

**RECORD OF THE PROCEEDINGS  
SKAGIT COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
TUESDAY, JULY 27, 2010**

The Skagit County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on Tuesday, July 27, 2010, with Commissioners Sharon D. Dillon, Ron Wesen, and Kenneth A. Dahlstedt present.

I. CALL TO ORDER:

Chair Dillon called the proceedings to order at 8:02 a.m.

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

Chair Dillon led the gallery in the salute to the flag.

III. AGENDA:

a) 8:00 a.m. - 9:00 a.m. Public Works- Thomas G. Ballard, Interim Director:

1. Discussion/Possible Action: Resolution Providing Notice of Road Closure on Cook Road No. 63000, for the Purpose of Replacing the Rail Crossing

Tom Ballard suggested that this item be postponed for one week so that Mr. Robert Owen from Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) Railroad could be present to brief the Board on work coming due at the railroad crossing.

Mr. McGaughey made the Commissioners aware that BNSF Railroad will be closing the railroad crossing on Cook Road from August 17<sup>th</sup> through August 19<sup>th</sup> in order to repair the railroad tracks. This is a busy intersection and is in need of repair. Mr. McGaughey understands that BNSF Railroad will be coordinating the Washington State Department of Transportation and Emergency Services for a detour around this area.

2. Discussion: South Fidalgo Island Stormwater Management Plan

Kara Symonds, Watershed Planner, was present to discuss the South Fidalgo Island Stormwater Management Plan which the local community, and hired consultant, helped put together. The area which the plan covers is south of Anacortes and north of Deception Pass State Park. It was funded by the drainage utility and addresses drainage deficiencies and future growth.

Ms. Symonds reported that the consultant analyzed current codes, rules, and ordinances and reviewed existing documents regarding the current conditions and drainage concerns in the area. Geotechnical analysis and hydrologic modeling was also performed and worked into the final plan. Recommendations were given regarding future low-impact development, drainage easements, public education, and steep slope management.

Multiple projects were identified and each were plugged into a six-year work plan and ranked. Projects should begin next year. Workshops will be offered

for landowners regarding landslides. Ms. Symonds informed the Board that the plan is available online at the Public Works webpage under hot topics. The Commissioners thanked everyone for the excellent job and commented on the plan in relation to future growth.

3. Discussion/Possible Action: Resolution Authorizing the Dissolution of the Skagit County Drainage Utility Commission

Dan Berentson, Natural Resources Division Manager, and Jan Flagan, Assistant Section Manager of Surface Water Management, were present to discuss the resolution authorizing the dissolution of the Skagit County Drainage Utility Commission.

Ms. Flagan informed the Board that the Commission was established in January of 1995 and charged with certain goals to accomplish. She reported that according to the resolution which appointed the Commission each goal has been accomplished, either by the Commission or Public Works. The Commission has been inactive since 1998. The Drainage Utility will continue to address drainage problems. Mr. Berentson informed the Board of the steps Public Works takes when a call is received regarding a drainage concern or compliant. Drainage projects are posted online monthly. The Commissioners appreciated Public Works partnering with the Skagit County Drainage Utility Commission in order to complete the tasks set out by the resolution and they agreed that since the tasks have been completed and Commission inactive, it should be dissolved.

A motion was made by Commissioner Dahlstedt to approve the Resolution authorizing the dissolution of the Skagit County Drainage Utility Commission. (**Resolution No. R20100245**) Commissioner Wesen seconded the motion. The vote passed unanimously.

4. Miscellaneous

Mr. Ballard reported that Public Works had no miscellaneous items to discuss.

Commissioner Wesen asked how the road overlay projects were going.

Mr. McGaughey stated that chip sealing was being performed county wide.

Chair Dillon recessed the proceedings at 8:45 a.m.

- b) 9:00 a.m. - 10:00 a.m. Planning and Development Services - Gary Christensen - Director:

1. **Discussion: 2010 Work Plan Review**

Chair Dillon reconvened the proceedings at 9:01 a.m.

The department's 2010 work program was discussed, including some of the projects. The department has been focusing on a few larger projects instead of multiple smaller ones. Balance must be attained due to the county's limited resources. Chair Dillon pointed out that many of the projects listed on the 2010 work program are actually multiple year projects.

2. **Discussion: Development Activity Trends, Project Timelines and Current Level of Service Standards**

Deputy Director, Bill Dowe, briefed the Board on the status of the building permits and development applications issued by the county and compared them to years past.

Tim DeVries, Building Official, wanted to be sure that the Board and public were aware that Planning and Development Hours are from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. and from 1:00 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. Many people they service drop in for help, some call ahead and make appointments. If a certain person in the department is unavailable, they do their best to have another person from the same department present to help. Mr. DeVries discussed the life cycle of an application for a project. He stated that other county departments are involved as well including the Health Department, Geographical Information Services, Department of Emergency Management, and the Auditor's Office.

Commissioner Wesen understood that Planning and Development Services staff is down by one-third and wondered who did what.

Mr. DeVries stated that most employees work in several areas now and that they do not have any extra employees available to wait to help people who drop in to see someone. The average wait time is 15 to 20 minutes. Appointments can always be made in order to reduce wait times.

3. **Miscellaneous**

Gary Christiansen informed the Board that there was one miscellaneous item to discuss. Skagit County recently received the Washington State Governor's award for the county's open space plan. Many agencies and groups worked on this plan and a citizens advisory committee will be formed of nine individuals who represent the county geographically who would evaluate the county's current and future needs. Mr. Christiansen stated that he would like to put together a public service announcement to advertise that applications will be accepted for this committee. Chair Dillon recessed the proceedings at 9:50 a.m.

- c) 10:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m. Presentation by the Skagit County Washington State University Extension Center: Economic Issues

Chair Dillon reconvened the proceedings at 10:03 a.m.

Ned Zaugg, Department Head of Washington State University (WSU) Cooperative Extension Center, discussed the positive impacts which the varied agricultural programs have in Skagit County and he wished to inform the Commissioners about the team that he works with and of their work through the WSU Skagit County Extension Center. Mr. Zaugg started by discussing the dairy industry in Skagit County. 736,426 pounds of milk are produced each day in the county. Milk prices were discussed as well as the perception of the industry by the media, the viability of the industry, and how to succeed in the market. Regulations, testing, the importance of food safety, the adoption of new technology and the importance of involved youth in the industry were also discussed.

Joan DeVries, Livestock Advisor, discussed their outreach in the county. She reported that often smaller farms are the worst polluters. Education is important in this arena and raising livestock costs a lot of money. A 12-week course regarding best management practices in livestock agriculture is offered through the center which focuses on everything one would need to know in order to succeed.

Doug Karr, Horticultural Pest Control Coordinator, said he works to control pests in Skagit County. He works with many entities. He discussed his background. His most important task is working with the public. Community outreach is key to successfully controlling pests in county agriculture. Mr. Karr reported that the county did a press release on the apple maggot season which led to an article in the Skagit Valley Herald, Argus, Master Gardener's newsletter and a radio interview. After the articles and interview, calls into the office increased regarding this problem and how to control it. Mr. Karr discussed many of the common pests and their lifecycles. Monitoring, identifying and responding rapidly to an infestation helps control the pest population.

Don McMoran, Agriculture and Natural Resources Extension Educator, has been looking into different irrigation systems. Skagit County uses the Big Gun system to water fields. Mr. McMoran studied other irrigation systems including boom systems and drip irrigation systems. He concluded that both systems were more efficient than the Big Gun system (both use less fuel and water) and that the drip irrigation system would give farmers an efficient way to water their crops, use less water, and have less conflict with other entities who are concerned about water usage. There are two problems Skagit County would need to solve before farmers would implement drip irrigation systems. Mr. McMoran stated that Skagit County has the highest iron bacteria counts in the nation. In order to be cost effective, ways to protect water piping and water tape would need to be looked into. The other issue to look into is the installation and removal of the irrigation systems from the field. Mr. McMoran has begun to experiment with the drip irrigation system in local fields in order to begin solving these problems. He is hoping to convert 1,000 acres of land from the Big Gun watering system to the drip irrigation system. Mr. McMoran briefly discussed the Young Farmer Group, and Viva Farms.

- d) 11:00 a.m. - 11:15 a.m. Recognition by U.S. Census Bureau for Skagit County's Contributions for the Successful 2010 Census

Chair Dillon reconvened the proceedings at 11:02 a.m.

Laverne Lamoureux, Partnership Specialist with the U.S. Census Bureau, discussed Skagit County's ranking among the other counties in Washington. She was pleased to see that Skagit County placed third in the rankings and she discussed the improvements of the cities. A letter and award were presented to the Commissioners for a job well done. Ms. Lamoureux complimented Mr. Holloran for his assistance and the workers who went door to door to complete the count. Ms. Lamoureux wanted everyone to know that if anyone thinks they were missed, they can still be counted, over the phone, through the end of July.

Chair Dillon recessed the proceedings at 11:09 a.m.

- e) 11:30 a.m. - 11:45 a.m. Public Comment Period

Chair Dillon reconvened the proceedings at 11:30 a.m.

David Wilder, President of People First, informed the Commissioners of the fundraising event that People First was having through the Applebee's Restaurant in Burlington. On August 25, 2010, Applebee's will accept fliers which would give People First 15% of the sales for each transaction. He also informed the Commissioners of the annual upcoming dances, the first of which will be in September. He also spoke of upcoming Tuesday game nights which would give people a chance to interact with each other as they play their favorite board game. For more information, people may call Mr. Wilder at 360-428-0140 or visit the website: [www.skagitpeopelfirst.org](http://www.skagitpeopelfirst.org).

Howard Gulley of 15815 Yokeko Drive in Anacortes discussed drainage on South Fidaglo Island and the importance of different entities working together on the problem including Skagit County (which includes Public Works and Planning and Development Services), the Department of Natural Resources, the Drainage Districts, and any others who should be part of the planning process.

A citizen calling himself Lazarus stated that he has been homeless for twenty years. Mr. Lazarus informed the Commissioners of a prescription which he has to fill, but is unable to due to the cost and current healthcare system. He spoke out against his oppression, of the system which he and others find themselves in, and of the fiscal irresponsibility of the cost to fill his prescription (\$300) as compared to the cost it may be if he were in jail (\$10,000).

#### IV. ADJOURNMENT:

Chair Dillon adjourned the proceedings at 11:46 a.m.

**BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
SKAGIT COUNTY, WASHINGTON**

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**Sharon D. Dillon, Chair**

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**Ron Wesen, Commissioner**

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**Kenneth A. Dahlstedt, Commissioner**

**ATTEST:**

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**Linda Hammons, Clerk of the Board  
Skagit County Board of Commissioners**