

**RECORD OF THE PROCEEDINGS  
SKAGIT COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
Tuesday, June 13, 2000**

7:00 a.m. – 8:00 a.m.	Breakfast with Washington State Association of Counties Staff and Skagit County Elected Officials (Mitzel's American Kitchen, 1627 Freeway Drive, Mount Vernon).
8:30 a.m. – 9:30 a.m.	Work Session – Washington State Association of Counties Staff Courthouse Visit with Skagit County Elected Officials.
9:30 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.	Work Session – Washington State Association of Counties Staff Courthouse Visit with the Skagit County Commissioners.
1:30 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.	<u>Planning &amp; Permit Center – Tom Karsh, Director.</u> 1) Discussion – Costs to Bulk Mail Public Notices. 2) Miscellaneous.

The Skagit County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on Tuesday, June 13, 2000, with Commissioners Harvey Wolden, Robert Hart and Ted W. Anderson present.

**PLANNING & PERMIT CENTER – Tom Karsh, Director.**

1. Discussion – Costs to Bulk Mail Public Notices.

Tom Karsh, Director, advised that this session was scheduled to discuss legal obligations to publicly notice different types of actions, proposed official controls, and proposed changes to official maps or codes. He explained that as part of the Settlement Agreement with the Association of Skagit County Landowners (ASCL), the County had agreed to hold a public hearing to talk about public hearing notices. He advised that those negotiations are still ongoing, but that the Department is anticipating that this negotiated public hearing would be scheduled sometime in July. Mr. Karsh stated that the Department had gleaned information from local bulk mail businesses concerning such notification options. Mr. Karsh reviewed the provisions of the Planning Enabling Act, which states that notice of the time, place and purpose of such hearings should be given in one publication of general circulation in the County at least 10 days before the hearing. However, the Board may prescribe different methods of providing such notice.

Mr. Karsh further stated that the Growth Management Act (GMA) encourages involving the public in different ways including utilization of Citizens Advisory Committees and other efforts. Skagit County has responded to this direction by passing a local resolution that extends that 10-day notice period to a 15-day notice period. He explained that the County is in the process of codifying that public participation resolution as part of the Unified Development Code. He indicated that the County wants to provide as much public participation as is practical, while keeping in mind that such notices are costly. He briefly reviewed the current methods for notifying the public of a public hearing, and also the notice required for project review. He emphasized that most interest is in dealing with legislative and county-wide changes in Code, rather than project-specific items.

Mr. Karsh indicated that his Department had surveyed counties and cities throughout the State, and found a wide range of notice procedures. He advised that Snohomish County notifies everyone in the County when there is a public hearing involving legislative action.

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Mr. Karsh stated that there are two businesses in Skagit County that are in the bulk mailing business, and they would both tailor a notice however the County would direct them to. He stated that if the County wanted to give every box holder in Skagit County a generic occupant notice, the cost would range from \$6,000 to \$6,500 per mailing. If such a mailing is tailored to specific people and addresses, i.e., isolating unincorporated areas, the cost would increase due to the increased work for such sorting.

Commissioner Anderson noted the need to put something distinctive on generic notices to assure that people would read such notices.

Mr. Karsh further detailed the costs to take out ads in the Skagit Valley Herald. He advised that a full page advertisement would cost \$2,300 for the first run, and then 25% less for each additional day that the ad is run. A half-page advertisement would cost \$1,200. Inserts in the paper would be negotiated depending on size and amount.

A discussion ensued regarding the costs to have individually addressed envelopes to each household, and the efforts that could be made to make sure such mailings are read by the public. Mr. Karsh advised that such mailings would cost 13 cents per piece of paper.

Commissioner Anderson stated that the decision on what would qualify for such notification, and the methods therefore, could be decided on a case-by-case basis by the Board.

Mr. Karsh reiterated that whenever extra work or a "sort" is required, the cost would be more expensive than the \$6,000 generic mailings as explained earlier.

A lengthy discussion ensued on the particulars of such mailings.

Commissioner Anderson noted that a citizen who visited him suggested that anyone applying for a Special Use Permit should be required to mail a registered letter to all of those landowners within a 300' perimeter. This would make the person applying for the Special Use Permit responsible for a portion of the notification process.

Mr. Karsh stated that there has been much case law developed which argues about state minimum standards. Such case law suggests that the courts agree it is not a violation of due process if you do the minimum notification.

Commissioner Hart suggested that the top of each legal notice should contain a brief summary of the item being noticed.

### 2. Miscellaneous.

There were no Miscellaneous items for discussion.

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**ADJOURNMENT.**

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

**BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
SKAGIT COUNTY, WASHINGTON**

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Harvey Wolden, Chairman

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Robert Hart, Commissioner

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Ted W. Anderson, Commissioner

ATTEST:

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