

**RECORD OF THE PROCEEDINGS
SKAGIT COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
Tuesday, March 27, 2001**

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| *T | 9:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m. | Public Hearing – To Consider Testimony re: an Interlocal Agreement between Skagit County and the Town of LaConner relating to Law Enforcement Services. |
| *T | 10:00 a.m. – 10:30 a.m. | Presentation – Skagit Conservation District Work Plan. |
| | 10:30 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. | Introduction – Guemes Island Ferry Committee. |
| *T | 11:30 a.m. – 11:45 a.m. | Public Comment Period. |
| | 1:30 p.m. – 2:00 p.m. | Bid Opening – County Legal Printing (July 1, 2001 – June 30, 2002). |
| | 2:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. | Executive Session – Personnel, Litigation and Land Acquisition. |

The Skagit County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on Tuesday, March 27, 2001, with Commissioners Ted W. Anderson, Don Munks, and Kenneth A. Dahlstedt present.

PUBLIC HEARING – TO CONSIDER TESTIMONY RE: AN INTERLOCAL AGREEMENT BETWEEN SKAGIT COUNTY AND THE TOWN OF LACONNER RELATING TO LAW ENFORCEMENT SERVICES.

Chairman Anderson opened the public hearing.

Sheriff Ed Goodman briefly reviewed the history of this matter. He stated that in 1995 this issue was brought to the Board and had been discussed intermittently since. In January of this year, the Town Council unanimously approved entering into an Interlocal Agreement for Law Enforcement Services to be provided by Skagit County. Numerous hearings were held, including two such hearings before the Town Council. He stated that the Sheriff's Office was looking at forming a LaConner detachment consisting of a sergeant, 3 deputies and a part-time records person. He reviewed the current status of such personnel.

As no public testimony was forthcoming, Commissioner Munks moved to close the public hearing, and Commissioner Dahlstedt seconded the motion. The motion passed with a unanimous vote, and the public hearing was closed.

At the request of Chairman Anderson, LaConner Police Chief Larry Yonnely concurred with Sheriff Goodman's statements about the ongoing discussion since 1995 regarding law enforcement for the Town. He stated that the feeling is that LaConner needs to have more advanced technology and service and that such can be provided by the Skagit County Sheriff's Office. He noted the disadvantages of being a small agency with a small budget and lack of necessary manpower. He reviewed his personal history with Sheriff Goodman, stating that the Sheriff is a man of integrity and will make this proposal work for all concerned. He stated that this would be a good move for the Town in his opinion, commenting that the first year may be "bumpy," but that in the end better protection would be provided to the community.

Commissioner Munks reviewed that he had received many comments and concerns from constituents about the impact to their taxes. However, in discussing this with the County's Budget/Finance Director, the proposed agreement over a 3-year period will balance out. He indicated that it is important that the County assist in increasing the services to the area.

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Commissioner Dahlstedt stated that anytime there is significant change, there is the fear of the unknown. He indicated that he was pleased with the process gone through, and the good attendance at the Town Council meetings. He commented on the increased protection to citizens of the Town and indicated his commitment to helping the Sheriff in his efforts to make the program successful.

Eron Berg, Mayor of LaConner, reviewed the 15 months of working with the Sheriff, County representatives, and the local citizenry to put this agreement together. He expressed his appreciation to the Sheriff, Undersheriff, and Staff for the amount of work they have dedicated to this process, which was substantial. He also commented on the assistance received from the Snohomish County Sheriff and Mayor of Stanwood, together with the personal participation of the Board. He stated that this agreement is a good thing for all taxpayers, and that the Town is looking forward to working with Sheriff Goodman.

Commissioner Munks moved to accept the Interlocal Agreement with the Town of LaConner to provide law enforcement services. Commissioner Dahlstedt seconded the motion, which passed unanimously. **(Contract No. 05245)**

PRESENTATION – SKAGIT CONSERVATION DISTRICT WORK PLAN.

Carolyn Kelly, Manager of the Skagit Conservation Program, introduced Skagit Conservation District Chairperson Betty Norton, and Vice-Chair Jan McRae. She also introduced the key people on her staff who were in attendance, including Kristy Carpenter, Melissa Martme, Tom Slocum, and Sue Bridgeman.

Ms. Kelly reviewed the District's goals for 2001, noting that such goals are varied and vast. She reviewed the history of the organization of Conservation Districts and a description of what such districts are charged to do. She stated that the District can deal with any natural resource and agricultural land use issue brought to them. Ms. Kelly stated that in 2001, their goals would involve the protection and improvement of surface and ground water quality, targeting those with 3(d) listings. Another goal is to promote and provide assistance for fish and wildlife protection and enhancement activities. She indicated that the District intends to continue to participate in watershed planning and implementation activities, as well as to support efforts to protect and preserve prime farmlands and to promote sustainable agriculture. The District will also continue to implement the forest stewardship program under the direction of Al Craney. In addition, the District will continue to provide conservation educational opportunities and volunteer activities to residents of all of Skagit County. These include such groups as the Watershed Masters and the Stream Team. Ms. Kelly reported that the District would be more and more involved in evaluation and monitoring programs to not only demonstrate program effectiveness but to facilitate adaptive management strategies.

Chairman Anderson asked if the district would be able to utilize baseline monitoring information gathered by the County. She replied that she hoped that the data could be shared. In this regard, she stressed the need for the District to increase its ability to deal with growing resource issues and to continue to search for applicable funding.

She reviewed a detailed map of Skagit County showing the planned work areas that are funded for the next year. Ms. Kelly discussed some of the specifics of such projects.

A discussion ensued on the imposition of buffers, riparian habitat programs, and the CREP Program.

Ms. Kelly next discussed the Dairy Nutrient Management Program, reporting that there are currently 57 dairies remaining in Skagit County who must have a certified plan by July of 2002, with full implementation by December of 2003. She stated the currently certified plans have been received from 56% of the dairies, and completely implemented plans are at 18%.

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Ms. Kelly next reviewed the highlights of the education program. She commented on the recently completed tree planting and sale, noting that there is a trend of people who are going out and making their own habitat improvements. This year education programs included Watershed Masters Training, with those individuals returning 40 hours of such service to the community. In addition, the Stream Team will continue again, with individuals being dedicated to an all year long commitment. She briefly reviewed the Shellfish Monitoring Program to help with the testing for recreational shellfish beaches. Ms. Kelly indicated that the Board would participate in issuing an Arbor Day Proclamation next week. In addition, the District will continue publishing a newsletter and providing education materials. She reviewed the Earth Day activities for later in April. Ms. Kelly stated that the District would continue to promote activities such as Enviro-Thon, and the Natural Resources Youth Camp of Western Washington, sponsoring kids to go to Eastern Washington for a week to learn about natural resources issues. She stated that the District also has a program of providing information to schoolteachers in Skagit County, advising what materials are available and what they need.

Commissioner Munks commented that it is nice to see a program that actually works with the farmers rather than issuing mandates. He stated that the board has tried to expand the CREP Program for the County's agricultural buffers, hoping for a win-win situation for everyone.

After a brief discussion on previous practices and the changes made in the past years, Ms. Kelly stressed that the sharing of data is very important, with need for a unified system throughout the State.

A lengthy discussion ensued regarding buffers on forest lands and related salmon recovery efforts.

The Board thanked the members and staff for attending, and Ms. Kelly for her informative presentation.

INTRODUCTION – GUEMES ISLAND FERRY COMMITTEE.

Glen Veal, Max Benjamin, and Allen Bush of the Guemes Island Ferry Committee introduced themselves to the Board. Mr. Veal reported that Steve Orsini and Dixon Elder were not able to be present.

Mr. Veal reviewed a history of the Committee and the Guemes Island ferry service. He reported that the Committee has served as a liaison with the Public Works Department, Guemes Islanders, and the County as a whole. He stated that the ferry service is the lifeline to the mainland for the citizens of Guemes Island. The Committee assists with the establishment of fares and identifying revenue sources to assist with the costs associated with the operation of the ferry. He discussed the agreement reached with the County, which has withstood the test of time and, in essence, recognizes such sources of revenue which help the County pay for ferry operation. He stated that it is well established that the ferry is an extension of the County Road system, and those expenses not directly associated to the roads are direct operating costs and are picked up by these various revenue sources. The Committee has worked on improving communication between the Public Works Department and the Board to make sure that services are maintained and concerns addressed. He advised that the Committee has worked with over 12 County Commissioners and 9 Public Works Directors, and that the three gentlemen present have remained on the Committee since its inception.

Max Benjamin, Committee member, stated that it has been important to the Committee to be responsible to everyone in the community and the County as a whole, since the County as a whole is responsible for maintenance of the ferry service and operations. He stated that the ferry has been carrying its weight, and that ferry users have gotten a bad reputation in other parts of the County from individuals who are not aware how the system works. He reported that the system has been a success and that the funding of the ferry enjoys a positive cash flow. He reviewed the specifics of Resolution No. 11939, advising that revenues cover 88% of the crew expenses. He reviewed a detailed list of the revenue pertinent to the ferry. Applicable revenue derived from sources is \$732,031. He then reviewed the costs including salaries of crew, benefits, fuel, insurance, for a total cost of \$618,293. Mr. Benjamin noted that there is a positive cash flow amount of \$113,758.

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Mr. Benjamin reported that every year the ferry is in dry dock for required maintenance, and there is a considerable drop in fares during that time in June, which is a busy time.

Chairman Anderson stated that he is amazed that there is no capitalization factor in the agreement for long-term funding and a reserve set aside for a new ferry in the future.

Mr. Veal responded that the Committee has been told that is not legally possible to set such funds aside.

Chairman Anderson indicated that he would look into the legality of that report.

Mr. Benjamin reviewed the total County overhead on the ferry, including repairs and dock work, and previous years of revenue amounts.

Mr. Benjamin reported that the island has grown tremendously over the last few years, and that the Guemes Islanders have been carrying their share of the load for the ferry. He reviewed the increases in valuation to the property on Guemes Island.

Mr. Benjamin stated that he has been working with Commissioner Munks and the Public Works Department to make the system work better. He next commented on the needed improvements to parking on both sides at the docks. On the island, he reported that there is only one small parking area, with busy weekends requiring on-the-street parking. On the Anacortes side, he advised that the situation is worse. There are only 30 parking spaces, many of which are taken by employees. He stated that the Committee has been attempting to work with Public Works to get the Sixth Street parking lot built so it could alleviate this situation. He commented on recurring problems of communication and lack of response. He discussed the need for reasonable public access at the proposed Sixth Street, and for adequate ADA access. He discussed various options for allowing for such access through neighboring properties, and a possible property exchange.

Chairman Anderson asked the Committee to put their suggestions in written form and submit them to him for further discussions with Chal Martin, Public Works Director.

Mr. Benjamin indicated that this could be a win-win situation and that the whole area could be developed for the benefit of all concerned.

A discussion ensued on the difficulties of developing the parking lot, including the historical building designation and the City's need for additional parking.

Allen Bush, Committee Member, indicated that the Committee would put together a package of what they envision for this area, to present to the Board for development of a community effort with the City.

Commission Munks reviewed that he has talked with Chal Martin about the proposal for completing the parking lot. He indicated that he had also talked with Ian Munce and Mayor Dean Maxwell about a cooperative effort with the City for a right-of-way through one area. He stated that the City has indicated that they are willing to work with the County.

Chairman Anderson stated that previously there was a huge problem with the City over their park, and they were very territorial. He stated that it was his position from the start to try and tie everything together.

Mr. Benjamin reiterated that the ADA access is very serious and must be responded to. He stated that there is correspondence that shows that the Public Works Department has not taken this matter seriously.

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD.

David Wilder, Chinook Enterprises, and the Advisory Committee Member with Skagit Valley College, reviewed the proposed activities for Career Employment Expo 2001 to be held on April 17, 2001, from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Howard Gulley, Anacortes, asked the Board what he could do to help the Board revise the County Code so that it is more equitable, and that the hiring of outside consultants would not be necessary. He indicated his need to get on with his building project.

BID OPENING – COUNTY LEGAL PRINTING (JULY 1, 2001 – JUNE 30, 2002).

Patti Chambers, Clerk of the Board, opened the one bid received for the provision of County Legal Printing services for the period July 1, 2001 through June 30, 2002.

The bid was from the Skagit Valley Publishing at a rate of \$3 per column inch per publication.

Ms. Chambers advised that, pursuant to RCW, the Board would make the bid award at their first meeting date in April, after considering the merits of the submitted bid.

ADJOURNMENT.

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

**BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
SKAGIT COUNTY, WASHINGTON**

Ted W. Anderson, Chairman

Kenneth A. Dahlstedt, Commissioner

Don Munks, Commissioner

ATTEST:

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