

**RECORD OF THE PROCEEDINGS  
SKAGIT COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 14, 2006**

- \*T 8:00 a.m. – 9:00 a.m. Presentation – Skagit County Employee Budget Advisory Committee
- \*T 9:00 a.m. – 9:45 a.m. Presentation – Washington State Department of Transportation
- \*T 10:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. Planning & Development Services – Gary Christensen, Director
1. Set Date and Time – Public Meeting for Final Plat Approval for the Plat of Buchanan Acres (PL05-0014) Submitted by Geoff and Suzanne DeVries
  2. Set Date and Time for Board of County Commissioners' Consideration of the Planning Commission's Recorded Motion on the WJY Associates Compliance Proposal
  3. Request for Board Approval to Install a Private Grinder Pump Station and Connect to Sewer Force Main – Samish Water System
  4. Status Report on 2005 Growth Management Act (GMA) Update
  5. Review and Possible Action on an Adopting Ordinance for the Bayview Ridge Subarea Plan and Development Regulations
  6. Discussion – South Fidalgo Subarea Planning Process
  7. Discussion on the Progress on the 2006 Critical Areas Ordinance Update
  8. Miscellaneous

The Skagit County Commissioners met in regular session on Tuesday, November 14, 2006, with Commissioners Kenneth A. Dahlstedt and Don Munks present. Commissioner Ted W. Anderson's absence was excused.

**PRESENTATION – SKAGIT COUNTY EMPLOYEE BUDGET ADVISORY COMMITTEE.**

The 14-member Employee Budget Advisory Committee met weekly from August to October. The Committee's desired outcomes for their work were specific recommendations and strategies for improving the County's bottom line, especially in the General Fund. Their recommendations include strategies for generating income and reducing expenses.

The members discussed and deliberated the variety of issues that were posted on the County's web-based Budget Discussion Forum, as well as issues Committee members brought to the table. Kay Haaland, Washington State University Extension, facilitated the meetings, served as issue-organizer and recorder.

Committee members learned that several issues mentioned on the web site were already being addressed by various County entities.

Cori Russell, Records Management, reported on the following:

**Reducing Expenses in County Government**

Issue 1: Department heads and others occasionally request vehicles and other acquisitions that may not be the most cost effective purchase for the intended use.

Recommendation: Make sure what is purchased actually meets the needs of the department instead of the wants of a department head or elected official.

Issue 2: The County is exceeding some safety-related standards required by the Washington Administrative Code (WAC), and perhaps the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA). This increases expenses for supplies and equipment.

Recommendation: Limit purchase of first-aid supplies and other health-related items to those things required by OSHA and the WAC.

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Issue 3: Overtime expenses cost the County a substantial amount of money.

Recommendation: To avoid overtime, increase the use of flex-time within departments.

Carly Ruacho, Planning & Development Services, reported on the following:

**Income Generation and Cost Recovery**

Issue 1: Skagit County government has limited cost recovery systems in place.

Recommendation: Identify and set fee schedules for services and/or supplies to ensure the fee schedules stay current with actual expenses so costs can be recovered when appropriate.

Issue 2: Open Space tax benefit programs.

Recommendation: Identify potential violators of the "current use" tax benefit programs. Enforce regulations as necessary for compliance - Open Space-Timber; Open Space-Farm & Ag; Open Space-Open Space.

Issue 3: Collection of liens and associated fees on code enforcement cases.

Recommendation: Collect liens and fees now authorized by code.

Jeffery Marks, Assessor's Office, reported on the following:

**Personnel and Staffing Issues**

Issue/Concern 1: Can the County departments and units re-organize to become more cost effective and efficient while meeting the needs of the public?

Discussion: The Committee recommends reviewing the needs for unit managers across departments; current staffing levels (may need fewer staff in one area and an increase in another); the salary structures, particularly for management employees; and consolidation of some functions.

Issue/Concern 2: Alternative work schedules have the potential for costs savings and increasing employee moral.

Discussion: Alternative work schedules should be considered a viable option for some staff and departments. There is a potential for more sharing of office space and other resources, plus more time for contact with the public.

Issue/Concern 3: Consider offering employees 2-3 days of non-paid personal leave per year that does not impact their current annual leave or sick leave.

Discussion: This has potential as an easy salary saving strategy for departments, which have seasonal quiet times. Approval for non-paid personal leave would be at the discretion of the department head.

Issue/Concern 4: The current 180-day hiring freeze policy.

Discussion: The Committee suggests reviewing the "hiring freeze" policy to determine if it is saving money overall and accomplishing what was intended. This would include considering the indirect costs and impacts of the open positions. It is understood the hiring freeze policy allows department heads to ask to fill a position more quickly than 180 days when there is a significant negative impact on the department's functionality.

Issue/Concern 5: Avoid the use of temporary workers for long-term needs.

Discussion: Compared to regular employees, temporary workers can result in significant indirect costs (loss of efficiency and functionality). Consider filling the position or find an alternative means to get the work done (e.g. cross-training, job sharing).

Issue/Concern 6: Replace or enhance current staff with regular employees vs. hiring outside contractors.

Discussion: There are times when it is appropriate to hire temporary expertise to complete a task. However, because this practice is potentially costly compared to utilizing permanent staff, the Committee recommends re-organizing, if necessary, to use permanent staff to handle more of the currently

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contracted jobs. This does not mean adding more responsibilities onto an already full workload. However, expertise is available among the departments, which could be shared.

Issue/Concern 7: The County must match its level of service to the employees' hours available to work. Can some non-mandated services be eliminated?

Discussion: Many employees feel they cannot continue to do more with less. Productivity decreases as the work load increases beyond what is considered normal.

Many more issues were discussed, but not acted upon. Given that many employees seem unaware of these discussions, the Committee recommends that the County distribute this information to the employees so they know these issues are being addressed.

The report will be posted on the County's web site, in addition to being emailed to everyone.

**PRESENTATION – WASHINGTON STATE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION.**

Todd Carlson, Planning and Engineering Services Manager, and Dina Swires, Traffic Engineer, both from the Washington State Department of Transportation, provided a PowerPoint presentation on Traffic Mitigation for State Route 538/State Route 9 and a Freeway Master Plan for Interstate 5 – Conway to Cook Road.

**PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT SERVICES – GARY CHRISTENSEN, DIRECTOR**

**1. Set Date and Time – Public Meeting for Final Plat Approval for the Plat of Buchanan Acres (PL05-0014) Submitted by Geoff and Suzanne DeVries.**

Commissioner Munks motioned to set Monday, November 20, 2006, at 9:45 a.m. for final plat approval of the Plat of Buchanan Acres (PL05-0014) submitted by Geoff and Suzanne DeVries. Chairman Dahlstedt seconded and the motion carried.

**2. Set Date and Time for Board of County Commissioners' Consideration of the Planning Commission's Recorded Motion on the WJY Associates Compliance Proposal.**

Commissioner Munks motioned to consider the Planning Commission's recorded motion on the WJY Associates compliance proposal on Tuesday, November 28, 2006, at 10:00 a.m. The motion was seconded by Chairman Dahlstedt and passed.

**3. Request for Board Approval to Install a Private Grinder Pump Station and Connect to Sewer Force Main – Samish Water System.**

Following a short discussion regarding what is perceived to be an antiquated interlocal agreement with Whatcom Water District #12, Commissioner Munks motioned to approve a request to install a private grinder pump station and connect to sewer force main located on the east side of Old Highway 99 North Road. Chairman Dahlstedt seconded the motion, which passed.

**4. Status Report on 2005 Growth Management Act (UGA) Update.**

Senior Planner Kirk Johnson gave a status report on the 2005 GMA Update process. He said the Planning Commission is wrapping up its deliberations on the GMA Update policy and code matters and will begin map deliberations, which should be completed by the end of the year.

Planning and Development Services would then reconvene with the Planning Commission in January for review of a drafted recorded motion reflecting all their work on the 2005 GMA Update. The Department anticipates presenting the Planning Commission's final recorded motion to the Commissioners for consideration in late January or early February, 2007.

Director Gary Christensen said the Commissioners will be asked to approve a resolution in December acknowledging that the 2005 GMA Update hasn't been completed, but the Department is making progress.

**5. Review and Possible Action on an Adopting Ordinance for the Bayview Ridge Subarea Plan and Development Regulations.**

Mr. Christensen reported that on July 11, 2006, the Department presented the Commissioners the Planning Commission's recommendations on the proposed Bayview Ridge Subarea Plan and Development Regulations. A draft ordinance has been prepared and should the Board choose to adopt it, the Bayview Ridge Subarea Plan and Development Regulations would become effective 30 days from the adoption and signature date. This would allow sufficient time for maps and development regulations to be codified and other implementing measures to be put into practice.

Mr. Christensen noted that Public Works will release the draft Bayview Ridge Stormwater Management Plan the first part of December. Therefore, the Department suggests delaying action on the ordinance today.

**6. Discussion – South Fidalgo Subarea Planning Process.**

Mr. Christensen said in response to numerous community questions regarding the planning process for the South Fidalgo Subarea, a letter has been written to the citizens of Fidalgo Island. Mr. Christensen proceeded to read the letter to the Commissioners.

Commissioner Munks said a lot of work was accomplished by the Citizen's Advisory Committee and the Technical Advisory Committee; however, the debate continues over the size of zoning. It is important to start the process again and engage the Fidalgo Island citizens in talking about the many issues that remain.

Both committees have a real challenge ahead to finalize what they are doing and arrive at a point where a recommendation is brought forward to Planning and Development Services and the Planning Commission. Commissioner Munks said he is looking forward to that happening.

Chairman Dahlstedt stated the importance of engaging the citizens so their voices can be heard.

A motion was made by Commissioner Munks to approve sending the letter to the citizens of Fidalgo Island. Chairman Dahlstedt seconded the motion, which carried.

Mr. Christensen noted that the letter will be posted on both web sites and a direct mailing would be sent to various interest groups.

A community meeting regarding the South Fidalgo planning process will take place on the November 29, 2006 at the Rosario Center.

**7. Discussion on the Progress on the 2006 Critical Areas Ordinance Update.**

Ann Bylin explained that Planning and Development Services is in the final adoption steps of the 2006 Critical Areas Ordinance (CAO) Update. The state mandated adoption deadline of December 1, 2006, will not be met. Due to the complexity and public interest in the CAO Update, it seems appropriate to wait until after the holidays to allow for as much public input as possible.

Ms. Bylin proceeded to review the proposed updated CAO adoption schedule. Planning and Development Services will provide the Commissioners with a resolution outlining the work done to date towards amending the CAO and the anticipated timeline for adoption.

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Mr. Christensen stressed the importance of involving the public in a deliberative process. Mailings to all post office boxes in the County will be sent regarding open houses and public hearings.

**8. Miscellaneous.**

There were no miscellaneous items to report on.

**ADJOURNMENT.**

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

**BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
SKAGIT COUNTY, WASHINGTON**

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Kenneth A. Dahlstedt, Chairman

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Ted W. Anderson, Commissioner

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Don Munks, Commissioner

ATTEST:

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