

**RECORD OF THE PROCEEDINGS  
SKAGIT COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
Monday, November 23, 1998**

8:15 a.m. – 8:30 a.m.	<b>CONSENT AGENDA. MISCELLANEOUS.</b>
8:30 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.	Presentation – Fisheries Enhancement Group Request for Funding.
9:00 a.m. – 9:30 a.m.	Work Session – Transportation Funding.
9:30 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.	Consideration of Hearing Examiner's Recommendation for Approval of Heilman Heritage Group's Application for Deception Shores Planned Unit Development, located .5 miles Northwest of Deception Pass Bridge on Fidalgo Island (PPT 93-007-ORD).
10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.	Executive Session – Personnel, Litigation and Land Acquisition.
11:00 a.m. – Noon	Public Hearing – Consideration of a Resolution Authorizing Skagit County to Increase Property Tax Revenues in Excess of Increases in the Value of State Assessed Property, New Construction and Improvements to Property for the 1999 Budget Year.
1:30 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.	Work Session – Codes for County Parks.

The Skagit County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on Monday, November 23, 1998, with Commissioners Robert Hart, Ted W. Anderson, and Harvey Wolden present.

**CONSENT AGENDA:**

Commissioner Anderson moved to approve the Consent Agenda for Monday, November 23, 1998, changing the not-to-exceed amount in Item #17 from \$5,000 to \$1,000. Commissioner Wolden seconded the motion, which passed with a unanimous vote.

**COMMISSIONERS' OFFICE:**

1. Record of the Proceedings of Monday, November 16, 1998.
2. Record of the Proceedings of Tuesday, November 17, 1998.
3. Resolution approving the County providing a defense to Judge Larry Moller, Judge John Meyer, Commissioner S. Gene Willett and Pamela K. Springer in Skagit County Superior Court Case No. 98-2-01025-1, Benjamin B. Jury, Plaintiff vs. Skagit County District Court, et al. (**Resolution No. 17212**)
4. Call for Public Hearing to consider testimony regarding the sale of surplus property consisting of 36 acres of timber located near Cascade River Road. The public hearing will be held on December 7, 1998, at 11:00 a.m. (**Resolution No. 17213**)

**BUDGET/FINANCE:**

5. Call for Public Hearing to consider testimony regarding the proposed 1999 Skagit County Budget and related tax levies. The public hearing will be held on December 7, 1998, at 10:00 a.m. (**Resolution No. 17214**)

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT:

6. Ordinance amending Skagit County Code Section 10.04.030 to revise the speed limit for the entire length of Avon Street, #30600, from 35 miles per hour to 25 miles per hour. **(Resolution No. 17215)**
7. Ordinance amending Skagit County Code Section 10.04.030 to revise the speed limit on a portion of West Shore Drive, #17510, from 35 miles per hour to 25 miles per hour. **(Resolution No. 17216)**
8. Ordinance amending Skagit County Code Section 10.04.030 to revise the speed limit on a portion of Lyman-Hamilton Highway, #94020, from 50 miles per hour to 35 miles per hour. **(Resolution No. 17217)**
9. Snowmobile and Winter Recreation programs Cooperation/Collection Agreement with the Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission, wherein the maximum cost to the State will be \$1,600 for providing maintenance by plowing snow, grading and leveling, and installing appropriate highway signs. The contract will expire on April 30, 1999. **(Contract No. 04142)**
10. Supplement No. 1 to a Professional Services Agreement with Sumas Transport, Inc. to continue hauling leachate from Inman Landfill to an authorized wastewater treatment plant. The supplement will extend the contract through December 31, 2000, for the same hauling rates in the original contract. **(Contract No. 03340)**
11. Supplement No. 1 to Professional Services Agreement with Surety Pest Control Inc. to continue to provide rodent control services at the Recycling & Transfer Station, extending the agreement through December 31, 1999 at the same rates of the original contract. **(Contract No. 03317)**
12. Consultant Agreement for Acquisition Services with Pharos Corporation in accordance with Federal Guidelines for expenditure of funds on the Farm-to-Market Road Improvement Project. The total reimbursement is \$19,650. **(Contract No. 04143)**

PARKS & RECREATION DEPARTMENT:

13. Out-of-State Travel Request for Kami Manley to attend the NRPA National Leadership Development School, December 6-9, 1998 in Las Vegas, Nevada, for a total amount of \$400. The additional tuition of \$385 will be reimbursed by NACPRO Scholarship after completion. **(Approved)**
14. Contract with the Washington State Parks & Recreation Commission for snowmobile and winter recreation programs for trail grooming. The contract begins immediately and will be effective through May 31, 1999. **(Contract No. 04144)**
15. Addendum to Development Agreement with Pacific Recreation Group, Inc., extending the term of the contract through December 31, 1999, with all other terms of the agreement remaining the same. The Development Agreement is for the "Park North Cascade," Recreational Vehicle Park. **(Contract No. 03520)**
16. Interlocal Agreement between the Washington State Department of Corrections and Skagit County for utilization of inmate crew, with inmate wages set up to a maximum of \$1.10 per hour per inmate plus vehicle operating costs of 31.5 cents per mile, and a standard fee of 12% of total bill for wages and mileage to be charged for the use, repair and replacement of Department of Corrections supplies, tools and equipment used on the projects. The contract begins on September 23, 1998 and will continue through June 30, 1999. **(Contract No. 04145)**

TRAINING:

17. Personal Services Agreement with Lynch Associates to provide training and/or consultation services on various organizational and employee development issues including customer service, organizational vision, strategic planning, professional development for managers and personal effectiveness for

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employees. The contract will begin November 16, 1998 and will continue until terminated for a not-to-exceed amount of \$5,000. The Board changed the not-to-exceed amount to \$1,000. **(Contract No. 04146)**

**SECOM:**

18. Personal Services Agreement with Dianne L. Haller to conduct background investigations of all applicants for employment at SECOM, to determine their suitability for employment in a position of trust and access to sensitive criminal information. The contract term is January 1, 1998 through December 31, 1998, with a not-to-exceed amount of \$8,000. **(Contract No. 04147)**

**SHERIFF'S OFFICE:**

19. Special Use Permit with the United States Department of Agriculture for the Extension and Authorization of the Government-owned Office Facility (Baker River Building #2003) to be utilized by the East Detachment's Baker River compound. Fees for this use have been exempted. The permit will expire on December 31, 1999. **(Contract No. 04148)**
20. Amendment to Personal Services Agreement with James Tracy, Ph.D., expanding the scope of services to include psychological screening evaluations by the Sheriff's Office and compensating the Contract at \$250 per hour instead of \$275 per hour. The contract will expire on November 1, 1999. **(Contract No. 03975)**

**ARIS:**

21. Interlocal Cooperative Agreement among Skagit County, Community Mental health Services, and Skagit County School Districts for providing a mental health specialist working to provide individual and family counseling services for students and families referred from the School Districts through the ARIS program. The annual costs for salary, benefits and support for this position are estimated at \$49,508 and are split as follows: Burlington District, \$5,600; Concrete District, \$1,500; Mount Vernon District, \$8,900; Sedro Woolley District, \$7,400; Community Mental Health, \$14,000; and Skagit County, \$12,100. The agreement is effective September 1, 1998 through December 31, 1999. **(Contract No. 04149)**

**PERSONNEL:**

22. Memorandum of Understanding to Current Collective Bargaining Agreement between Skagit County and Juvenile Probation Teamsters, Local #231 adding the Advantage Health Plan and changing the Group Health employee contribution to \$74 per month. **(Contract No. 03625)**
23. Memorandum of Understanding to Current Collective Bargaining Agreement between Skagit County and Courthouse Teamsters, Local #231, adding the Advantage Health Plan and changing the Group Health employee contribution to \$74 per month. **(Contract No. 03461)**
24. Memorandum of Understanding to Current Collective Bargaining Agreement between Skagit County and District Court Teamsters, Local #231, adding the Advantage Health Plan and changing the Group Health employee contribution to \$74 per month. **(Contract No. 03462)**

**PLANNING & PERMIT CENTER:**

25. Agreement with Paragon Construction Company, Inc. for the emergency repair of the community drainfield at Edison for a total dollar amount of 25,785.33. **(Contract No. 04150)**

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**EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT:**

26. Memorandum of Agreement between Skagit County and the City of Mount Vernon wherein the City agrees to assign and maintain addresses using the City addressing system in designated portions of the rural County. The Agreement has been signed and acknowledged by Skagit County Fire District No. 3. **(Contract No. 04151)**

**MISCELLANEOUS:**

1. 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, November 23, 1998, the Board, by a majority vote, did approve for payment those vouchers included in the above-mentioned list and further described as follows:

Warrants numbered 32859 through 33092 from Clearing Fund 696 in the total dollar amount of \$466,690.21 (Transmittal No. C-79-98); and

Warrants numbered 33093 through 33546 from Clearing Fund 696 in the total dollar amount of \$589,501.66 (Transmittal No. C-80-98); and

Warrants numbered 33547 through 33547 from Clearing Fund 696 in the total dollar amount of \$14,677.50 (Transmittal No. C-81-98);

Warrants numbered 33548 through 33897 from Clearing Fund 696 in the total dollar amount of \$432,692.81 (Transmittal No. C-82-98); and,

Payroll warrants numbered 25223 through 25223 in the total dollar amount of \$56.18 (Transmittal No. P-56-98).

**PRESENTATION – FISHERIES ENHANCEMENT GROUP REQUEST FOR FUNDING.**

Allison Studely, Fisheries Enhancement Group, asked the Board for support in efforts to protect and restore salmon in Skagit County. She noted that the salmon issue has become top priority, and that public awareness and involvement is an integral part of the State's focus. Ms. Studely indicated that the funding base for the Fisheries Enhancement Group has begun to decrease, and therefore they need to obtain funds from additional sources to continue their worthwhile projects. She stated that the Fisheries Enhancement Group is a private, non-profit organization for the protection of salmon in the Samish and Skagit basins. The Group was established in 1991 and is funded by grants, public donations, and a surcharge on fishing licenses, both commercial and sport. As salmon decline, and fishing licenses decrease, funding has suffered a severe decline. Unfortunately, Ms. Studely explained, right when the resource needs additional monies, there is no funding. She indicated that the State is not sure how much funding they will be able to provide in 1999.

Ms. Studely reviewed the projects and efforts of the Fisheries Enhancement Group, together with the levels of staffing and the utilization of 500 hours per month donated by volunteers. She further indicated that there are six full-time employees, four of which are provided by the "Jobs for the Environment" State program.

Ms. Studely asked for a \$25,000 contribution from the county to allow for operational funding to continue outreach to private landowners, provide technical support, and to leverage outside dollars that come in to Skagit County. She reviewed a map of the various projects throughout the County.

Chairman Hart clarified that this is an operational request and not a project request.

Ms. Studely indicated that the funding would be used for employment of project management and project coordinator staff.

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Commissioner Wolden stated that with this becoming a top priority in the State, no one is really sure how long the local jurisdictions will be impacted, or how much money will come from outside the area for pass-throughs in the County budget. He noted that the County would be relying on groups like the Fisheries Enhancement Group to give the County direction for the future.

Commissioner Anderson moved to approve the request for \$25,000 worth of funding for the Fisheries Enhancement Group. Commissioner Wolden seconded the motion, with the provision that a source of funding be identified prior to the Fisheries Enhancement Group receiving monies for their programs. Commissioner Anderson agreed with the provisions of Commissioner Wolden's second. The motion passed with a unanimous vote.

**CONSIDERATION OF HEARING EXAMINER'S RECOMMENDATION FOR APPROVAL OF HEILMAN HERITAGE GROUP'S APPLICATION FOR DECEPTION SHORES PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENT, LOCATED .05 MILES NORTHWEST OF DECEPTION PASS BRIDGE ON FIDALGO ISLAND (PPT-93-007-ORD).**

Dave Hough, Planning & Permit Center Staff, reviewed the exact location of the subject development, consisting of 27 lots on 68 acres, with one unit per 2-1/2 acres. Mr. Hough advised that the Hearing Examiner held a public hearing and accepted comments, and has recommended the Board's approval with conditions.

After a brief review, Commissioner Wolden moved for approval of the Hearing Examiner's recommendation regarding Heilman Heritage Group's Application for Deception Shores Planned Unit Development, located .5 miles northwest of Deception Pass Bridge on Fidalgo Island. Commissioner Anderson seconded the motion, which passed with a unanimous vote. **(Resolution No.17218)**

**PUBLIC HEARING – CONSIDERATION OF A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING SKAGIT COUNTY TO INCREASE PROPERTY TAX REVENUES IN EXCESS OF INCREASES IN THE VALUE OF STATE ASSESSED PROPERTY, NEW CONSTRUCTION AND IMPROVEMENTS TO PROPERTY FOR THE 1999 BUDGET YEAR.**

Alicia Huschka, Budget Director, reviewed the purpose of the public hearing in that the Board is to consider an increase in property tax revenues in excess of increases in the value of state assessed property, new construction and improvements to property for the 1999 budget year. She explained that this is the second year the County must comply with Referendum 47, which requires that a public hearing be held to consider collecting property taxes at a rate higher than inflation, or 100.85%.

She explained the various levy amounts proposed in detail, and the resultant resolutions that would be required.

Ms. Huschka next spoke to the substantial interests of the County in this regard. She explained that major resources for Skagit County are showing a decline, including timber tax and harvest of timber monies from the Department of Natural Resources. She explained that many of the major revenue sources are volatile, including sales tax revenue. She stated that sales tax revenue is increasing, but is still not up to 1994 levels.

Commissioner Wolden commented on the effects of annexation by the cities and towns and the resultant loss of revenue for the County.

Mike Woodmansee, County Administrator, reviewed further impacts to revenues including Growth Management Act (GMA) compliance, and various interlocal agreements with other jurisdictions wherein the County has agreed to revenue share in the future.

Ms. Huschka went on to explain further substantial needs for the County including the costs of addressing salmon recovery in 1999, and maintaining a solid fund balance in the general fund at approximately \$3.8 million. She further spoke to the effects to the Road Fund Levy such as the Skagit River Feasibility Study. She indicated that there will also be resolutions for consideration regarding Medic One, even though the County is not looking at taking an increase, but is proceeding with the Referendum 47 resolutions on advice of the County Assessor to maintain previous levels.

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Ms. Huschka reviewed a history of the property tax information 1992-1999, and further gave examples of proposed levies at various cities and towns throughout the Northwest.

Chairman Hart opened the public hearing.

Don Bockelman, 30623 South Skagit Highway, Sedro Woolley, cautioned the Board not to act in haste regarding timber tax decreases. He stated that there have been many times when the Board hurried to take some action, only to receive windfall taxes when the amount of harvests increased.

Mr. Woodmansee responded that the Board during times of excess monies has amended the budget and transferred this money to land acquisition or facilities improvement funds. He spoke in detail regarding the amounts of distributions and estimates for 1999. He indicated that in some years when there were "windfall" monies, that money was put into construction projects, growth management requirements, and other facilities projects. He further indicated that the numbers presented are actual numbers.

Mr. Bockelman next commented on the fees and funds received from permits and penalties. He stated that building permit fees are very high, and that these are due to the Board making poor spending choices. He stated that no one wants more taxes or higher fees. Mr. Bockelman stated that he is opposed to increasing taxes, and stated that the Board should reduce taxes to show the people that they can have faith in the Board.

Tony Splane, 714 Sapp Road, Sedro Woolley, Sedro Woolley, stated that his highest bill per month is his tax bill. He indicated that it is time for politicians to quit taxing people simply because they own a small parcel of property. He urged the Board to find another source of revenue.

Carol Ehlers, 3998 Windcrest Lane, West Fidalgo Island, objected to all of the proposed levies except the medic one levy. Ms. Ehlers complained that the information for this public hearing was not made available until the hearing began, so that she was unable to review the proposals in detail. She indicated that this did not present an "appearance of fairness." She asked that the Board make available the information for a public hearing one week in advance of the hearing.

Commissioner Wolden commented on attendance at special district budget hearings.

Ms. Ehlers spoke again to the need to be transparent and distribute information prior to the hearing.

Mike Woodmansee commented on the timeliness issue and that the information from State agencies was not available until late last week, but the County will strive to do better.

There being no further public testimony forthcoming, Commissioner Anderson moved to close the public hearing. Commissioner Hart seconded the motion, which passed unanimously. The public hearing was closed.

Commissioner Anderson commented on the current Board continuously taking less than 106%, setting the budget every year before setting the millage. He stressed the importance of the general fund balance not being left in a precarious position, and indicated the need to find a better way to fund government other than through property taxes. He indicated that this is a much larger issue than can be addressed at the County level, and must be addressed at the State level. He discussed the various procedures that have been implemented to obtain better information from the small taxing districts. Commissioner Anderson stated that most of the budgetary costs are personnel costs, locked up in union contracts, cost of living raises, and increased benefit costs. He stated that Departments requested 70 new positions, of which 2 were granted. Commissioner Anderson stated that the Board has made a concentrated effort to be responsible to the taxpayers. He briefly commented on the duties of the County to defend itself in Growth Management Act issues and other issues.

Commissioner Wolden concurred with Commissioner Anderson's remarks in that the Board has tried to do a good job of keeping the budget level to 104%.

Mr. Woodmansee commented that 65% of the total general fund budget goes to the criminal justice system.

Commissioner Hart stated that no one likes to pay increased taxes, and commented briefly on the necessity to

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spend money defending the County's interests in land issue matters.

Commissioner Anderson moved to adopt a Resolution authorizing property tax increase for 1999 for the Skagit County Levy in the amount of \$433,846, which is a percentage increase of four percent from the previous year. Commissioner Wolden seconded the motion, which passed with a unanimous vote. **(Resolution No. 17219)**.

Commissioner Anderson moved to approve a Resolution authorizing property tax limit factor increase for the 1999 Skagit County Levy at the rate of 106% of the highest amount of regular property taxes. Commissioner Wolden seconded the motion, which passed unanimously. **(Resolution No. 17220)**

Commissioner Anderson moved to authorize property tax increase for the 1999 Skagit County Road level in the amount of \$73,010, which is a percentage increase of one percent from the previous year. The total 1999 general property tax levy, including new construction, shall be approximate, \$7,547,976. Commissioner Wolden seconded the motion, which passed unanimously. **(Resolution No. 17221)**.

Commissioner Anderson moved to authorize the property tax limit factor increase for 1999 Skagit County Road Levy at a rate of 106%. Commissioner Wolden seconded the motion, and it passed with a unanimous vote. **(Resolution No. 17222)**

Commissioner Anderson moved to authorize property tax increase for the 1999 Emergency Medical Services Levy at a zero percent increase from the previous year. Commissioner Wolden seconded the motion, which passed unanimously. **(Resolution No. 17223)**

Commissioner Anderson moved to authorize property tax limit factor increase for 1999 Skagit County Emergency Medical Services Levy at 106%. Commissioner Wolden seconded the motion, which passed with a unanimous vote. **(Resolution No. 17224)**

**ADJOURNMENT.**

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


**BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
SKAGIT COUNTY, WASHINGTON**

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Robert Hart, Chairman

  
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Ted W. Anderson, Commissioner

  
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Harvey Wolden, Commissioner

ATTEST:

  
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Patti J. Chambers, Clerk of the Board  
Skagit County Board of Commissioners

