

**RECORD OF THE PROCEEDINGS
SKAGIT COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
Monday, February 12, 2001**

MONDAY, February 12, 2001

10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.	Department Head Meeting
11:00 a.m. – 11:30 a. m.	CONSENT AGENDA. MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS.
11:30 a.m. – 11:45 a.m.	Proclamation – FFA Week in Skagit County, February 17-24, 2001.

The Skagit County Commissioners met in regular session on Monday, February 12, 2001 with Commissioners Ted W. Anderson, Don Munks and Kenneth A. Dahlstedt all present.

DEPARTMENT HEAD MEETING

Chairman Anderson opened the meeting. He suggested that department head meetings be held every other week. Everyone present agreed that bi-weekly would be fine.

Mike Almvig, Director, Information Services, reported that a new virus has insinuated itself into the system. Information Services is working on discovering the source of the virus and fixing it.

Ron Feld, Director of Mediation Services, reported that Mediation Services became a county department in July 2000. It was established in the mid-1980's and was known as CommonGround. He is part-time Director of Mediation Services, with Jessica Lee employed as full-time coordinator.

Mediation is a voluntary confidential process whereby participants, with the help of a trained, volunteer mediator, develop mutually acceptable agreements. It is an alternative to court. Mediation is often done with families where people want to work through problems before they become court problems.

There were over 200 cases last year, most of which came through small claims courts. The judges will often assign a case to a mediator. The judges are very supportive as mediation avoids the court process. Oftentimes disputes are settled with an apology rather than a monetary judgment, which would occur in court. The emphasis on mediation is for everyone to get something out of it that they can live with. He suggested that department heads might look at Mediation Services as a way to solve problems.

Commissioner Anderson said the commissioners often get involved in situations they have no jurisdiction over. He asked if mediation over such things as disputes between property owners would be something Mediation Services could get involved in?

Mr. Feld said that Mediation Services would be an excellent source for this kind of thing. Either party can contact them, but both parties must be willing.

Chal Martin, Director of Public Works, asked whether he would be able to schedule a meeting with two neighbors who were in dispute with one another.

Mr. Feld said that usually one person contacts Mediation Services and they take it from there. A lot of the work is done in the screening process, with mediations scheduled both during the day and the evening. With mediated settlements the follow through rate is much higher than court settlements.

Nancy Brown, Director of Youth and Family Services, asked about training.

Mr. Feld answered that there is basic mediation training that meets the criteria for getting certified. He noted that the next training is May 10-12 and May 18 and 19 in the Skagit County hearing rooms. The cost is around \$550.00. Also, since the Skagit County Mediation Services Department is small they are willing to take on a few people for an internship.

Tim Holloran, Director, Senior Services, said they have some retirees who might be interested in being mediators. Mr. Feld said they are going to put out a notice that they are willing to accept the donation of funds to help pay for training. They are also looking at applying for some grants.

Commissioner Munks asked about the charges for mediation services.

Mr. Feld explained that the fees paid by participants are on a sliding scale. Relative to neighborhood disputes, the cost is around \$30.00. Participants are required, if they are doing a parenting plan, to attend a workshop on parenting the child caught in the middle. Catholic Community Services runs that locally. It is aimed at getting an idea of how children are doing when the parents are divorcing.

Chal Martin, Director, Public Works Department, provided an overview of the Ag Buffer program. At the end of December a notice was received from the Western Washington Growth Management Hearings Board that Skagit County's Ag Buffer Program was approved, but more information would be coming. John Moffat met with the board and the direction was given that the county can take the money they have been given and develop a program for baseline monitoring.

A Science Advisory Committee was established in the ordinance and will have a critical role in determining what type of science should be used. The first meeting of the Science Advisory Panel (SAP) was held on Friday. The meeting went well. The panel is presently studying the ordinance and the draft proposal for gathering the baseline data. They will reconvene on February 26. In the meantime, WWGHB is due to give a final written decision on how the Ag Buffer Program is supposed to be implemented. It does appear to be a fairly costly, complex program. He stated that he will be in attendance at the Washington Association of Counties Legislative Forum this week and he is sure the topic will come up.

Commissioner Munks said he thought it would be important to tell people that a study has never been done on the actual cost of implementing a program like this. At the request of Commissioner Anderson, Mr. Martin has been looking at a cost analysis. Once that is shared, everyone will have an idea of what the county is facing with this "one little program".

Mr. Martin talked about some of the costs, noting that they came up with about \$40,000,000 for one component, which requires construction of estuary habitat projects. He cited some of the other costs, estimating a total cost of \$54,000,000, with the County having to come up with about \$14,000,000.

Tom Sheahan, Director, Emergency Management, asked about the possibility of receiving some of the monies King County would be receiving for salmon restoration.

Mr. Martin said that idea is still on the table.

After further discussion, Commissioner Anderson said that not only are there the costs to establish the buffers, but the costs in terms of loss of farm and dairy land have not been taken into consideration. If a large part of the land is taken, it will really cause farmers to question whether it is economically feasible to stay in business. This has the potential to devastate area farmers.

Commissioner Munks agreed that this would have an economic impact. The important thing is there is a 1.5 million dollar project grant and that is all the money that is available. There is no five-year possibility of monies as it is a one-time grant. This will have a huge impact on what happens in Skagit County

Commissioner Dahlstedt reported that several people have contacted him lately about the hiking potential on the dikes and riverbed area. There is a real interest in trying to reach a positive resolution there. He suggested that since the people who are present today are interested in hiking in those areas, they might wish to have their names on a list of supporters. The landowners need to be reassured that there would be good citizens hiking these areas. He said they would be pursuing this, talking to the dike commissioners, and trying to find common ground with the neighbors.

He said there are some other possibilities in terms of linkage of the Padilla Bay dikes with other areas for hiking and biking. He asked department heads to bring any ideas they might have to the commissioners as they see this as a team effort.

Commissioner Anderson felt they had gotten off on the wrong foot because when a feasibility study was done showing these dikes being used as trails, none of the people had been informed or were involved in the process.

Mr. Sheahan said the only negative thing he has heard has been from the hunting side. The hunters go on the dikes and walkers come through the hunting site who don't like the idea of the hunters out there with guns.

There was some discussion about inviting elected officials to the department head meeting. The Commissioners indicated that they were always welcome and hoped they had been clear in extending an invitation to them.

Commissioner Munks commented on the trail discussion, stating that he would take an advocacy role on the other side. This is about talking to people who own property and have people walking across them on a regular basis. The people who are walking on these trails are there because they enjoy the scenery, but they are also gawkers and will look into homes. From the property owner's standpoint it is an invasion of property.

Also, there are liability issues for the property owner when someone is going through their property. Liability insurance is almost tripled when you have people going through your property. This is a big issue to the property owners.

There were no problems with the Padilla Bay Estuary trail in the beginning, but later there were robberies, molestations, and thefts, etc. When dealing with trail issues you try to put yourself in the other person's shoes. It does cause them a lot of problems. They aren't anti-trail, but they want people to understand what they are going through.

Mr. Sheahan suggested the possibility of developing the property around the outside of the airport for a trail. Commissioner Munks mentioned the beauty of the area behind the Northern State property, saying that it would eliminate a lot of contentious issues if people walked in public areas rather than on private property.

CONSENT AGENDA

Commissioner Munks motioned to approve the Consent Agenda items 1 through 13, with the exception of item 2 for Monday, February 12, 2001. Commissioner Dahlstedt seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

COMMISSIONERS' OFFICE:

1. Record of the Proceedings for Monday, February 5, 2001.
2. Record of the Proceedings for Wednesday, February 7, 2001. **(REMOVED)**
3. Appointment of Robert Hart to the Skagit County Mental Health Advisory Board for a three-year term beginning February 1, 2001 and expiring on January 31, 2004.
(Resolution No. 18169)

4. Settlement Agreement among Skagit County, City of Anacortes and Twin Bridge wherein the County agrees to approve the City's application for a \$300,000 grant from the County's Distressed County Public Facilities Fund, and to accept and process timely the stipulation of the Parties for remand of action wherein the Hearing Examiner's decision shall be vacated. County shall also lift suspension of previously issued building permits for the Twin Bridge project. This agreement clarifies and further expands the previously signed agreement of January 16, 2001. **(Contract No. 05173)**

PUBLIC DEFENDER:

5. Out-of-State Travel Request for Lana Stephenson to attend a "Life in the Balance 2001: Defending Death Penalty Cases" seminar in Albuquerque, New Mexico, March 3-6, 2001, for a total cost of \$909.50. **(Approved)**

ASSIGNED COUNSEL:

6. Personal Services Agreement with Colleen Kenimond, attorney at law, to handle cases referred that are considered conflict of interest cases for the Skagit County Public Defender's Office. Compensation ranges from \$550 per felony case for arraignments to \$220 for misdemeanor cases. The contract term is February 1, 2001 through February 1, 2003. **(Contract No. 05200)**

HEALTH DEPARTMENT:

7. Out-of-State Travel Request for John Hadman to attend the International Council of Professionals in Food Safety World Conference in Madrid, Spain, May 24-27, 2001, at no cost to the County. Mr. Hadman is only asking that the County pay his regular salary for the four days he will attend the conference. **(Approved)**
8. Amendment No. 3 to State Department of Ecology Agreement No. C9700088, which eliminates the resource protection part of the well delegation program. Resource protection wells involve wells that are drilled for the observation of contamination, dewatering or water table monitoring purposes. In general, this part of the program did not function well. This was discussed with DOE and agreed to eliminate this part of the program as of October 1, 2000. **(Contract No. 03658)**
9. Region 3 Aids Service Network Agreement with the Snohomish Health District (serving as Lead Agency) wherein the Skagit County Health Department shall furnish the necessary personnel, service, supplies and do all things necessary to maintain a County AIDS Task Force and continue to participate in Region 3 AIDS Service Network Council and support the planning activities of the region. The County will be reimbursed \$78,548 for performing these services. **(Contract No. 05201)**

HUMAN SERVICES:

10. Personal Services Agreement with Community Mental Health Services for the period January 1, 2001 through December 31, 2001, wherein Community Mental Health will provide individual and group treatment to children who are victims of sexual abuse and who hold membership in the Swinomish Tribe, provide weekly counseling for adults with developmental disabilities, provide staff support for LaFollette Place apartments, and provide other services as requested as funds are available to support. Total not-to-exceed compensation is \$25,000. **(Contract No. 05202)**

YOUTH & FAMILY SERVICES:

11. Interlocal Cooperative Agreement with the Swinomish Tribal Community for after school/evening cultural program activities for Tribal children. The term of the agreement is December 1, 2000 through June 30, 2001. The not-to-exceed compensation is

\$22,500. **(Contract No. 05203)**

PUBLIC WORKS:

12. Call for Bids for Two Latest Model Four Axle Dump Trucks, with a bid opening set for March 13, 2001, at 1:30 p.m. **(Resolution No. 18170)**
13. Request for Proposals for Environmental and Engineering Services for the Baker River Bridge Rehabilitation Project, Job No. ES9700-6. Proposals are due by March 9, 2001 at 4:00 p.m. **(Resolution No. 18171)**

MISCELLANEOUS

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, February 12, 2001, the Board, by a majority vote, did approve for payment those vouchers included in the above-mentioned list and further described as follows:

Warrant 89155 through 89604 , Clearing Fund 696, in the amount of \$3,449,259.16. (C-10-01)

Warrants 89605 through 89636, Clearing Fund 696, in the amount of \$295,513.33. (C-11-01)

Skagit County Payroll Transmittal PP-03-01, Payroll Suspense Fund 699, payroll warrants numbered 68408 through 69314 in the amount of \$901,389.51. (P-5-01)

Skagit County Payroll Transmittal PP03-01, Payroll Warrant Clearing Fund 699, warrants 954536 through 954604 in the total of \$75,894.79. (P-06-01)

PROCLAMATION – FFA WEEK IN SKAGIT COUNTY, FEBRUARY 17 -24, 2001

Chairman Anderson opened the meeting. Commissioner Dahlstedt read the proclamation declaring FFA Week in Skagit County, February 17 -24, 2001.

WHEREAS, the FFA and agricultural education provide a strong foundation for the youth of America and the future of the food, fiber and natural resources systems; and
WHEREAS, the FFA promotes premier leadership, personal growth and career success among its members; and
WHEREAS, agricultural education and the FFA ensure a steady supply of young professionals to meet the growing demands in the science, business and technology of agriculture; and
WHEREAS, the FFA motto, "Learning to do, doing to learn, earning to live, living to serve", gives direction of purpose to these students who take an active role in succeeding in agricultural education; and
WHEREAS, the FFA promotes citizenship, volunteerism, patriotism and cooperation.

Commissioner Dahlstedt motioned to approve the proclamation that February 17-24-2001 be designated FFA Week in Skagit County. Commissioner Munks seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Michele Hunter of the Sedro Woolley chapter of Future Farmers of America talked about some of the things her chapter participates in. They do supervised projects, such as job experience and home improvement projects. They also have contests and work on community service projects.

The other members of Future Farmers of America who were present introduced themselves to the Commissioners and described some of the projects and areas they work in.

Commissioner Anderson thanked the FFA students for attending the meeting today.

Commissioner Dahlstedt expressed his support for FFA, explaining that he too had been a member, serving as treasurer and president at one time. He said that a lot of his abilities come from that experience and he is very proud of the young people present today. It is exciting to see so many participants.

Commissioner Munks said he was very happy to see everyone here, stating that FFA was always a major component of his life. His four daughters all went through FFA programs. It is a great organization and these programs are important to a lot of people. He commended and congratulated the group.

Commissioner Anderson presented a copy of the proclamation to each of the chapters. He then thanked them for their attendance at today's meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Dahlstedt motioned to adjourn the proceedings. Commissioner Munks seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

**BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
SKAGIT COUNTY, WASHINGTON**

Ted W. Anderson, Chairman

Don Munks, Commissioner

Kenneth A. Dahlstedt, Commissioner

ATTEST:

Jean Terry, Acting Clerk of the Board
Skagit County Board of Commissioners