

**RECORD OF THE PROCEEDINGS
SKAGIT COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
TUESDAY, JUNE 3, 2003**

- *T 9:00 a.m. -10:00 a.m. Board of Health – Peter Browning, Director
1. Discussion – Skagit County Activity Coalition, “Ahead of the Curve Again” Presentation at the National Conference
 2. Update – The “Rehab the Lab” Program
 3. Welcome Baby Annual Report
- *T 10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. Public Hearing – To Consider Public Testimony Regarding the Adoption of Interim Ordinance O20030006, Related to Allowances For Agricultural Processing, Agricultural Primary and Accessory Uses in the Natural Resource Lands, Natural Resource Industrial and Rural Reserve Zoning Districts
- 11:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. Work Session – Flood and Water Storage Issues

The Skagit County Commissioners met in regular session on Tuesday, June 3, 2003, with Commissioners Kenneth A. Dahlstedt, Ted W. Anderson, and Don Munks present.

BOARD OF HEALTH – PETER BROWNING, DIRECTOR.

1. Discussion – Skagit County Activity Coalition, “Ahead of the Curve Again” Presentation at the National Conference.

Mr. Browning spoke about the Skagit County Activity Coalition program that he recently presented to a group at the National Conference in San Diego. Our program has been underway in the County for approximately the last five years. He said the President of the United States, as well as the whole nation, is trying to garner attention to public health.

Mr. Browning stated that physically inactive individuals have higher direct medical costs. One in four adults is currently not active at all, 60% are not regularly active, 6 out of 10 Americans are overweight or obese and nationally, we have a dramatic increase in diabetes in youth and adults. It is very important to the success of the program that the difference between activity and fitness be clarified. Fitness comes from getting your heart rate up to 80% of your max and then keeping it there for 20 minutes or more. Activity is some form of movement that you do for 30 minutes a day, at least 10 minutes at a time, for at least 5 days per week.

Skagit County’s Activity Coalition began with a community meeting to develop a “core group”, including hospitals, a Parks and Recreation representative, insurance providers, health club owners, hiking and biking groups, and a Senior Services representative. Block grant funding was received, which paid for a half-time employee to manage the efforts of the core group. They then developed a clear definition of the problem and scope relating to the project. After the core group developed the definition and the scope, more members of the community were invited to be a part of an advisory group. These included physicians, Mayors, County Commissioners, and Planning Directors. Once assembled, the advisory group looked for financial assistance and then worked with the Urban and Rural Planning Commission, the Parks and Recreation planning members, and City and County Planning programs.

Mr. Browning went on to talk about the Pedometer Program that has just gotten underway for County employees and a web based application being created by Western Washington University for a four County region. He stated that the tough part about promoting physical activity is to translate good intentions into action.

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2. Update – The “Rehab the Lab” Program.

Andy Ross, Environmental Health Specialist, gave an update on the Rehab the Lab Program funded by the Washington State Department of Ecology. Funds in the amount of \$6,300 will allow the Health Department to visit with six public high schools throughout the County to look at their chemical stockrooms. A contractor has been hired that will come in and meet with teachers to review their chemistry programs and usages to identify high-risk chemicals. Mr. Ross indicated that in most cases these chemicals have been stored for decades with no means of disposal as it is expensive. Each high school has between 100-200 containers and most of those products would not be allowed to be used today. Once they are identified, a different contractor would be brought in to package them up and dispose of. It is hopeful that this can be accomplished by the end of the school year.

Mr. Browning said the schools are very appreciative with efforts to find a solution to this problem. It has been very well received.

3. Welcome Baby Annual Report.

Meredith Baker, Welcome Baby Coordinator, indicated that this is the sixth year of the program and there are over 7,300 families entered into the database since it began in 1997. Program goals for next year include how to sustain the program over the long haul, finding a full-time specialist to work with Ms. Baker, and finding a universal library card for those that don't belong to a city library system. A toddler group has now been formed and is free for parents. In addition, school superintendents are anxious to work with Ms. Baker to do an outcome study as some of the first newborns will be attending kindergarten this next fall.

Ms. Baker indicated that at some point Chairman Dahlstedt had asked her to put together a video on post-partum depression, which has just been completed. A number of people in the community contributed to looking at this problem, as it does affect the children. She then showed a video titled “Mother, Baby, Emotional Care”.

PUBLIC HEARING – TO CONSIDER PUBLIC TESTIMONY REGARDING THE ADOPTION OF INTERIM ORDINANCE NO. O20030006, RELATED TO ALLOWANCES FOR AGRICULTURAL PROCESSING, AGRICULTURAL PRIMARY AND ACCESSORY USES IN THE NATURAL RESOURCE LANDS, NATURAL RESOURCE INDUSTRIAL AND RURAL RESERVE ZONING DISTRICTS.

Linda Kuller, Senior Planner, gave a brief recap regarding Interim Ordinance No. O20030006, regarding permanent proposed changes to the zoning ordinance. The amendments are related to agricultural uses, accessory use, agricultural food processing facilities and other similar issues. As of today, she has received four written comments and will accept more during the public hearing.

Chairman Dahlstedt opened the public hearing.

Mike Shelby, Manager of the Western Washington Ag Association spoke on behalf of the crop growers. They recommend the Commissioners move forward with the ordinance that the Ag advisory group has recommended. He said the Board needs to place their confidence in the Ag Advisory Board and adopt the interim ordinance.

Larry Jensen, Burlington, said he has been involved with the process for some time. He said performance standards should not be adopted for progress but approves adopting the interim ordinance as amended by the Ag Advisory Board.

Don Wick, Executive Director of EDASC thanked the Commissioners for their steadfast support of agriculture over the years. He said EDASC has also been a steadfast supporter of agriculture and farming and this is yet another tool to enhance it. He supports the adoption as amended.

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Bob Rose, Skagitonians to Preserve Farmland, Steve Sakuma, Burlington, and Annie Lohman of Bow indicated that after review of the comprehensive plan, the intent is clear to support and protect agriculture. Skagit County Code needs clarity and reasonableness so that the code and the comprehensive plan match.

Oscar Lagerland, 19501 Dahlstedt Road, Burlington, serves on the Ag Advisory Board and spoke about his concerns of where agriculture is going in this valley. It now competes on a world market with a great amount of food being imported with little or no inspection. He feels we need to support our local agriculture as far as security is concerned. He asked if there are any friends of agriculture anymore and said he supports the ordinance.

Barbara Craner, 22970 Bulson Road, Mount Vernon, asked that when there is a substantial land use change, involve the public through the Hearing Examiner process.

June Kite, 20819 Starbird Road, spoke on behalf of Friends of Skagit County. She said more work is needed in order for the Planning Commission to support a permanent ordinance. They recommend giving the Planning staff more time to draft such an ordinance.

Bill Vaux, 5108 Heather Court, Anacortes, stated that there have been very few times when the Commissioners could directly help agriculture and the farmer. Quite frequently there is an opportunity to pass resolutions to protect farmland, but not the farmer. He said this is the time. We can preserve all the farmland there is but if we can't sell the crop then we can't preserve agriculture. He encouraged the Commissioners to vote in favor of the ordinance as amended and that EDASC favored as testified to the Planning Commission.

Rich Royston, 203 Stanford Drive, Mount Vernon, said he's not a farmer but wishes he was. His great-grandparents were farmers on both sides as well as siblings so he has a keen interest in it. Farmers need to do all they can to sustain themselves. He said food processing doesn't belong in industrial or urban areas due to contaminants. There are over 7,000 people in Skagit County that derive their income from agriculture and it generates over 225 million dollars for our economy. He also urged the Board to adopt the ordinance.

Ann Anderson, an employee of Cascade Ag said the ordinance that was passed previously was coined the "Cascade Ag Ordinance". She said if the old code had been clear then we wouldn't be here today. She asked the Commissioners to continue to support the County's comprehensive plan and adopt the ordinance.

Janet McCrae also encouraged the Commissioners to adopt the ordinance as amended and said that value added on the farm is one of the things that simply must be done. She would like to see everything on the shelves in the grocery stores come from Skagit County and by passing this ordinance, it is one of the things that will help put it there.

John Roozen, 12362 Avon-Allen Road, Burlington, also asked the Board to approve the interim ordinance as amended by the Ag Advisory Board.

Commissioner Anderson remarked that one point that struck home with him is that a lot of lands are rural resource lands that were once family farms. The bulk of the facilities will be located where they were located before and with value added. He said what we are trying to do is preserve tradition and he's excited for the farmers.

Commissioner Munks said there are a lot of people that have a vision of what Skagit County is – past, present and future. Once we had agriculture, logging, mining and fishing. Agriculture is the only thing left. Some industries come and go but Ag is our mainstay, always has been and always will be. The key is to help the farmers, as without them, farmland is a wasteland. We need producers and processors to make the land viable. It is critical to look at changing with the times or the times will change us. The only way to change is to be financially viable and that must happen within the farm community itself. There

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were once a lot of processors, but that has changed. He said the Board has the opportunity to save the farmers and that is the key.

Chairman Dahlstedt stated that a significant amount of revenue is generated by the Ag community. A lot of facilities have been built with much success. There are concerns that are legitimate and clarification is need as to what can be done in the future. Cooperation and communication must be accomplished in order to make agriculture viable in our community. He said he appreciates all of the effort put into this ordinance by the Planning Department and the Ag Advisory Committee.

There being no further public testimony forthcoming, Commissioner Anderson motioned to close the public hearing, which was seconded by Commissioner Munks. The public hearing was closed.

Commissioner Anderson made a motion to render their decision on this matter on Tuesday, June 10, 2003 at 10:00 a.m. Commissioner Munks seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

ADJOURNMENT.

Commissioner Anderson made a motion to adjourn the proceedings. Commissioner Munks seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

**BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
SKAGIT COUNTY, WASHINGTON**

Kenneth A. Dahlstedt, Chairman

Ted W. Anderson, Commissioner

Don Munks, Commissioner

ATTEST:

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