

**SKAGIT COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
RECORD OF THE PROCEEDINGS  
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 4, 2001**

7:00 a.m. – 8:30 a.m.	Real Hero’s Breakfast – Skagit Valley Casino
*T 9:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.	<u>Board of Health – Peter Browning, Director</u> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Flu Vaccine Update</li><li>2. Water Lab Update</li><li>3. Health Department Licensees and their On-Site Sewage System requirements</li><li>4. Miscellaneous</li></ol>
*T 10:00 a.m. – 10:45 a.m.	Park Projects Update
10:45 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.	Commissioners’ Work Break
11:30 a.m. – 11:45 a.m.	Public Comment Period
11:45 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.	Bid Opening – One New/Demo Latest Model Public Works Sweeper
1:30 p.m. – 2:15 p.m.	Commissioners’ Work Break
2:15 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.	Discussion and Possible Action - Sauk Suiattle Tribe BIA Request for Conversion from Fee to Trust Lands
2:30 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.	Work Session – Best Place
3:45 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.	Work Session – Discussion of Flood Awareness Week

The Skagit County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on Tuesday, December 4, 2001, with Commissioners Ted W. Anderson, Kenneth A. Dahlstedt and Don Munks present.

**BOARD OF HEALTH – Peter Browning, Director**

**1. Flu Vaccine Update**

Amy Tidrington, Public Health Nurse, updated the Board on the flu vaccine. Ms. Tidrington said the Health Department has received all of the flu vaccines that were ordered. Because of this, the vaccinations are open to the general public, including all age groups with no prescriptions necessary. She said there have already been laboratory confirmed cases in the United States and Canada. She reminded everyone that it does take about two weeks to develop the immunity necessary to fight off the virus.

**2. Water lab Update**

Cherry Fox, Microbiologist, explained the importance of the water lab. In the beginning, the lab was to be a regional water lab for Skagit, Island and San Juan counties. It is still officially the regional lab, however, there are also privatized labs scattered throughout the state.

Ms. Fox said there are two group systems and most of the testing that is done is on drinking water, which is tested for coliform bacteria and E-Coli. Group A systems require coliform bacteria testing every month. Group B systems are tested annually. No testing is required for individually owned wells. The test results can be obtained in 24 hours. Ms. Fox said that if the organisms are present, they don't necessarily cause illness, however, they do act as indicators of other possible pathogens. Thirty percent of private wells test unsatisfactory. Three percent of Group A systems test unsatisfactory. She stressed the need for chlorination of the private septic systems every two years.

Chairman Anderson asked what procedures would be necessary if the Group A systems tested positive for bacteria.

Ms. Fox answered that if bacteria is detected in any public system, owners are notified and four follow-up samples are required to be taken and tested. Environmental Health is also notified and everyone works together to eliminate the problem.

If you have a well that needs to be checked, a testing kit can be purchased at the Health Department or the Upriver Services office. Upon learning the levels of concern, a sheet of instructions is given on how to chlorinate the well. After one week, testing is repeated.

Commissioner Dahlstedt asked if there was more contamination found in a particular area. Ms. Fox said no, it is more common in older wells.

Ms. Fox went on to say that the presence of the water lab in the Health Department expedites the monitoring of any contamination. When samples are sent to private labs, our Health Department often does not receive notification for some time. The water lab also tests raw waters, which are pre-chlorination samples from systems that chlorinate their own water. An additional task that is performed is Sanitary Surveys. These are used to test for sewage contamination. Their ability to do the testing on-site is particularly valuable to Environmental Health.

During the summer months, testing of the swim beaches in Skagit and Island Counties is done every other week for the presence of E-Coli. There were 232 swim beach samples done in 2001. Clear Lake and Big Lake have tested fine during the last two years. Ms. Fox said there has been increased testing in Skagit

County due to the Samish Watershed and the Ag Buffer programs that are currently being handled by the Public Works Department.

**3. Health Department Licenses and their On-Site Sewage System Requirements**

Steve Olsen, Environmental Health Specialist, spoke about the requirements of on-site sewage systems. He explained that there are two purposes of the Operations, Monitoring and Maintenance Program. They are to provide information and education to every owner of an on-site sewage system about how they work, how to take care of them, the rules and regulations that govern their operations, monitoring and maintenance and to enforce the rules and regulations.

Mr. Olsen said the Health Department licenses over 100 food service establishments, group camps and recreational vehicle camps with on-site septic systems. The sewage code requires each owner of an on-site sewage system to be responsible for proper operation, monitoring and maintenance of their system. Licensees are required by the County Sewage Code to have their systems inspected on an annual basis. The schedule is more frequent than for residences because:

- Liquid waste volumes of commercial food establishments are usually much higher than residential volumes because they are open to the public and customers.
- Liquid waste strengths of food service establishments are much stronger than residential liquid waste, and often require more complicated on-site septic systems in order to treat the sewage adequately.
- Since volumes, strengths and septic systems are more complicated, the septic system is more prone to failure.

In March of 2001, a letter was sent to all food service establishments and camps informing them of the need to have an annual on-site septic system inspection prior to the issuance of 2002 permits. A Septics 101 Clinic For Food Establishments was provided in the spring of 2001 and will be offered again in 2002. In August of 2001, the Health Department began person to person visits to licensees and handed out packets of information containing a copy of "Keep Skagit Waters Clean", a description of the sewage code rules and regulations, a list of the permits issued by the establishment in order to operate in Skagit County, a copy of the On-Site Septic System Service and Inspection form, and a list of County certified personnel qualified to do the annual inspections.

Mr. Olsen said there have been approximately 600 people who have taken the Septic 101 clinics.

**4. Miscellaneous**

Mr. Browning thanked Dr. Howard Leibrand for doing an excellent job in informing the public about bio-terrorism.

**PARKS, RECREATION & FAIR – Bob Vaux, Director**

Bob Vaux, Parks Director, spoke about the Northern State Recreation Area planning and design charette that was held in October. A conceptual master plan was put together that would incorporate miles of trails, baseball and softball fields, an event center, three kinds of camping, barns and trails for horses. He is uncertain about the direction to be taken in regard to the project. He asked if in light of 62% of the voting public in Skagit County supporting I-747, and the 2002 budget process currently impacting and reducing staff and projects County-wide, if there is necessary community, administrative and economic support to develop and sufficiently maintain and operate the NSRA. Mr. Vaux said there are several other significant projects currently being considered or worked on. They include Pressentin Park, a Recreation Center proposal, the possible move/significant upgrade of the County Fairgrounds, Clear Lake Beach, Skagit Valley Playfields and Dream Field and Howard Miller Steelhead Park.

Patrik Dylan, Project Manager, gave an executive summary of the design Charette for NSRA.

Commissioner Dahlstedt said he supports all of the parks projects but the County needs to be fiscally responsible. He said he is not ready to proceed with a 13 million dollar project.

Louie Requa, Chairman of the Northern State Recreation Area Task Force, said the task force only wanted the Board to go ahead and take the plan to the public, and begin the permitting process on the ten ball fields. He already has commitments from various entities to do site work for the ball fields. The permit process needs to begin now in order to break ground in 2003. Mr. Requa told the Board that a decision must be made soon or he would stand to lose most of the support being given to the task force.

Commissioner Munks asked if Mr. Requa had an estimate for the ball fields. Mr. Requa said the estimate in the beginning was 13-18 million dollars, however, the project has been scaled back. He estimates a total price tag of about 3 million dollars.

Mr. Vaux added that building the diamonds would cost around 5 million and would require adding two full-time staff.

Commissioner Dahlstedt said the County can't do anything that would require adding staff when the 2002 budget could result in staff cutbacks.

Mr. Requa said that although the Northern State Recreation Area will cost millions of dollars, not much of that will come out of County money because people will come out of the woodwork to help. Local equestrian groups will step up to build the trails and restore the barns, and area businesses and civic groups are always eager to help. He said that, along with the matching grants they will be receiving, they will be more than able to fund it and maintain it. The ball fields, in particular, will be self-supporting through user fees, so the Commissioners' concern about staff is unwarranted.

Commissioner Dahlstedt said he would like to see each proposed project looked at one at a time, with a budget for each. He feels it is definitely an important project but that long-term staffing needs should be looked at.

Mr. Vaux said the parks and Recreation Department will now work to come up with a cost estimate for each component of the park. He said he would also examine financing alternatives.

Chairman Anderson supports going ahead with the work. He said the money is available to at least begin the permitting process for the ball fields. He said the Northern State project was granted \$300,000 a year for 10 years from the County's real estate excise taxes. The County Commissioners, which included Bob Hart and Harvey Wolden, voted unanimously to do that in 1999, but they have been replaced this year with Commissioners Munks and Dahlstedt.

It was decided that the plan to develop the area would be put on hold while Skagit County deals with more pressing financial issues.

**PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD:**

Tom Solberg, 19019 Minnie Road, Alger, thanked the Board for all of their efforts and feels they are doing a good job. Mr. Solberg would like to see more services being contracted out. He also spoke of his concerns regarding the water line between Bow Hill and Alger.

**BID OPENING – ONE NEW/DEMO LATEST MODEL PUBLIC WORKS SWEEPER:**

Dub Queen, Public Works Department, opened the following bids:

1. Ben-Ko-Matic  
848 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue, South  
Kent, WA  
Bid Bond Enclosed  
Total Bid amount \$144,704
2. Clyde West  
9615 West Marginal Way South  
Seattle, WA  
Bid Bond Enclosed  
Total Bid Amount \$156,677.29
3. Pacific Utility Equipment  
1303 South 96<sup>th</sup> Street  
Seattle, WA  
Bid Bond Enclosed  
Total Bid Amount \$136,176.26

Mr. Queen stated he would evaluate the bids and would be back to the Board with a recommendation within two weeks.

**MISCELLANEOUS:**

Staff presented a Resolution to call for a Public Hearing for the proposed 2002 Skagit County budget. The hearing will be held on Monday, December 17, 2001 at 11:30 a.m.

Chairman Munks motioned to approve the Resolution. Commissioner Dahlstedt seconded the motion, which passed unanimously. **Resolution No. 18505)**

**DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION – SAUK SUIATTLE TRIBE BIA REQUEST FOR CONVERSION FROM FEE TO TRUST LANDS:**

Commissioner Munks motioned to take no action/no appeal on the Sauk Suiattle Tribe request for conversion from fee to trust lands. Commissioner Dahlstedt seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

Commissioner Munks motioned to adjourn the proceedings. Commissioner Dahlstedt seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

**BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
SKAGIT COUNTY, WASHINGTON**

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Ted W. Anderson, Chairman

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Kenneth A. Dahlstedt, Commissioner

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Don Munks, Commissioner

ATTEST:

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JoAnne Giesbrecht, Clerk of the Board  
Skagit County Board of Commissioners