

RECORD OF THE PROCEEDINGS
SKAGIT COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
Monday, March 10, 1997

10:00 a.m. - 10:15 a.m.	Public Comment Period.
T 10:30 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.	Parks Projects Update.
11:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.	County Clerk's Office Staffing Request.
	CONSENT AGENDA. MISCELLANEOUS.
1:30 p.m. - 3:30 p.m.	Work Session - Drainage Utility Commission.
3:30 p.m. - 4:30 p.m.	Executive Session.

The Skagit County Commissioners met in regular session today with Chairman Harvey Wolden and Commissioner Ted W. Anderson present today. Commissioner Robert Hart's absence was excused.

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD.

Bob Ratfield, Samish Island, stated that he would like to register a complaint in regard to asking for assistance in maintaining a tide gate on Samish Island. Commissioner Wolden asked if Public Works employee Ryan LaPosa was the person who was working on this water/culvert situation and Mr. Ratfield affirmed that Mr. LaPosa had reviewed the situation some time ago. Mr. Ratfield stated that he objects to have to start paying drainage taxes when he has to address his own drainage problems and asked about the possibility of a ditching district. Commissioner Wolden stated that he would be contacting Mr. LaPosa to find out how Public Works is addressing this issue.

Jim Hillier, 3181 South Shore Drive, Lake Cavanaugh, announced that he is representing a good deal of the various committees who are against the proposed Frailey Mountain shooting range., Mr. Hillier stated that the facts and feelings in regard to this opposition have been submitted and he is here today to register this complaint on record. Commissioner Wolden stated that it is possible that this issue will be discussed during the Parks Projects update scheduled later this morning.

PARKS PROJECTS UPDATE.

LaConner Tennis Courts -

Jon Aarstad, Parks Director, discussed the situation with the tennis courts in LaConner, stating that Will Bennett is here today to present this item to the Board.

Mr. Bennett from LaConner, stated that he was representing a group which is attempting to rejuvenate the tennis courts in LaConner and reviewed the history of the situation. Mr. Bennett introduced those in attendance today who are instrumental in developing this project, including Mr. Dick Nord, who reported to the Board that LaConner has not had tennis courts since 1980 and reiterated the events leading to the ruin of the courts. Mr. Nord stated that the group had some discussions with Commissioner Hart, and at his suggestions have contacted many community service groups for support, which has raised approximately \$7,000. Mr. Nord announced that they anticipate total funding of \$10,000 from community service groups. In this regard, Mr. Nord stated that they are here today to request additional support from the County in the amount of \$20,000.

Commissioner Anderson stated that this request fits the County's criteria for community projects and as they have already approached the community, which has greatly contributed support, Commissioner Anderson made a motion to support this project in the amount of \$20,000. Chairman Wolden seconded the motion and it passed unanimously. Chairman Wolden stated that they will make a recommendation in this regard. Chairman Wolden discussed how the County supports these types of projects that have a positive impact on youth.

Mr. Nord thanked the Board on behalf of the committee. Chairman Wolden asked Mr. Aarstad to move forward in the process of securing this funding through the real estate excise tax monies that are earmarked for these types of projects. Mr. Aarstad reminded the Board that it has been brought to his attention in the past that *there is sometimes a timing issue for release of those funds* and stated that he just wanted to advise the LaConner group that these funds might not be available immediately.

Pressentin Park and Swinomish Boat Launch –

Mr. Aarstad discussed these grant projects briefly, stating that the projects are progressing. A brief discussion took place in regard to the timing of the Swinomish project.

Skagit Fisheries Enhancement Program –

Mr. Aarstad discussed the installation of a fence line along Hansen Creek. Mr. Aarstad stated that meetings have taken place on site with the U.S. Forest Service and the Skagit Conservation Service in regard to the buffer that will have to be in place. Mr. Aarstad reported that this project has an agreement forthcoming. Commissioner Anderson asked if property owners had been advised and Mr. Aarstad stated that this does not affect any property owners except the County at this point.

Randy Good, Sedro Woolley, asked what the buffer zone distance was on the Hansen Creek project and Mr. Aarstad replied that it was 25 feet. Mr. Good suggested possibly waiting until the creek is dredged for drainage purposes before installing the fence, as it would be difficult to move equipment in and out of the creek area with the fence in place. Chairman Wolden stated that this could be a continuing dredging project and brief discussion ensued. Mr. Good stated that there is one area of the creek that has not been dredged for some time. Mr. Aarstad clarified which area of the creek would be fenced.

Other projects -

Mr. Aarstad also briefly discussed the Parks Advisory Board calendar and mentioned that a workshop is scheduled for Parks Board to meet staff on March 27th, location to be announced, at approximately 5:30 p.m. or 6:00 p.m.

Commissioner Anderson asked if the railroad bridge in Sedro Woolley could be looked at and stated that it is just a maintenance item and possibly this could be removed.

Shooting Range Update –

Commissioner Wolden inquired about the Frailey Mountain shooting range project and Mr. Aarstad reported that there is a contract with Wheeler & Associates in route and that the intention is to complete the environmental impact statement for Coyote Ridge and Frailey Mountain and then to proceed with the shooting test which will be monitored by a sound monitoring group. Mr. Aarstad reported that he does not have the specifics at this time as far as the schedule for the shooting demonstration but that they anticipated completion within the next couple of weeks. Mr. Aarstad stated that he would notify the President of the Association as to the schedule when that information is available. Several other contacts were suggested to Mr. Aarstad in this regard. Chairman Wolden asked if there would be an update on this project at the advisory meeting and Mr. Aarstad stated that the review of the time frame was given at the last meeting and that the contract with Wheeler & Associates was the key to proceed. Mr. Aarstad anticipates 30 to 45 days for completion from the date of the contract.

COUNTY CLERK'S OFFICE STAFFING REQUEST.

Phyllis Coole-McKeehen, Clerk, presented information on the number of cases coming through the Clerks office, illustrating the percentage increases in the docket entries and new cases filed over the years since 1987. Ms. Coole-McKeehen mentioned some significant changes that have take place since 1995 that have caused an increase in the workload in the Clerks office. Ms. Coole-McKeehen also reviewed the previous requests for additional staff, mentioning that only two new employees have been added over the years. Ms. Coole-McKeehen updated the Board on the backlog she is facing, mentioning that there is a ¼ to 2 day delay due to insufficient staffing on some items and continued by discussing other serious delays of services.

Ms. Coole-McKeehen expressed her frustration at these delays and reviewed the impacts to the County, stating that there are definite liability and loss of revenue issues. Ms. Coole-McKeehen stated that the bottom line is that she needs four additional staff in her office. Ms. Coole-McKeehen also discussed that even though the Clerks Association has attempted through legislation to gain additional funding for processing Becca Bill cases and such, there has been no legislation in this regard, although they are attempting this again this year. Ms. Coole-McKeehen expressed her anger that funds in the County are being used for computer hardware rather than funding additional staff positions that are crucial to the operation of the County. Ms. Coole-McKeehen indicated that the lack of filling positions could be construed as a form of blackmail, as her department had been addressing collection problems as asked previously by the Board. Ms. Coole-McKeehen stated that the only way she can resolve this problem if her request is not honored, is to reduce hours of operation and thus, service to the public. Ms. Coole-McKeehen is announced that she is coming to the Board today requesting some direction.

Commissioner Anderson announced that he believes that the ultimatum presented here by Ms. Coole-McKeehen is the blackmail for Ms. Coole-McKeehen to say that if her staffing request is not met that there will be a decrease in service, stating however, that Ms. McKeehen did provide a compelling argument. Commissioner Anderson reminded Ms. Coole-McKeehen that the Board offered assistance earlier this year in the form of an additional employee just to handle collections and that Ms. Coole-McKeehen did not seize that opportunity for an additional staff person. Commissioner Anderson emphasized that if the money and latitude was available, he would be glad to oblige with additional staff in all departments if the need was there, however, it was clear that the funding was not available. Ms. Coole-McKeehen stated that she has shown the Board where the funding is available for the addition of two people and Ms. Coole-McKeehen also responded to the comment by Commissioner Anderson on the collections person offer, stating that it is not possible to start a collections program at this time due to various other priorities that have to be resolved before collections can begin.

A discussion ensued in regard to when the backlog in databasing information began and the procedure for collection was also discussed.

Commissioner Anderson asked for clarification as what Ms Coole-McKeehen felt was her staffing priority, if not in collections. Ms. Coole-McKeehen explained how she would rectify the situation with additional staff. A lengthy discussion ensued in regard to the collection program.

Commissioner Anderson again asked her exactly how many additional staff people she was requesting and Ms. McKeehen stated she needed four people and reiterated how she would implement these additional staff positions within her office.

Mike Woodmansee, County Administrator, mentioned that this issue goes back at least ten years and discussed the various impacts on caseloads in recent years. Mr. Woodmansee reviewed the issue of growth in government as far as the taxpayer is concerned and reminded the Board that they need to assess the needs of the Clerk and also listen to the taxpayers as in the end the Commissioners are accountable. Mr. Woodmansee suggested that the Clerk, judges, Juvenile Probation director, the Board and Mr. Woodmansee sit down and look at the problems Ms. Coole-McKeehen presented today.

The Board concurred that a meeting as Mr. Woodmansee suggested would be appropriate. Commissioner Wolden expressed his concern that collections are not being made and further discussed the impact of the Becca Bill. It was determined that a meeting would be scheduled in this regard.

CONSENT AGENDA

Commissioner Anderson made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. Chairman Wolden seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

- Commissioners Office:

1. Record of the Proceedings of March 5, 1997.

• Public Works:

2. Resolution approving Interlocal Cooperative Agreement with the Town of Hamilton for reimbursable services. (Resolution No. 16478).
3. Interlocal Agreement with the Town of Hamilton for the calendar year 1997 through 2001, for reimbursable work, provide materials and equipment rental on a reimbursable basis. (Contract No. 03407).
4. Revised Rural Arterial Program Project Agreement for Starbird Road in the amount of \$274,403. The previous agreement signed in October 1996 was for \$3,157. (Contract No. 03408).

MISCELLANEOUS.

1. Staff presented the annual Skagit Valley Publishing advertising contract for the period of April 1, 1997, through March 31, 1998. The advertising space for the publication of the weekly agenda is \$4,300 per year. Commissioner Anderson made a motion to approve the contract. Commissioner Wolden seconded the motion and it passed unanimously. (Contract No. 03409).
2. Staff presented an Amendment with CDK Construction Services for remodeling projects, cost of total work not to exceed \$5,000, for work to be done on third floor of the courthouse. Commissioner Anderson made a motion to approve the Contract as presented. Commissioner Wolden seconded the motion and it passed unanimously. (Contract No. 03193).
3. Staff presented an Amendment to a Vendor Services Agreement with S.A. Newman, Forest Engineers, Inc. as there was a change from \$84,50 to \$8,800 as approved in 1995 for the 1996 budget. Commissioner Wolden made a motion to approve the amendment. Commissioner Anderson seconded the motion and it passed unanimously. (Contract No. 02689).
3. 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.

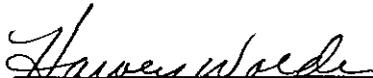
As of this date, March 10, 1997, by a majority vote, did approve for payment those vouchers included in the above mentioned list and further described as follows:

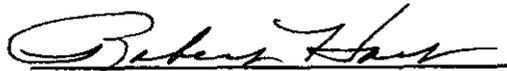
Vouchers #7007-80 through #7007-83, #7007-86 through #7007-94, #7007-96 through #7007-97, #7007-99 through #7007-106, #7007-108 through #7007-114, #7007-117, #7007-126, #7007-129, #7014-28, #7014-66 through #7014-83 in the total amount of \$1,083,390.07 and Warrants #170815 through #171503. (Transmittal No. C10-97).

ADJOURNMENT.

Commissioner Anderson made a motion to adjourn the proceedings. Chairman Wolden seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
SKAGIT COUNTY, WASHINGTON

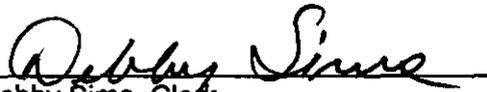

Harvey Wolden, Chairman


Robert Hart, Commissioner


Ted W. Anderson, Commissioner



ATTEST.


Debby Sims, Clerk
Board of Commissioners