

11/1/83

Chairman Norris asked if it was possible to add those conditions that another cable company franchise was granted under before this franchise is approved? John Runsey suggested this public hearing be continued so he can get the Prosecutor's opinion.

Commissioner Manfield made a motion to continue the public hearing for two weeks, to Tuesday, November 15, 1983 at 9:00 a.m. or as soon thereafter as possible. Commissioner Rohrer seconded the motion. The motion was carried unanimously.

Discussion - Samish River YACC Project

Gene Sampley reported the board requested that Linda Arentzen of the Soil Conservation Service be invited to provide an update on the cleanup project on the Samish River.

Linda Arentzen reported. She provided an update on the cleanup and showed some slides of the areas that have been a part of the project. She said they are working closely with the Fisheries Department to maintain a good fish habitat on the Samish.

Oscar Graham, Crew Supervisor provided a further report on the work of the crew. He also stressed that the crew is putting out a lot of effort, explaining what work has been accomplished and how.

Linda Arentzen reported that on November 22nd the Conservation District is having a Conservation Corps presentation of some of the projects they have been involved in the county. It will begin at 10:00 a.m. at the Conservation Corps with lunch at the Midway House at noon. The board stated they would plan on attending this beginning at 12:00 noon that day.

Discussion - Gages Slough - Phase I

Gene Sampley reported, providing the status of the slough and the work done to date. He provided a map of the area.

In 1972 the cleaning of the slough was accomplished and it was the first effort for which there were any records accessible. In 1978 there was an attempt to form a zone that would address the slough's problems. That hearing met with considerable opposition from a county perspective due to a misunderstanding as to the scope of the project. Opposition was not from county government but from people attending the hearing. In 1982 a brief report was developed as to what it was felt the immediate needs might

Gene reviewed the report that was developed in 1982 with some of the suggestions, or alternatives, provided at that time. After putting together a proposal, which included the possibility of a pump station, the county was asked to meet with the city of Burlington for discussion. The city requested this meeting. As a result of this discussion the city suggested all work not be done now but be done in two phases.

In January or February of 1983 it was determined the city was pressed for funds. The proposal was modified at that time into two phases: channel cleaning and pipe replacement. The cleaning of the ditch and replacement of pipe on Pulver Road and in the field was Phase One. This work was accomplished. The Department of Transportation supplied one pipe as part of its contribution. Gene said that as far as he knows the slough is clean now except for vegetation that may have grown since the work was done.

Gene said there has been some discussion regarding the installation of a pump. He is concerned that some people feel that the county has not addressed the problem.

There have been difficulties for some time about the installation of a pump, but now the situation has changed. The 1982 County Report recommended a pump be installed.

After further discussion about the 1982 report Commissioner Norris said that recently the board has requested that Bob Schofield work in cooperation with Gene Sampley in conducting a study of the area to see if a management plan can be put together that would be acceptable and affordable. He asked Mr. Schofield if that had been initiated and if they were in the process of accomplishing the study?

Mr. Schofield said the first step of this study was to contact the Department of Ecology and get their opinion. This was done several weeks ago. They are presently investigating this. It was also suggested that they would participate financially in the study. Bob said that this is not actively being pursued until a recommendation from the Department of Ecology is received. He said to his knowledge there never was a comprehensive study of the Gages Slough performed.

Commissioner Mansfield said he would like to see if there were some differences of opinion as to "where we are". Chairman Norris said that basically, this matter was scheduled as a discussion item on the agenda and they weren't anticipating a large group discussion. He said it appears there may be some differences of opinion with Burlington because of a report in the Skagit Valley Herald on Friday.

Ray Henery of Burlington said they discussed this matter at a council meeting the previous night. He said their council is unanimous in the feeling they should do something there. He felt that the matter had been studied to death. He said there are two or three or four options and that they are anxious to get started with the option of putting a pump station at Gages Slough and Pulver Road. He also felt that it should be cleaned out in some places. He suggested putting a holding reservoir in and putting a pump in.

Chairman Norris said that this exact project was proposed a year ago and asked if the City Council of the City of Burlington had changed their minds about this.

Neil Morrison of the Burlington City Council said that when they were originally presented with the proposal quite a few members of the City Council went out and walked the area and also invited the commissioners to walk with them. He said that you could see all kinds of debris growing there. They wanted to first see if that could be cleaned out and then if there would be a need for a pump station. They felt that the level was caused by obstructions, so they agreed to that portion of the plan. He said that was a start and that they were not trying to block anything but trying to see if something could be done at a lower cost first.

Chairman Norris said they did present the overall project. The County Engineers at that time advised that was the only solution. He said that for the reasons Mr. Morrison has stated there was some hesitancy at approaching the overall project at that time. Chairman Norris again asked if the City of Burlington was ready to go forward with the project?

Mr. Henery said he thought they were. He will talk for the Council. They are willing and ready to go ahead with the pump station at Gages Slough and Pulver Road.

Chairman Norris said that the issues around this particular project have changed somewhat in the last year. They have made a conscious effort to keep uninvolved, at a distance so it doesn't appear that the board is meddling in the city's affairs. He asked if by participating in this project at this level are they committing to this level of participation from here on out? He said they are supportive of the

project to alleviate the problem that exists now. However, there are some plans they may not be able to handle if different plans come to fruition. u/h

Gene Sampley said that in the past the County has been bit by circumstances that come up because when they participated in some things they have then been obligated forever. An agreement should be worded carefully that the County would not be involved in all future activities. The design of the installation is such that it could accommodate growth.

Chairman Norris asked, since the study has been initiated, would it be in order to install this type of pump device prior to completion of the study? Gene Sampley said didn't think it would be something that would need to be undone as a result of the study.

Commissioner Mansfield expressed concern about the County's responsibility and what it is and moving ahead with the portion that can be done.

Commissioner Rohrer felt that this had been an on-going problem and needs to be addressed. He felt that there needed to be some discussion with all involved parties and some firm decisions made, then moving ahead.

Larry Kunzler felt that the pump station was premature until the study is completed. He felt it was too , premature to commit until the topographic study had been done.

In further discussion regarding the need for a pump and how soon, Gene Sampley indicated that a pump could not be put in until next spring when the high water is out of the way. Chairman Norris asked if the study would be completed at this time Bob Schofield said he did not think so. They would probably need a full rainfall year in order to obtain the data needed.

Mr. Herery asked if there was any guarantee that anything would get done by next spring. He said he thought that "Skagit County and Burlington could solve the problem without all this malarkey".

Commissioner Mansfield said he thinks it is the county's problem but, obviously, it is necessary to go through certain permits and process. It is still incumbent upon the county and Burlington to decide about doing it. This means starting the process now so time doesn't lag beyond that.

Linda Arentzen of the Soil Conservation District said that it is really nice to see the county and Burlington ready to work together on this project. She said she does feel that time is of the essence. The county and Burlington should proceed, with the study continuing on also. She said she does not feel that they should stop with the ideas for a pumping station just because the study is to be done.

Mr. Herery said the council is in 100% agreement that that is what they would like to do. Mr. Morris emphasized that when they have hearings in the city that over half of the people in attendance are from in the county.

Chairman Norris said that he would like some time to work with the Public Works Director on this and see what the time frame is. He said he doesn't think his opinion has changed over the last five years. Something has to be done to manage the level of slough. This should be coordinated now with the study being proposed. They should go ahead and initiate the process to put the pump in. However, at the same time he would insist that Skagit County in no way is obligated to this level of participation.

on any future activities. Mr. Henery asked if the study would bear out where any future responsibility would be? Chairman Norris said that it probably would but in the interests of the county's budget they are not committing to any future projects.

#### Discussion - Community D.W.I. Task Force Grant

John Rumsey reported. He said there is a large increase in the last year in involvement of drinking drivers in fatal accidents. He said this amounts to at least 57% to 62% of fatalities being caused by drunk drivers. For the year 1982 Skagit County was ranked 9th in the state as having the most severe drinking driver problem.

There was some discussion about the reasons why the county ranks so high.

Chairman Norris emphasized the seriousness with which this problem is approached. Commissioner Rohrer commented on how everything is geared to drinking. For example, television, advertising, etc.

John said that several counties in the last year have participated in drinking driver crackdowns. The system has not been able to handle the overload in some cases, when it gets to adjudication and prosecution. It is a very complex situation.

Chairman Norris said that his opinion was that "we cannot afford not to" deal with this.

John Rumsey said that it is important to look at whether one segment of the system can support the steps another segment is taking. Both the National Highway Traffic Safety Commission and the Washington Traffic Safety Commission are very concerned at this situation. With some of the tougher laws in the state and nationwide they are getting greater involvement with the problem drinker. The Safety Commissioners are looking at the formation of a Task Force. They are willing to offer a full-time coordinator to help build the task force, serve the task force and perform the day to day application of the task force. Through building a task force they could set a full-system approach to the problem. Right now a grant has been applied for in drug and alcohol prevention/intervention. This would allow the county to build very good public information education programs. Have asked in those grants that it be a coordinated community effort. It needs an original task force type of approach. The proposal would be for a one year grant which would fund a full-time coordinator to serve, perform the day-to-day operations and act as basically a staff person for a community-wide task force involving deterrence, prevention, etc. to review the financial aspect and see if there are some ways there can be some help in that, with the focus on public information and education.

There was some discussion regarding coordination with other programs. Chairman Norris said he wished to make sure that the county is coordinating with other programs. John said that the prevention/intervention program is going to be introducing a program in the schools called "Here's Looking at You". It provides youngsters with coping skills and ways to handle peer pressure on drinking issues.

Chairman Norris asked John what he could foresee that would assist Skagit County in lowering its position on the list? John said that the education approach is very definitely a key. Also, prevention/intervention is one that starts right now with schools. It won't have an immediate type of impact.

Commissioner Mansfield said he thinks it is going to take re-education as well as education. It requires an ongoing program that will gradually decrease this.