

**RECORD OF THE PROCEEDINGS  
SKAGIT COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
TUESDAY, MARCH 15, 2011**

The Skagit County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on Tuesday, March 15, 2011, with Commissioners Ron Wesen, Kenneth A. Dahlstedt, and Sharon D. Dillon present.

I. CALL TO ORDER:

Chairman Wesen called the proceedings to order at 8:30 a.m.

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

Chairman Wesen led the gallery in the salute to the flag.

III. AGENDA:

a) \*8:30 a.m. - 9:30 a.m. Planning and Development Services - Gary Christensen, Director:

1. Discussion - Shoreline Master Plan Update

Gary Christensen, Director, was present to provide an overview the agenda for Planning and Development Services. Mr. Christensen stated that the Skagit County Shoreline Management Master Program (SMP) was the recipient of a Department of Ecology grant to update the SMP. Mr. Christensen indicated that the County has contracted with The Watershed Company to assist with the update.

Betsy Stevenson, Senior Planner, introduced Amy Summe of The Watershed Company. Ms. Stevenson went on to provide a PowerPoint presentation. She discussed the planning process and tasks that were associated with the SMP update, which she indicated consisted of six phases. Ms. Stevenson stated that these phases would be completed in approximately three years.

Ms. Summe described the required steps to complete the SMP. She explained that throughout the process, the public would be involved. She said that this update was a more comprehensive update than had been previously done. She went on to say that the update would include environmental and ecological designations based on the criteria set forth in the guidelines, and existing and planned land use. She explained that the concept of no net loss meant that over time, as development occurred, environmental functions would remain the same as when the SMP came into effect.

Ms. Stevenson said that the County would be engaging interested and affected parties who represent diverse perspectives including timber, agriculture, business, fish, wildlife, and recreation. Ms. Stevenson explained that the County was seeking letters of interest from individuals to serve on an advisory committee to guide development of the Skagit County SMP.

Ms. Stevenson stated that citizens interested in serving on the advisory

committee are encouraged to apply by submitting a letter of interest. She said that letters of interest are due by 4:30 p.m. on Thursday, March 31, 2011, and should be submitted to Linda Hammons, Clerk of the Board, 1800 Continental Place, Mount Vernon, WA 98273, or [lindah@co.skagit.wa.us](mailto:lindah@co.skagit.wa.us). She went on to say that application material and other information related to the County's SMP Update process would be available on the County's website at [www.skagitcounty.net/SMP](http://www.skagitcounty.net/SMP).

Ms. Stevenson indicated that the Board of County Commissioners would select 11 to 15 individuals to be seated on the advisory committee. She said that the advisory committee would be expected to be seated by May of 2011.

Commissioner Dahlstedt commented on the term of no net loss, and Shoreline Management Act versus the Growth Management Act (GMA), and that restoration was not being required in the GMA.

The Commissioners provided their approval to move forward with the application process for the advisory committee.

2. Miscellaneous

There were no miscellaneous items for Planning and Development Services to discuss.

Chairman Wesen recessed the proceedings at 9:32 a.m.

b) 10:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m. Public Works - Henry Hash, Director:

1. Public Hearing - Consider Testimony Regarding Establishment of the 2011 Guemes Island Ferry Fare Structure and Rescinding Resolution No. R20080577

Chairman Wesen reconvened the proceedings at 10:01 a.m.

Henry Hash, Director, introduced members of the Guemes Island Ferry Committee and Public Works staff. Mr. Hash stated that Public Works and the Guemes Ferry Committee were jointly recommending a fare increase for 2011. Mr. Hash thanked the Committee for their hard work and for being flexible.

Glen Veal, Chairman of Guemes Island Ferry Committee, thanked the Commissioners for their support of the public process. He stated that they were able to come to an agreement regarding the fare structure and indicated that he supported the process.

Rachel Beck, Guemes Island Ferry Manager, thanked Public Works staff for their hard work. Ms. Beck provided a brief background of the process involved in drafting the proposed rate increase. She went on to say that Public Works saw a need to increase fares because the current fare schedule, as established by Resolution No. R20080477, no longer presented a fare structure that was capable of meeting the fare revenue target as set forth in Resolution No. R20100050.

Ms. Beck stated that the proposed changes to the Guemes Island Ferry fare structure would produce a fare schedule that was capable of meeting the revenue target: it would change the language of "winter" and "summer" fares to "non-peak" and "peak" fares; increase the vehicle (under 20') and driver fares by \$1.00 per category; increase motorcycle fares by \$1.00 per category; increase the passenger and passenger with bicycle fares by \$0.50 per category; increase the oversize vehicle fares by \$1.00 per category; establish fares for discounted frequent user media accordingly; adjust the summer, or "peak" rate to reflect a \$0.50 increase in senior/disabled/youth passenger categories, a \$1.00 increase in adult passenger categories, a \$2.00 increase in vehicle (under 20') and driver categories, and a 25% increase rounded to the nearest dollar, for oversize vehicles per 5' category; eliminate the 10-trip and 23-trip discounted frequent user media, and replace with 20-Trip discounted punch cards for car and driver and motorcycle categories; set expiration dates for frequent user media; rescind Resolution No. R20080477, and establish a new Guemes Island ferry fare structure.

Chairman Wesen opened the public hearing at 10:20 a.m.

Steve Orsini of 4971 Guemes Island Road in Anacortes stated he was opposed to a fare increase. Mr. Orsini stated that there was not enough efficiency in the Guemes Island ferry operations and that he thought operating costs could be further reduced. He stated that he was opposed to the deficit reimbursement model and would like to return to the "bridge model". Mr. Orsini stated that there are severe issues related to wages and benefits. He went on to stress the importance of the SKAT bus meeting the passengers as they disembark from the ferry.

Frank Mudge of 24427 Rolling Ridge Drive in Sedro-Woolley and 4869 Guemes Island Road addressed consideration of costs. Mr. Mudge spoke about the issues of frequent users; the convenience of 10-punch cards; and senior discounts.

Seeing no further public testimony forthcoming, Commissioner Dillon motioned to close the public hearing at 10:37 a.m. Commissioner Dahlstedt seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner Dillon thanked the Guemes Island Ferry Committee for working with staff to come to a compromise.

Commissioner Dahlstedt stated that the County was committed to doing everything it could to run a good ferry system at a fair price.

The Commissioners will render a decision on this matter on Tuesday, March 22, 2011.

Chairman Wesen adjourned the proceedings at 10:45 a.m.

c) 11:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m. Community Services - Jennifer Kingsley, Director:

1. Presentation - County Youth on Substance Abuse

Chairman Wesen reconvened the proceedings at 11:04 a.m.

Lisa Mitchell of United General Hospital introduced Maddy Loy, Riley Self, and Elizabeth Gaver from Mount Vernon High School. The students spoke about the "Let's Draw the Line... between youth and alcohol" Campaign, which was being launched by the Washington State Coalition to Reduce Underage Drinking. The students presented the Commissioners with Commitment Cards to sign.

The Commissioners thanked the students for the presentation.

Chairman Wesen recessed the proceedings at 11:12 a.m.

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

Chairman Wesen reconvened the proceedings at 11:30 a.m.

Carol Ehlers of West Fidalgo Island, displayed a road map being used by the federal government, which depicted Fidalgo Island. Ms. Ehlers stated that the map was out of date. She addressed the risks in using out of date maps for planning purposes. She went on to speak about an April 5, 2011, hearing regarding solar and wind power, and thanked SKAT for providing Dial-A-Ride service in Anacortes.

Chairman Wesen closed the public comment period at 11:42 a.m.

- e) 11:45 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. Proclamation: March 13, through March 19, 2011 - National Safe Place Week in Skagit County

Chairman Wesen reconvened the proceedings at 11:45 a.m.

Felicia Rodman, Outreach Coordinator, and Justin Krupa, Director of Oasis Teen Shelter were present to discuss the Safe Place project in Skagit County.

Commissioner Dahlstedt read a proclamation declaring March 13, through March 19, 2011, as National Safe Place Week in Skagit County.

Chairman Wesen recessed the proceedings at 12:00 p.m.

- f) 3:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m. Planning and Development Services - Gary Christensen, Director:

1. Presentation: Pipeline Safety

Commissioner Dahlstedt reconvened the proceedings at 3:06 p.m.

Mr. Christensen was present to introduce the Pipeline Safety Project. He stated that the County was the recipient of an almost \$50,000 grant to develop land use standards and procedures pertaining to transmission pipeline safety from the U.S. Department of Transportation Pipeline Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA). Mr. Christensen acknowledged the efforts of Carly Ruacho, Senior Project Manager; and Michele Szafran, Associate Planner.

Ms. Ruacho, Senior Planner, discussed the anticipated results from the pipeline safety project. She stated that the results would include: notification to all landowners within close proximity of pipelines; county-wide parcel level mapping

of existing pipelines; consultation forms to facilitate communication between landowners and pipeline operations regarding proposed development; and development land use regulations pertaining to pipeline safety.

Ms. Ruacho, Senior Ruacho, went on to provide a PowerPoint presentation. She stated that Skagit County has four major oil or gas transmission pipelines. She said that the scope of the project would include regulation development, permit processing modifications, creation of mapping products (including web-based applications), creation and dissemination of informational materials and implementing forms, as well as staff and interested party training upon adoption of new regulations.

Ms. Ruacho went on to state that Skagit County has had no pipeline failures in the past decade according to the Pipeline Safety Trust incident data. She said that as Skagit County's population grows, identifying transmission pipelines, educating the development community and citizens as well as county and elected/appointed officials, and properly planning around this critical infrastructure would be important.

Ms. Ruacho introduced Carl Weimer, Executive Director of Pipeline Safety Trust; and Jim Doherty, Legal Consultant with Municipal Research Service Center (MRSC). Mr. Weimer stated that he had been traveling the state with Mr. Doherty to inform other jurisdictions about pipeline safety. He went on to explain the consequences of spills from crude oil pipelines and liquid gas pipelines to local government, businesses and the environment.

Mr. Doherty said The Department of Transportation (DOT) Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA) had launched the Pipeline Informed Planning Alliance (PIPA) to develop land use guidance for activities on and near pipeline rights-of-way (ROW). Mr. Doherty stressed the importance of local government jurisdictions notifying the pipeline operator before any permits were issued. He also urged anyone involved in a building project to contact the federally-mandated national "Call Before You Dig" number, 811. He said that this system was created to help protect the public from unintentionally hitting underground utility lines while working on digging projects.

#### IV. ADJOURNMENT:

Chairman Wesen adjourned the proceedings at 4:00 p.m.

**BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
SKAGIT COUNTY, WASHINGTON**

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Ron Wesen, Chairman

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Kenneth A. Dahlstedt, Commissioner

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**Sharon D. Dillon, Commissioner**

**ATTEST:**

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**Linda Hammons, Clerk of the Board**