnel, Litigation and Land Acquisition.
- 10:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m. Customer Service Program Presentation.
- 6:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m. Regional Transportation Planning Organization Meeting (Port of Skagit County).
- 7:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m. Skagit Council of Governments Meeting (Port of Skagit County).

The Skagit County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on Wednesday, May 18, 1994, with Commissioners Harvey Wolden, Robby Robinson and Robert Hart present.

**CUSTOMER SERVICE PROGRAM PRESENTATION.**

Bob Taylor, Administrative Officer, reviewed the history of the Customer Service Program starting in November of 1993. The program will be implemented County-wide, but the initial focus has been on our largest department, Public Works. An Interdepartmental survey has also been completed. Mr. Taylor introduced to the Board Duane Knapp of Corporate Strategy who briefly reviewed the progress made in this regard.

Mr. Knapp presented to the Board a report book which outlines the results to date of the program. Mr. Knapp briefly reviewed the original goals set for Skagit County. Mr. Knapp noted that most people who live in Skagit County want and choose to live here because of the overall environment and lifestyle. The goal of this program was and is to become the premier County in the State of Washington. The purposes of this program are to provide great customer service to our constituents, induce pride and produce pride in employees, develop a partnership of mutual respect and trust between citizens (customers) and representatives of the County, and maintain a balanced lifestyle.

Mr. Knapp presented an overview of the customer service process, and stated that he has received outstanding employee enthusiasm and support. There have been many revisions to the value proposition and literally hundreds of suggestions were submitted for changes. A substantial amount of work has gone into development of surveys, the actual surveying of employees, and development of follow-through on the issues brought up. Many programs have the executives decide what should happen, according to Mr. Knapp, but this program was developed by frontline employees, and Mr. Knapp expressed his appreciation to the Board for the involvement of employees.

Mr. Knapp noted that there are a number of things the County will be following through on, including the institution of a training program regarding customer service.

Mr. Taylor introduced Rich Medved, Director of Public Works, who announced that there are over 100 specific action items with an assigned individual to carry on the next step with deadlines and delivery dates. Mr. Medved indicated there has been great response and over 200-300 suggestions resulting in hours of meetings with employees and that the enthusiasm level is very high. Employees are committed to this program, even though it is a difficult concept to embrace, but the Public Works employees took to the task and wanted an opportunity to do something to improve customer service performance. Mr. Medved pointed out that County employees really know their jobs, are talented people, and are eager to create a format for expressing themselves in this area. Mr. Medved stated that confidence and energy levels are high. These ideas will be turned into action and another list of action items will be forthcoming this summer.

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Commissioner Hart stated that the whole idea of re-inventing government is empowering the people most closely related to customers. The Board indicated their interest in making the system better, and that people on the front line are the vital link.

Mr. Medved indicated that it is important to realize that this is just the first step and that this must become a way of life, not just an exercise, and indicated his appreciation for the support the Board has given and the push that has been made to succeed in this program.

Commissioner Hart stated that it is general knowledge that thousands of companies have gone through programs like this and many have made this a way of life, and that, consequently, these companies are getting bigger and bigger. Constituents need to have trust and cooperation with the County, and the Board must be completely committed to this program.

Chairman Wolden indicated that participation is the key, and to individuals need to feel like they are a part of the solution, and that by empowering people, the employees gain confidence.

Mr. Taylor advised that Board that several individuals should also be recognized in developing this program: Stephanie Wood, Shelley Holt, and Robin LaRue spent a tremendous amount of time assisting in the development of this program.

Mr. Knapp reviewed the Skagit County Value Proposition for Skagit County.

Skagit County is a beautiful and diverse community; with extraordinary natural resources; a very special place where we want to live. Skagit County's desire to serve is guided by the following principles:

- We are entrusted with providing services that will protect and plan for the health, safety and stability of our citizens and environment.
- Our mission is to provide superior service to the citizens of Skagit County, and to be recognized as the premier county in the State of Washington.
- We are committed to creating a partnership of mutual respect and trust between our county representatives and citizens.
- We will take responsibility for providing professional leadership, operational excellence, timely assistance, and maximum efficiency in delivery of these public services.

Mr. Taylor added that every employee will have a copy of this document and the document will be incorporated into the employee orientation program in the future. Mr. Taylor advised that Mr. Knapp will continue to advise and consult over the next few months at no additional cost to the County.

Mr. Taylor advised that the process is not over yet, that the County is ready to move on to other departments and bring the program to other areas of the County. Beginning in the near future this program will begin in the Public Health Department.

Pat Pearce, Director of Public Health, indicated that the department is very receptive to this program, and is committed to work together as a group to the very highest level.

Mr. Taylor expressed appreciation to the Board for the opportunity to work with Duane Knapp.

ADJOURNMENT.

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

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
SKAGIT COUNTY, WASHINGTON



Harvey Wolden  
Harvey Wolden, Chairman

Robby Robinson  
Robby Robinson, Commissioner

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Robert Hart, Commissioner

ATTEST:

Patti J. Owen

Patti J. Owen, Clerk  
Skagit County Board of Commissioners

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