

**RECORD OF THE PROCEEDINGS
SKAGIT COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 17, 2013**

The Skagit County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on Tuesday, December 17, 2013, with Chair Sharon D. Dillon, Commissioner Ron Wesen, and Commissioner Kenneth A. Dahlstedt present.

I. CALL TO ORDER:

Chair Dillon called the proceedings to order at 8:30 a.m.

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

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

III. AGENDA:

a) *7:30 a.m. Skagit Conservation District - Partnership Meeting (Skagit Valley College, Knutzen Cardinal Center, 2405 East College Way, Mount Vernon)

b) 8:30 a.m. - 9:00 a.m. Public Works - Dan Berentson, Interim Director:

Chair Dillon introduced Interim Director Dan Berentson who introduced Surface Water Section Manager Jan Flagan.

1. Public Hearing/Possible Action: To Consider Testimony Regarding an Ordinance Amending Skagit County Code Chapter 12.19, Drainage Utility

Ms. Flagan said that Skagit County Code, Chapter 12.19 had not been updated in 15 years and that they had been reviewing the code with staff from the Treasurer and Assessor's Offices in order to determine a fair way to tax impervious surfaces.

Ms. Flagan said that Drainage Utility Assessments established on impervious areas were calculated differently by the type of zone: commercial, residential, agricultural, etc. She said that Public Works was recommending that the rate be updated to a flat charge per parcel according to land use classifications. In addition, they were suggesting to exempt timberland which would be consistent with current state laws. Ms. Flagan said that the code also needed to be updated to reflect changes to state laws made in 1994. Mr. Berentson also said that drainage districts would be exempt from the drainage utility assessments.

Chair Dillon opened the public hearing at 8:36 a.m.

Steven Dahl was present to represent Skagit Aggregates dba Day Creek Sand and Gravel and he was present to inform the Commissioners that they supported the proposed changes.

Bob Linn of Sedro-Woolley was present to discuss the proposed update and he thanked Skagit County for addressing the difficult issue. He shared that he was a farmer, Certified Public Accountant, and had a graduate in the economics of taxation. He informed the Commissioners that there were two tenants of taxation to follow: 1. that taxes collected had to relate to their use, and 2. that taxes collected had to be easily administered. He said that the current system failed those two tenants of taxation. He said the proposed update was a better solution. Mr. Linn also pointed out that farmland did not add to drainage problems because it absorbed water. He ended by suggesting that farmland which had no structures on it be taxed the same as undeveloped land.

Seeing no further public testimony forthcoming, Commissioner Wesen made a motion to close the public hearing at 8:43 a.m. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Dahlstedt. The motion passed unanimously.

A motion was made by Commissioner Dahlstedt to approve approve the Ordinance to amending Skagit County Code 12.19 regarding Drainage Utility Assessments, and remove an incorrect reference to RCW 84.28. **(Ordinance No. O20130007)**
Commissioner Wesen seconded the motion.

The vote passed unanimously.

The Commissioners appreciated the code being updated in order to be fair and equitable.

2. Miscellaneous

Public Works did not have any miscellaneous items to discuss.
Chair Dillon recessed the proceedings at 8:50 a.m.

c) 9:00 a.m. - 10:00 a.m. Public Works - Dan Berentson, Interim Director:

Chair Dillon reconvened the proceedings at 9:00 a.m. and introduced Interim Director Dan Berentson. Mr. Berentson introduced Ferry Operations Division Manager Rachel Rowe.

1. Presentation: 2013 Draft Guemes Island Ferry Operations Status Report

Ms. Rowe presented the draft Operations Status Report with the Commissioners.
<ftp://ftp.skagitcounty.net/countycommissioners/documents/agendapackets/12172013>
The annual report was compiled by staff and helped shaped by the citizen ferry committee. She said that the report had been presented to the community during a community forum and time which provided an opportunity for people to provide comments. Ms. Rowe said that once Public Works met with the ferry committee after the public comment period ended, they expected to finalize the report in February 2014. The Commissioners thanked Ms. Rowe and the volunteers on the ferry committee.

2. Presentation: Use of Visualization Software in the Design of Roadway and Other Civil Engineering Projects

County Engineer Paul Randall-Grutter introduced additional engineering staff and then provided the Commissioners with a presentation that had also been presented at a conference earlier in the year. The project was a visualization of the Francis Road Project. They discussed the difficulties with planning the project and how the software they used helped accelerate the design process.

3. Miscellaneous

Public Works did not have any miscellaneous items to discuss.
Chair Dillon recessed the proceedings 9:41 a.m.

d) 10:00 a.m. - 10:30 a.m. Planning and Development Services - Dale Pernula, Director:

Chair Dillon reconvened the proceedings at 10:03 a.m. and introduced Planning and Development Director Dale Pernula.

1. Discussion/Work Session: 2016 Skagit County Comprehensive Plan Update

Mr. Pernula and Senior Planner Kirk Johnson were present to discuss the initial plans in place to perform the 2016 Comprehensive Plan Update. Per state statute, Skagit County was required to complete the update by June 30, 2016 to update development regulations.

Mr. Johnson provided a checklist provided by the Washington State Department of Commerce for municipalities to use in order to ensure compliance with statues and to make sure information is up to date. Mr. Johnson discussed Planning and Development's goals, process, and plans to coordinate with the cities and Skagit Council of Governments.

The Commissioners agreed to keep the focus narrow and to work with the Planning Commission on the update.

Chair Dillon recessed the proceedings at 10:27 a.m.

2. Miscellaneous

Chair Dillon reconvened the proceedings at 10:31 a.m. and announced that a press release had been approved to hear an update from the Economic Development Association of Skagit County (EDASC). The meeting had been scheduled for 10:30 a.m. on December 17, 2013. Chair Dillon introduced EDASC Director Don Wick.

Also present from EDASC was Terica Taylor, and from the Port of Anacortes, Bob Hyde.

Mr. Wick thanked the Commissioners for supporting economic creation and he went on to provide information to the Commissioners about how the year 2013 was a year of growth in jobs and increased wages in Skagit County. He briefed the Commissioners on the new businesses that had located to Skagit County and the types of other services EDASC provided to small and large businesses.

The Commissioners discussed their support of EDASC and for creating a business friendly climate in Skagit County to provide family wage jobs. They thanked EDASC for their work to promote business in Skagit County.

Chair Dillon recessed the proceedings at 11:01 a.m.

e) 11:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m. Port of Anacortes: Annual Update

Chair Dillon reconvened the proceedings at 11:02 a.m. and introduced Port of Anacortes Director Bob Hyde.

Mr. Hyde thanked the Commissioners for their support and he briefed the Board on the festivals, events, tenants, and upcoming plans for the port.

The Commissioners commended the Port of Anacortes for creating a vibrant, community oriented destination.

Chair Dillon recessed the proceedings at 11:28 a.m.

f) 11:30 a.m. - 11:45 a.m. Board of County Commissioners:

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

1. Public Comment Period

Steve Rymer of Bow was present to share that his neighborhood was working on designating 4 nearby railroad crossings as quiet zones and he asked Skagit County to support them in their endeavor.

Mike Newman of Mount Vernon was present to share concerns he had with spending tax money on enhancing salmon habitat.

2. Miscellaneous Announcements

Chair Dillon recessed the proceedings at 11:38 a.m.

g) 1:30 p.m. - 2:30 p.m. Public Works - Dan Berentson, Interim Director:

Chair Dillon reconvened the proceedings at 1:30 p.m. and introduced Interim Public Works Director Dan Berentson.

1. Public Hearing/Possible Action: To Consider Testimony Regarding Revision of the Drainage Utility Rate Structure

Mr. Berentson said that they were present to discuss the proposed resolution authorizing the revision of the Drainage Utility Rate Structure.

Surface Water Section Manager Jan Flagan said that Public Works was recommending the approval of the resolution and she briefed the Commissioners on the assessment of storm water on the different types of parcels and she showed comparable rates throughout the State of Washington.

Chair Dillon opened the public hearing at 1:34 p.m.

Bob Linn of Sedro-Woolley was present to suggest that the title on the schedule be changed so that it would be clearer in the future: that one heading have developed agricultural land, and the other heading be undeveloped agricultural land and undeveloped land.

Oscar Lagerlund of Burlington, farmer and District 14 Drainage and Irrigation Commissioner, thanked the Commissioners for making the taxation schedule more equitable.

Seeing no further public testimony forthcoming, Commissioner Dahlstedt made a motion to close the public hearing at 1:40 p.m. Commissioner Wesen seconded the motion. The vote passed unanimously.

The Commissioners thanked Mr. Linn and Mr. Lagerlund for their comments.

A motion was made by Commissioner Wesen to approve the resolution establishing the new rate structure for Drainage Utility assessments that is more efficient and equitable. **(Resolution No. R20130396)** Commissioner Dahlstedt seconded the motion.

The vote passed unanimously.

Chair Dillon recessed the proceedings at 1:50 p.m.

2. Miscellaneous

h) 2:30 p.m. - 3:00 p.m. Public Works - Dan Berentson, Interim Director:

Chair Dillon reconvened the proceedings at 2:34 p.m.

1. Board Presentation of Certificate of Commendation to Patti J. Chambers

After Planning and Development Services Manager Gary Christensen, Interim Public Works Director Dan Berentson, County Administrator Tim Holloran, Superior Court Judge Mike Rickert, Program Administrator Bill Dowe, Watershed Planner Kara Symonds and the three Commissioners wished Patti Chambers well in her retirement, Commissioner Wesen read the Certificate of Commendation in recognition of dedicated public service rendered on behalf of the people, the community, and in the public interest, faithfully and unselfishly by Patti Chambers from December 13, 1993 to December 31, 2013.

IV. ADJOURNMENT:

Chair Dillon adjourned the proceedings at 2:51 p.m.

Sharon D. Dillon, Chair

Ron Wesen, Commissioner

Kenneth A. Dahlstedt, Commissioner

ATTEST:

Clerk of the Board