BUDGET WORKSHOP

The Board met in Budget Workshop at 1:00 p.m., County Administration Building, Conference Room #116, Coupeville, Wa, to review and discuss the Public Works Department budgets. All Commissioners were present, as was Elaine Marlow, Budget Director.

Handout: Proposed 2003 Public Works Department Budgets 10/7/02
Presentation by: Bill Oakes, Public Works Director
Staff Attending: Dick Snyder, Gwen Maxfield, Jack Taylor, Randy Brackett, George Anne Sherry, Colleen Jokinen; Angie McDowell

Bill Oakes reviewed what the Department had done this summer, and what had changed since May, and the presentation basically the same as presented earlier in the year. The 2003 budget proposal is to fund Public Works from the funds directly supported resulting in the Current Expense fund not making the $28,326 contribution to the Public Works Fund.

Public Works:

- Camano Trail - underway
- Courthouse Annex Remodel – specifications and call for bids authorized today
- Community Mental Health Facility – MOU signed today
- Freeland Sewer Study – re-started and negotiated the contracts

Storm Water - emphasize project delivery [pumps and pipe work].

Staff is aware of the new State stormwater rules; primarily affects larger projects and all state and federal-funded projects. When exact impacts are known, will meet with Fakkema & Kingma for their analysis as far as what the actual engineering impacts are. It is not Mr. Oakes plan to blankly adopt the State's manual; many of the things in the State manual Island County is already doing. All impacts will be discussed with the Board along with existing alternatives for what is already being done.

Solid Waste

- County-WSDOT property swap. WSDOT has moved off the site which leaves it open for the County to use for better access to scale facility at the Coupeville transfer site. Looking for alternative designs for the access.
- Rate Study [due next year]
- Groundwater Study – on-going

From a Risk Pool meeting last week, the Chair learned that insurance was available, not so unreasonably priced, to insure against environmental liabilities for open or closed landfills. His thought was to review the purchase of that type insurance thus freeing up a substantial amount of money dedicated in the reserve for Solid Waste.

Commissioner McDowell noted that the North end recycling center was extremely small and not very user-friendly, and inquired about any plans for relocation. He commented that perhaps sometime in the future the City of Oak Harbor may be amenable to leasing Oak Harbor recycling center at a nominal cost to have the County run that.

As Ms. Maxfield advised, the volume there had increased over the past couple of years, and staff is looking at the need for open hours, but had not yet looked at another site. Mr. Oakes agreed that the site was very small and that the Department could look into that.

Roads

Nothing budget-wise significantly changed from what was presented in May. Budget reflects on-going maintenance and operation. Aggressive Road program at $7.6 million in 2003 based on delivery of several projects shown on Budget Workshop Book Page 182 in today's handout [the Annual Road Construction Program]. Lehman Road project relates to drainage improvement at the south end close to the intersection with East Camano.

- **New Camano Shop** – open house tomorrow

At some point there needs to be a decision about the shop building and pole building. Ultimately the plan is to demolish those as this is the site for a new annex; it is a matter of when. Used now for storage and perhaps could be some interim use by Parks once Road equipment has been moved out.

- **Event-planning** – partnership with City, Towns and State, etc. on various events

- **LIDAR Light Detection And Ranging**

Partnering with Kitsap, NASA, USGS. Benefit for staff use for stormwater planning and engineering as well as the consultant community. Current USGS maps are 30' contours; this is plus or minus 8'. Will be on the Internet on the University of Washington server eventually.

- **Vegetation Management**

Purchased 4 shoulder mowers = $184,000; 4 mower heads = $28,000. Department is tracking the costs and continues to look for alternatives. Mower life between 5 – 7 years; may be looking at turning mowing implements over and keeping the tractors [example: replaced 2 mowing implements and kept 2 tractors this year].

Commissioner Thorn recalled that at least two different organizations in the community offered help on natural plants and other things possible to help reduce costs, and he asked Mr. Oakes to follow up on those offers.

- **Chip Seal**

Overall the cost of chip seal is ½ the cost of maintenance overlay. Department uses Polymer oil 100%, and are using ice abatement chips on specific roads as necessary. Chip seals last about 7 years +/- and a maintenance overlay probably 10 years +/-.

Commissioner McDowell recalled discussion last year about day labor in-house versus contract overlays and understood at that time that Public Works was instructed that 2003 would be the first year of the commitment to scale back on day labor and do more contracted work.

Mr. Oakes made note that the Department at bare minimum has a crew about a week and one-half for paving; to go below that would mean losing his goal of maintaining expertise in-house. Island County has a fairly unique maintenance paving, 1" +/- of Class G. At his direction aggregate crews were formed from all the crews on Whidbey Island who paved in all three districts. This year the Whidbey Island per shop day labor amount was 30% distributed among the three shops and 70% by contract. County wide, contracted out was 80%.

Commissioner Thorn did not believe that a hard and fast rule on a percentage split between day labor and contract work was necessarily appropriate, especially with budget constraints and declining funds over time. He suggested the possibility that Public Works consider a bid of its own on a job and look at it from the perspective of whether or not the County can beat a contract price; if it saves money overall he thought it entirely defensible.

The Chairman made the observation that the County was able to do the work cheaper because of not having to factor in a profit and one could argue about how the County calculates its costs to pave a mile of road as opposed to a private contractor. After talking to folks from Lakeside he was not sure he was even supportive of a 1" overlay.

Mr. Oakes' opinion was that a 1" overlay was appropriate in places, but agreed he would have to look at whether to do it everywhere, and did point out there are some 1" overlays that have lasted 20 years on some of the low volume roads. For arterial roads he agreed with the need to look very closely at whether that 1" was appropriate.

Chairman Shelton requested the Department get rid of the big paver and get the small paver which had been rented and much more effective for the pre-levels; do all pre-levels and seal coats, but all overlays be contracted out. Commissioner McDowell agreed 100% with the Chairman.

Commissioner Thorn thought it would be a huge mistake to degrade in-house capability.

Mr. Oakes acknowledged the direction of the Board today and agreed to look at what equipment profile would be needed to comply with that direction, and thought there was a life cycle cost analysis to be done to make sure what the most cost effective way is to go.

- **Paths & Trails**

Cedars Trail

Major capital expenditure next year is construction of Cedars Trail. New direction was to go along Maxwelton Road rather than cross country. There had been some funds spent on the design to go cross country but no right of way acquired. Routing the trail along Maxwelton Road will require some right of way acquisition and Mr. Oakes wants to meet with residents early on. Discussions so far with granting agency is that the County can move the location of the trail and still comply; should the trail concept be abandoned completely then funds will have to be returned.