

**MEETING MINUTES
SAN JUAN COUNTY (SJC), WASHINGTON
COUNTY COUNCIL
January 5, 2009**

Monday, January 5, 2009 - Council Hearing Room, Legislative Building, Friday Harbor

CALL TO ORDER – SPECIAL MEETING

Council Chair Howard Rosenfeld called the special meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. Council members Kevin Ranker, Rich Peterson, Gene Knapp (telephonically), Bob Myhr, and Alan Lichter; County Administrator, Pete Rose; Clerk to the Council, Ann Larson; Deputy Clerk, Lisa Brown; and interested members of the public were present.

REMOTE PARTICIPATION

Moved by Lichter, seconded by Myhr, to allow **Mr. Knapp** to participate telephonically. Motion carried unanimously on a roll call vote.

ORDINANCES/RESOLUTIONS:

ORD. NO. 1-2009 - (Refer to PUBLIC HEARINGS, 9:00 a.m., for details of action taken.)

RES. NO. 1-2009 – (Refer to DISCUSSIONS, 10:50 a.m., for details of action taken.)

PUBLIC HEARINGS/OTHER ACTION ITEMS

PUBLIC HEARINGS

9:00 a.m. - A public hearing was held to consider an **Ordinance amending San Juan County Code, Chapter 2.42 to increase the Noxious Weed Parcel Assessment**. Present: Council Chair, Howard Rosenfeld; Council Members, Kevin Ranker, Rich Peterson, Gene Knapp (telephonically), Bob Myhr, and Alan Lichter; County Administrator (CA), Pete Rose, Clerk to the Council, Ann Larson; Public Hearings Specialist, Lisa Brown; Noxious Weed Control Board Chair, Amanda Azous; Noxious Weed Control Program Field Coordinator; Rich Lee; and interested members of the public. Mr. Rosenfeld opened the hearing inviting questions from the Council for Staff. Mr. Peterson inquired about alternatives suggested by Patty Miller and restated his desire to have this go to ballot. Ms. Azous informed the Council that her suggestions could not be implemented due to limitations under the law. Mr. Ranker asked Ms. Azous to recap her revised request. Ms. Azous gave an overview of the request which reduced staffing to two 0.75 FTE positions, reducing the increase in assessments requested. She noted that 93% of property owners would pay \$18.75, or less, annually and that the people did decide in favor (65%) of an assessment six years ago under an advisory ballot. Ms. Azous answered questions from the Council regarding assessments and levels of service. She also referenced the packet of public comments, noting that, with some duplication, about 80% support the increased tax. Public testimony was opened, submitted by two individuals, one opposed and one in favor, of the increased assessment. Public testimony was closed with the right to reopen. Mr. Lichter commended the Noxious Weed Board on reducing their original request, in deference to the general financial crisis, to three-quarter time. He stated this would provide a modest but necessary minimum level of service for SJC, and made the following motion:

Moved by Lichter, seconded by Myhr, to adopt an Ordinance amending SJC Code, Chapter 2.42 increasing the Noxious Weed Assessment. Mr. Myhr commented on the Council being voted in to represent constituents and the necessity of the Noxious Weed Program to protect our islands by managing invasive species. Mr. Knapp stated that if it were a normal budget year he would be in favor without hesitation, but with deep cuts and reductions across the County, could not support pay and department budget increases. He expressed concern that this would send the message that the County doesn't take seriously the care of the elderly and sick, but does take care of its weeds. He said he planned to vote against the motion, but would be agreeable to Mr. Peterson's suggestion to put it to a vote of the public. Mr. Lichter commented that this will only bring the program up to a portion of where it should be, noting that although some County budgets were reduced, some of the highest paid employees received cost of living adjustments (COLA) and step increases, and that each program needs to be looked at on its own merits. Mr. Rosenfeld added that the Noxious Weed Program had not had an increase in over five years and this request is intended to bring the program up to a survivable level. **Motion**

carried, by roll call vote, with Lichter, Myhr, Ranker, and Rosenfeld in favor; Peterson and Knapp opposed.

DISCUSSIONS

10:50 a.m. (Commenced at 9:26 a.m. due to time constraints.) **Moved by Myhr, seconded by Peterson to approve a Resolution Ratifying Actions from the December 15, 2008, Council Meeting. Motion carried 5-0, by roll call vote, with Ranker abstained.**

ADJOURNMENT - Moved by Myhr, seconded by Lichter, to adjourn the meeting at 9:28 a.m. Motion carried. The next regular Meeting/Work Session was scheduled for Monday, January 13, 2009, and the next regular Tuesday Meeting was scheduled for Tuesday, January 14, 2009.

These Minutes were approved and signed on Tuesday, January 13, 2009. The original document is retained in the Council's permanent proceedings file. Attest: Lisa J. Brown, Deputy Clerk.