

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

Wednesday, June 22, 1994

10:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m. Department Head Meeting.

1:30 p.m. - 3:00 p.m. Public Hearing - Adoption of Ordinance Establishing New Addressing System for Skagit County.

The Skagit County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on Wednesday, June 22, 1994, with Commissioners Harvey Wolden, Robby Robinson and Robert Hart present.

PUBLIC HEARING - ADOPTION OF ORDINANCE ESTABLISHING NEW ADDRESSING SYSTEM FOR SKAGIT COUNTY.

Chairman Wolden opened the Public Hearing. Rodney Vandersypen, Public Works Department Staff, updated the Board on the progress of the new proposed addressing system. Mr. Vandersypen noted that there have been 8 meetings held with the advisory committee over the past 9-1/2 months. Such committee was composed of representatives from 911, Skagit County Public Works, Skagit County Fire Chiefs Association, Fire Commissioners Association, Fire Marshall, two citizens at large, and various city representatives.

Mr. Vandersypen briefly reviewed the history of the addressing system within the County. The County has been handling the addressing system since 1976.

Mr. Vandersypen noted that the problems with the existing addressing system consist of not enough addresses, street names have changed and residents have not adhered to the changes, addresses changed and the road name was not changed, some private roads are not named, numbers are out of sequence, and there are too many addresses with letter designators. It was further noted that records in Skagit County are incomplete and no complete database exists within the County. Mr. Vandersypen advised the Board that the County is mandated by the State to have a master street addressing guide for E-911 in place by 1998. A secondary reason for a new addressing system is to incorporate this information into the Skagit County Mapping Center in order to have the ability to generate a map of every address in the County for visual information output during emergency situations.

Mr. Vandersypen advised that the biggest change is from a 3 and 4 digit numbering system to a 4 and 5 digit numbering system. This will eliminate the A, B, or C lettering designations.

Paul Mahoney, Skagit County Assessor, stated that the concern of the Assessors and Treasurers offices are the maintenance of official records. Mailing and site addresses are sometimes not the same. Mr. Mahoney noted that his department has not been consulted in the development of this addressing system.

Mr. Vandersypen indicated that he has discussed potential problems with Bob Lee of the Assessor's Office and that the new addresses will be related to the parcel number to assist in alleviating confusion.

Gail Logsdon, 903 Bayview-Edison Road, and a County employee, stated that he foresees problems in the necessity to change all rural addresses and does not think the potential exists for the County to run out of address numbers in the future if the system is left as is. Mr. Logsdon recommended changing only those numbers that need to be changed or are causing confusion rather than changing all addresses. Mr. Logsdon further pointed out that the cost of instituting the new addressing system is prohibitive, perhaps as much as \$500,000. Mr. Logsdon indicated that the County should not have to bear the total cost of installing the new signage, and that perhaps non-profit organizations could assist in this cumbersome project

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if it is deemed necessary.

Ken Johnson, Fire Commissioner and a member of the advisory committee, expressed his concern over the grid system as modified, and advised that the Clear Lake Fire District is adamantly against the proposal since they just finished upgrading their addressing system. It was Mr. Johnson's belief, though, that if the decision is made to go with the proposal as presented, it must be done uniformly throughout the County, not just in specific problem areas. Mr. Johnson suggested that perhaps the proposed addressing system could be implemented, but still stay within the four-digit numbering system. Mr. Johnson stated that the proposed system would be a great system, but the Board must look at the finances involved and address the concern that many people will not like changing their addresses or road names. Mr. Johnson indicated his feeling that something definitely needs to be done to the addressing system presently in place.

Chairman Wolden queried Mr. Johnson on how the Clear Lake area funded the new signage. Mr. Johnson advised that the Fire District purchased the numbers and asked for donations to help defray part of the costs involved in the new signage required.

Commissioner Hart stressed the need to go to a basic system that will possibly take several years to instigate, but will be of a long-term benefit to the County.

Mr. Johnson indicated his approval of the proposed system, but reiterated his concern for the constituents, those people who have not spent the time that the committee has to fully understand the potential problems and emergency situations currently inherent throughout the County. Mr. Johnson further indicated that it will be less costly to do this now than in the future.

Chairman Wolden stated that the County needs to look at the least expensive way to accomplish the new addressing system.

Commissioner Hart stated that many constituents are against any type of change. Commissioner Hart asked if the County institutes a change, should it be to the proposal that the committee has worked out, or should there be a different proposal? Commissioner Hart further indicated that a new addressing system is going to be expensive, and readdressing is a real problem, so if the County is going to make a change, it should be done one time and done right.

Mr. Vandersypen stated that it is his belief that if we start fixing individual areas, the County will spend 5 times as much time trying to fix each problem than if the entire County changed addresses. Mr. Vandersypen indicated his feeling that a system needs to be developed so that when the County gets finished, the system will be good for the next 50 years. Mr. Vandersypen urged the Board to spend the money wisely.

Tom Sheahan, Skagit County Emergency Services Director, observed that no one wants change. Mr. Sheahan stated that he has experienced not being able to find an address and many law enforcement people have had the same problem. The fire service is at an advantage because they know the people who live in their community. Mr. Sheahan indicated that duplicated addresses and road names cause confusion. Mr. Sheahan stated that when the basic 911 system was put together, communities had to be sold on the advantages of a 911 system, just like they will have to be sold on a new addressing system. Mr. Sheahan supports Mr. Vandersypen's proposal and indicated that the money spent will not be a waste and that the expense is worth it. It is time to get a vision for the future, according to Mr. Sheahan. He further indicated that this is something that needs fixing and that the committee has worked hard in developing the proposed addressing system.

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Mr. Logsdon stated his opinion that the problem in finding addresses is that the addresses are not clearly marked, and stressed the importance of addresses being sequential. Mr. Logsdon further stated that he cannot conceive why the County needs to have an addressing system as elaborate as the cities.

Chairman Wolden stated that is possible to have addressing consistent throughout the County and cities if the use of a 5-digit numbering system is instituted. Chairman Wolden expressed his concern that it should not be difficult for emergency personnel to access an address and that he would like to see everyone in Skagit County adhere to this new system. Chairman Wolden stated that the people in Skagit County mandated E-911, and that there will not be a better time than now to get this system up and running.

Dave Montague, who is in charge of Medic I ambulances out of Skagit Valley Hospital, stated that he is in very great support of the new proposed addressing system. Mr. Montague stated that, in his opinion, the most important aspects of the addressing system are simplicity and consistency. Mr. Montague pointed out that it is not necessary to reinvent the wheel, as other counties have instigated some of these same systems. Mr. Montague further indicated his hope that this addressing information become part of the database for E911 and acknowledged that the costs involved are high, but are necessary.

Dale Irvine, Circulation Director for the Skagit Valley Herald, favors the change in the addressing system. Mr. Irvine expressed the Herald's interest in the development of a database of the 35,000 addresses in Skagit County.

Dan Cain, Skagit County Fire Marshall, stated that the County was basically out of addresses in the late 70's and that the addressing system is a mess. To repair it would cost every penny as much as replacing it with a usable workable system, according to Mr. Cain. He further indicated that several fire districts have done a very good job of addressing their areas. Mr. Cain indicated that there are many potential chances for tragedy with emergency services driving around looking for an address. Mr. Cain stressed the need to consider what the best system is now, to build a usable database, and computerize the mapping system, and that now is the perfect time to do this.

Bob Richards, McLean Road Fire Department Chief, indicated that the cost of putting up the new address numbers is substantial, but believes that the fire departments should assist putting the numbers on homes.

Chairman Wolden indicated his agreement with Mr. Richards.

Commissioner Hart stated that some of the departments will have financial difficulty accomplishing these tasks, but some sort of assistance will be sought to enable the installation of signage within a reasonable period of time.

Bob Cushman, Clear Lake Fire Department, questioned the different numbering systems for the cities and County and the problems associated therewith. Mr. Cushman suggested naming some of the unnamed roads to alleviate confusion and stressed the need for evening public hearings on this matter. Mr. Vandersypen stated that he announced all of the area meetings to the newspapers, radio, bulletin boards and at fire stations.

Pete Walker, former fire chief, suggested entering into interlocal agreements with each fire district in order to save money.

Commissioner Hart asked Geoff Almvig, Mapping Department, about selling the database created by the proposed addressing change. Mr. Almvig stated that it involves a simple datadump from one computer

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system to another.

Mr. Vandersypen further explained that before this ever starts, before the first address is given out, the County will get all involved departments together to coordinate the necessary changes. This will be a 2-year project. Mr. Vandersypen indicated that mailing addresses will be important to consider for the Assessor's Office and Treasurer's office. As we go through the process, these affected departments can determine the changes that will be necessary. Over a 2 year period, costs will be less than if done instantaneously. Mr. Vandersypen further indicated that once the system gets set up with the new mapping system using parcel numbers, the County will have an easier time tracking property. Mr. Vandersypen indicated that there may be some E911 money available to assist with the funding of this project.

A brief discussion ensued on the possibilities of obtaining funding from E911, and possible donations from individuals and businesses within the County.

Chairman Wolden confirmed with Staff that this project would begin in January 1995 and would take two years to complete. The E911 System is scheduled to be in place by 1998.

A discussion ensued on signage style and size, and sources of compensation for the various fire districts to install the signage.

There being no further public comment forthcoming, Commissioner Hart moved to close the public hearing. Commissioner Robinson seconded the motion, which unanimously carried.

Commissioner Robinson stated that there were a lot of good comments made here today, and that the efforts of the fire departments in this regard were very much appreciated. Commissioner Robinson further indicated it is time for the County to step up to the plate and do what is right to accomplish what is needed by the fire departments and medical response personnel. Commissioner Robinson expressed his desire to have Staff provide better input on the financial figures.

Commissioner Hart stated that he would like some time to ascertain the extent of fire department involvement, fund raisers, etc. to more ably determine the dollar amounts involved in changing the addressing system.

Mr. Vandersypen volunteered to make the necessary phone calls and make sure every fire district has a say. Mr. Vandersypen further indicated his willingness to attend fire department meetings, if necessary, to gather input in this regard.

Commissioner Hart reiterated that it is time to do this right and to try to obtain an E911 grant to help defray the costs of this project.

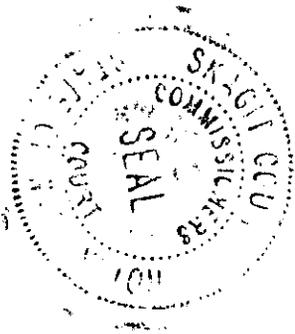
The Board directed Mr. Vandersypen to obtain this information and report back to them on July 5 during the regular Public Works agenda at 10:00 a.m.

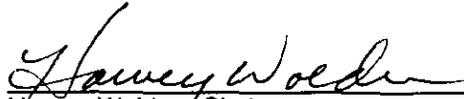
Commissioner Robinson thanked the audience assembled for their participation.

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

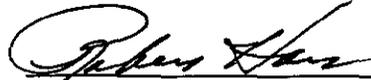




Harvey Wolden, Chairman



Robby Robinson, Commissioner



Robert Hart, Commissioner

ATTEST:



Patti J. Owen, Clerk
Skagit County Board of Commissioners