

the Courthouse Journal

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Washington Association of County Officials
Washington State Association of Counties

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ESSB 6050 Re-Referred to House Finance

The county-city financial assistance bill, **ESSB 6050**, was heard in the House Capital Budget Committee this week and business and trade unions opposed the bill on the grounds that they don't like the Public Works Fund as a source of funding. In spite of that opposition, many House members have committed to vote for the bill as it came over from the Senate. But by Thursday the bill was re-referred to the Finance Committee in an attempt to find another source of funding.

What that source may be is not known as this story has gone to press. The Finance Committee will meet on Monday, April 4 at 1:30 p.m.

Representative Jim McIntire is the Chair and the other members are: Hunter, Orcutt, Ahern, Conway, Fromhold, Hasegawa, Roach, and Santos. Any county receiving money in ESSB 6050 should immediately contact members of the House Finance Committee.

Senate Committee Amends Public Records Bill 2SHB 1758

The Senate Government Operations & Elections Committee passed out the bill that would amend the Public Disclosure Act regarding public records in response to the Hangartner case. A striker amendment was approved that is

essentially the same language as **SB 5735** without any provision for the attorney/client privilege. It is now in Senate Rules.

Reimbursement for Training Costs for Newly Elected County Officials HB 1184

If **HB 1184** passes, expenses incurred by newly elected county officials before they take office may be reimbursed from public funds, if they are for actual costs of training and education. Both WSAC and WACO offer training during the month of December following the elections of new members. This bill clarifies that they may

be reimbursed for those expenses even though they are not yet county employees. The bill passed out of Senate Government Operations and Elections Committee and is now in Rules Committee.

The Courthouse Journal

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We welcome your suggestions and contributions. The weekly deadline is noon Wednesday.

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Tom King Heads Off Into the Sunset

WSAC Research Associate Tom King has reached that magic number of 30 years in the PERS 1 retirement system and has decided to ride off into the sunset. Tom has given valuable service to the counties over the past 13 years. Before that he worked for the Department of Revenue and the Pierce County Assessor's office.

Tom will be missed by those of us here on the staff and the many counties that he has helped over the years. He is going to take some time looking at what he wants to do next, but if things work out for him and the stars align he may be heading to Oklahoma to get back into the horse business.

We all wish Tom the best in whatever he does and he will be missed in the county family.

Washington Counties Scholarship applications must be postmarked April 8, 2005, to be eligible ...so hurry!

County elected officials and employees who have students in their families take note!
The Washington Counties' Scholarship Fund is offering five \$2,500 awards to children of county employees who will be enrolled full-time during the 2005/2006 school year in a baccalaureate program, associate degree program or vocational/technical certification program.

Complete information and applications are available on the web at www.wacounties.org.

Applications must be postmarked no later than Friday, April 8, 2005.

Call WACO at (360) 753-7319 or WSAC at (360) 753-1886 if you would like to have an application mailed to you or if you have any questions.

We encourage all students to apply!

Budget, Finance and Taxes

Historic County Courthouse Assistance Funded

Although Legislation creating a Historic County Courthouse Fund has not moved from either the House or Senate, the Senate capital budget includes \$9 million for matching grants for courthouse preservation and renovation, including work completed since January 2003. The House budget, to be released next week, also is expected to include funding for this important new program.

Previous issues of *the Courthouse Journal* have listed the estimated improvement costs, including preservation of historic features, by county. For more information, call Paul Parker at WSAC.

County Treasurers' Administrative Provisions Bill (Treasurers/WACO Priority)

SHB 1158, the County Treasurers' administrative provisions bill, passed out of the Senate Government Operations and Elections Committee this week. Please call Senators on the Senate Rules Committee and ask that it be pulled to the Senate floor calendar.

Public Hospital District Investments

The broad opposition by the State Treasurer, State Auditor, county treasurers and the state organizations that represent county and municipal treasurers, to **SHB 1341** and **HJR 4202**, authorizing additional investment authority for specified hospital districts, has apparently worked its magic. The measure failed to get enough signatures from members of the Senate Government Operations and Elections Committee this week to get

a do pass recommendation and is likely dead for the session.

NACo Grants Clearinghouse Provides One-Stop Location for Sources of External Funding

NACo has added one more excellent service to its member benefit list by creating a Grants Clearinghouse in the Members Only section of the NACo Web site (www.naco.org). The clearinghouse provides a one-stop location for external funding opportunities, including both federal and private grants.

The goal of the grants clearinghouse is to offer a service that lessens the burden and confusion of members by providing comprehensive and specific information and tools regarding federal and private sources of external funding.

The grants clearinghouse has three main features:

- a searchable database of county eligible grants;
- a listing of county eligible grants that are currently accepting applications; and
- e-mail notification of newly announced grants.

The searchable database currently contains 260 grants that are listed in the Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance. All grants are screened for eligibility and appropriateness. New grants listed in the catalog are added to the database following the screening process.

However, not all grants listed in the database are currently funding programs or accepting applications. Although this is a limitation, the listing of all programs does enable counties to identify future potential funding sources and contact

information for granting agencies and departments.

The clearinghouse also includes a Grants Listing Webpage that features an up-to-date list of grants that are funding programs and accepting applications for which counties may apply. The information on the grants is updated using www.grants.gov. In the future, the grants listing will include more private grants.

Another feature to be added will be samples of successful grant applications. The successful applications should be on the Web site by the end of June.

The email notification feature enables members to learn about newly announced grants through regular emails. Members can sign up to receive grant notification based on specific areas of interest or they can receive notices of all newly announced grants. To receive this service, members should go to the Grants Clearinghouse and follow the prompts for signing up.

To get to the Grants Clearinghouse, go to the NACo Web site and click on the Members Only section on the right side of the page. To log into the Members Only section, type in your email address as your ID and then your county name as the Password. For example: bob.smith@co.blue-earth.mn.us and then Blue Earth County. If you are not able to log in, your email address may not be in the NACo database. Contact Membership Coordinator Emily Landsman (elandsma@naco.org) and she can get it added.

This is truly a valuable resource – one that you should use. It is just one more way that NACo is adding value to your membership.

Courts, Public Safety, Law & Justice

WACO Priorities Beat Cutoff

HB 1471, authentication of documents, left the Senate Judiciary Committee late Wednesday afternoon and is now in Senate Rules. Please contact your Senators on Rules and ask them to "pull" it to the floor. **HB 1471** allows for electronic transmission and certification of court documents. This is the first time these statutes have been amended in 124 years and the last stop before **HB 1471** hits the Governor's desk

SSB 5035, forensic pathology, cleared the House Criminal Justice and Corrections Committee early Thursday and is now in House Rules. Please contact your House members on Rules and urge them to "pull" **SSB 5035** for the floor. The bill eliminates the long-defunct forensic pathology specialist program through the University of Washington and allows the Forensic Investigations Council (FIC) to explore other potential programs to improve the quality of death investigations in the state. Any new programs will require approval by the Legislature. Please call your House Rules members now and enlist support of **SSB 5035**.

And then we hit a snag..... **SSB 5242**, possession of weapons by inmates, was on the list for executive action in the House Criminal Justice and Corrections Committee Thursday when a question was raised as to whether offenders on home detention with electronic monitoring would be prohibited a household item that could be considered a weapon. Hopefully, it has been clarified now that **SSB 5242** is a statute prohibiting the possession of weapons by inmates in state and local institutions and does

not apply to home detention or electronic monitoring and **SSB 5242** will move out of the committee this afternoon (Friday). WACO thanks James McMahan, lobbyist for the Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs, for his assistance in moving **SSB 5242** along.

Bail Bond Association Meets

The Washington Bail Bond Association met in Olympia last Saturday at the Phoenix Inn. Whatcom County Sheriff Bill Elfo attended for the county sheriffs at the invitation of Gordon Walgren, lobbyist for the group.

Walgren reviewed all the legislation of interest to bail bond agents. Most bills had failed with the cutoff and they included **SB 5726**, clothing and badges worn by bail bond recovery agents; **SB 5542**, alternative detention facilities; **SB 5541**, recovery agents executing bench warrants; and **SB 5166**, electronic home monitoring. **HB 1136** on electronic home monitoring (a WASPC bill) is still alive. All the bail recovery bills were sponsored by Senator Mike Carrell who was not there.

Next, Walgren asked the group if they want to pursue a bill next session to let bail recovery agents contract with courts of limited jurisdictions to execute bench warrants. One bail bond agent expressed concern that so many bench warrants would be for cases with no bond agent involved and who would pay? That proved a big factor since the only comparable operation is the contract some collection agents have with courts - they charge a fee to the defendant on top of his court costs. If the court collects, collections are slow and are

paid out with a protocol that pays the court costs last. When asked for support, no one responded. It was also noted that many warrants go unserved due to the fact the jails are overcrowded and there is no place to put the subject of the warrant.

There was a lot of discussion by long-term bail bond agents who did not want to have to get the additional endorsement that is now required by the Dept. of Licensing for bonding agents to go out to recover on bonds. DOL requires all recovery agents to be "qualified" - meaning tested for the endorsement and paying an additional fee to go out on recovery.

There was also discussion on what had to be on the clothing of recovery agents during a forced entry to identify them. The bail bond agents have insisted on "bond" being included. Recovery agents have been outlawed in Florida.

A bail bond agent from Idaho alerted the group to entities who are now operating in Idaho who post bonds for individuals with no premium, go out and apprehend them a few weeks later and then charge an exorbitant premium on the tail end instead of contracting for it up front. The solution to the unethical practice and the way to avoid the practice in Washington seems to be for the group to propose legislation next year that will limit the premium on a bail bond at 10%.

The Bail Bond Association is to be commended for their commitment the bail bond agents have to policing their own industry.

House Committee Cuts Judges Out Of Court Funding Bill

The House Judiciary Committee

Courts, Public Safety, Law and Justice (continued)

voted unanimously March 31 to pass a striking amendment to **E2SSB 5454**, the trial court funding bill. The committee amendment eliminates what was the bill's primary provision: state payment of one-half the salaries of district court judges.

Committee members justified the amendment with concerns that the judges' salaries could, over the years, create an unfunded liability for the state – the so-called bow-wave effect.

While the judges are out of the current version, the bill retains all provisions that increase civil filing fees. Instead of paying judges' salaries, the state's share of the filing fee increase is to be placed in the Public Safety Education Account (PSEA) to fund criminal indigent

defense, dependency defense, civil legal services, and a general court improvement account to be administered by the Administrative Office of the Courts. The counties retain their share of the filing fee increases, approximately \$18 million per biennium.

The bill is tentatively scheduled for public hearing in the Appropriations Committee on Saturday, April 2.

Gambling Commission Proposes Rule Change

The Washington State Gambling Commission, which regulates gambling activities in the state, is proposing a change from quarterly activity reporting to reporting activity twice a year for all

commercial operators. Currently businesses holding a gambling license report quarterly to the Commission, and many local jurisdictions use this information to verify local gambling taxes.

The reduced reporting schedule is necessary to accommodate a \$2.5 million budget reduction for the Commission.

The Commission will take comments on the proposed rule change at a public meeting at 9:30 a.m., April 15, 2005, at the Red Lion-Vancouver at the Quay, Vancouver, Washington. Written comments may be sent to Bill Kesel at billk@wsgc.wa.gov.

Elections, Licensing and Recording

Primary Date (Auditors/WACO Priority Bill)

ESHB 2027, changing the date of the primary to the third Tuesday in August, passed out of the Senate Government Operations and Elections Committee on Wednesday evening and has gone to the Rules Committee. Many thanks to all of the county auditors who attended the hearing on the bill Monday! They were: Auditors' President Corky Mattingly, Yakima County; Al Brotche, Mason County; Pat Gardner, Pacific County; Norma Brummett, Skagit County; Shirley Forslof, Whatcom County; Donna Eldridge, Jefferson County; Karen Flynn, Kitsap County; Bob Terwilliger, Snohomish County; Evelyn Arnold, Chelan County; Greg

Kimsey, Clark County; Dean Logan, Dir. of Elections, King County; Gary Zandell, Lewis County; Kris Swanson, Cowlitz County; Suzanne Sinclair, Island County; Kim Wyman, Thurston County; Pat McCarthy, Pierce County; Mike Garvison, Skamania County; Jerry Pettit, Kittitas County; and Vern Spatz, Grays Harbor County.

Please call Rules Committee members and ask that the bill be pulled to the Senate floor calendar. Rules Committee members are: Senators Franklin, Brown, Doumit, Eide, Fraser, Haugen, Kline, Kohl-Welles, Rasmussen, Regala, Spanel, Thibaudeau, Benton, Esser, Finkbeiner, Hewitt, Honeyford, Parlette, Roach, Schmidt, Zarelli, and Lt. Gov. Brad Owen. When the bill reaches the floor calendar, it will

need a super majority vote to pass, so 33 yes votes are needed. Please make contact with your senators now to let them know how crucial this legislation is.

Vote by Mail

SHB 1754, authorizing county-wide mail ballot elections, passed out of the Senate Government Operations and Elections Committee with a striking amendment that brought it back to its original form, without requiring all vote by mail after January 1, 2008. However, the Senate version of the bill, **SB 5744**, passed out of the House State Government Operations and Accountability Committee with a striking amendment that would require all vote by mail elections beginning in 2012.

Elections, Licensing and Recording (continued)

Elections Reform Bills

This week, the House State Government Operations and Accountability Committee held long and detailed work sessions on [ESSB 5499](#), clarifying and standardizing various election procedures, and [ESSB 5743](#), relating to voter registration procedures (HAVA), with Secretary of State representatives and county auditors. Corky Mattingly and Kim Wyman participated in the session on [ESSB 5499](#), and Pat McCarthy and Kim Wyman participated in the discussion on [ESSB 5743](#). When it came time to pass the bills out of committee on Friday, however, the bipartisan nature of the work sessions turned south and the bills passed out of committee by only one vote each on a partisan vote. Most of the amendments put forth were not adopted, so look for further amendments on the floor.

Other Election Bills Passed Out of Committees This Week

[HB 1749](#), strengthening review and correction of county election procedures.

[SB 5564](#), manual of election laws.

[SB 5565](#), out-of-state voter's information.

[ESSB 5395](#), voting devices/paper records.

Former Secretary of State Named to Commission on Federal Election Reform

Former Secretary of State Ralph Munro has been appointed to the Carter-Baker Commission on Federal Election Reform. Former President Jimmy Carter and former (U.S.) Secretary of State James A. Baker, III announced last week that they will

co-chair the Commission to examine the state of America's federal elections and recommend improvements. Carter and Baker have assembled a private, bi-partisan commission whose membership includes former Senate Minority Leader Tom Daschle, former House Minority Leader Bob Michel, former U.S. Representatives Lee Hamilton and Susan Molinari, university presidents, scholars and community leaders. After the 2000 presidential vote, former presidents Carter and Gerald Ford convened a National Commission on Election Reform, and their report contributed to the Help America Vote Act (HAVA) of 2002. Despite this reform, there were many problems during the election of 2002 involving both issues of inclusion and integrity. The new Commission on Federal Election Reform will look at those and other voting problems, examine the implementation of HAVA, and propose recommendations to improve the electoral process.

"I am concerned about the state of our electoral system and believe we need to improve it," former President Carter said. "I have monitored elections all over the world, and there is much we could learn from other democracies and from our own citizens. We will try to define an electoral system for the 21st century that will make Americans proud again."

"America's democracy is the backbone of our society, and only through fair elections can we guarantee that our system remains healthy," former Secretary Baker said. "To help reach that goal, I welcome the opportunity of working with President Jimmy Carter on a bi-partisan commission that will

recommend ways to improve our federal voting process. A prior commission, which President Carter co-chaired with President Gerald Ford, made recommendations that resulted in significant changes for the 2004 election.

But more can be done to guarantee the integrity and accuracy of our elections."

The Center for Democracy and Election Management (CDEM) at American University will organize the work of the Commission in association with the James A. Baker III Institute for Public Policy at Rice University, The Carter Center, and [*electionline.org*](#), a national clearinghouse of election reform information sponsored by The Pew Charitable Trusts.

The Commission plans to hold two public hearings -- the first on April 18 at American University in Washington, D.C., and the second at the James A. Baker Institute for Public Policy at Rice University in Houston in June -- with the goal of releasing a report in September when Congress returns from its Labor Day 2005 recess.

Environment, Land Use and Resources

GMA Stalemate Continues

Despite a major effort this week by counties, cities, the American Planning Association – Washington Chapter, and farm and business groups, passage of legislation to extend timelines for GMA updates and clarify the role of “best available science” remains in legislative limbo. The only significant measure to survive at this point is **HB 2171**, which provides all counties and cities a one-year delay in critical areas updates – and allows continued access to key state grant and loan funds, such as the public works assistance account and the Centennial Clean Water Fund.

Greater Flexibility for County Conservation Futures Funds

Legislation to allow counties to spend a portion of conservation futures revenue for maintenance and operation of properties purchased with those funds was amended this week but remains alive in the Senate. The Senate Committee amendment to **SHB 1631**, sponsored by Rep. Judy Clibborn (D-King County), allows a county to increase the conservation futures levy up to 10 cents per thousand valuation and to devote up to 15 percent of conservation futures revenue to be spent on maintenance and operation of properties purchased with those funds.

As it passed the House, **SHB 1631** authorized up to 25 percent of conservation futures revenue for maintenance and operation of properties purchased with those funds. If **SHB 1631** passes the Senate, it is expected that the House will concur in the Senate amendment.

Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program Revision Nears Passage

The Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program (WWRP) provides funds for the acquisition and development of outdoor recreation and habitat conservation areas. Counties, cities, ports, park and recreation districts, school districts, state agencies, and tribes are eligible to apply. Grant applications are evaluated annually and the Interagency Committee for Outdoor Recreation submits a list of prioritized projects to the Governor and Legislature for approval.

The Legislature typically funds the WWRP at between \$40 and \$50 million for a biennium. Half of the funds appropriated are for habitat conservation, and are allocated according to a statutory formula for critical habitat, natural areas, and urban wildlife habitat. The other half of the funds are appropriated for outdoor recreation, allocated by formulas established in statute for state parks, local parks, trails, and water access sites. A portion of each account is left unallocated. So far, the Gregoire budget includes \$45 million and the Senate budget \$54 million.

ESSB 5896 creates two new WWRP funds – for riparian protection and for farmland preservation – and improves the coordination of state land purchases and local government processes.

Measures of the most interest to counties include:

- The riparian protection account is created to distribute funds for the acquisition and enhancement or restoration of riparian habitat.
- The farmlands preservation account is created and funds

may be used by counties or cities (not by the state) for the acquisition of farmlands, their enhancement or restoration, or both.

- Criteria for grants for habitat conservation and outdoor recreation are revised to include such considerations as consistency with land use, shoreline, watershed, and recovery plans, inclusion of noxious weed control management plans, and the statewide significance of critical habitat projects.
- Lands acquired by the Department of Natural Resources and the Department of Fish and Wildlife using funds from the habitat conservation account are subject to payments in lieu of property taxes and for weed control. Lands acquired by state agencies using funds from the riparian protection account are also subject to payments in lieu of property taxes and for weed control.
- State or local agencies must review a proposed project application with the local government with jurisdiction over lands proposed for acquisition with WWRP grant funds.

General Government Issues

County Auditor/WACO Priority Bill Passes Out of Committee

HB 1386, increasing the surcharge on recorded documents from \$2 to \$5 for the preservation of historical documents passed out of the Senate Government Operations & Elections Committee on Wednesday, March 30. The bill was amended to redirect \$1 of the \$5 to the county general fund to be used at the county commissioners' discretion for historical preservation and programs within the community.

County Auditor Privacy Bill Passes Out of Committee

HB 1385, restricting the information on recorded documents was heard in the Senate Government Operations & Elections Committee on Tuesday

and passed out of committee on Thursday. Testifying in favor of the bill was prime sponsor Representative Dean Takko and Thurston County Auditor Kim Wyman.

County Veteran's Services Legislation Moving Along

Legislation to modernize and clarify the role of county government in providing services to indigent veterans continues to progress in the legislative process. **SHB 1189**, sponsored by Rep. Jim Moeller (D-Clark County), is now in Senate Rules and ready for floor action.

The bill requires each county to establish a veterans' advisory committee to advise it on distribution of funds collected for assistance to indigent veterans. It

allows county legislative authorities to authorize other entities to administer veterans' assistance programs through grants, contracts, or interlocal agreements so long as accountability criteria are met. Counties also may authorize the continued operation of veterans' relief or assistance programs existing on January 1, 2005 if the county solicits advice from the veterans' advisory board and specified grant, contractual, or interlocal agreement requirements are met.

The county responsibility to provide for burial of an indigent veteran or family member remains, but the authority is expanded to now allow for cremation. The burial or cremation may not exceed the limit established by the county nor be less than \$300.

Public Health and Human Services

Bill to Reduce Chronic Homelessness Moves Out of Senate Committee

HB 2163, to reduce chronic homelessness, has moved out of the Senate Financial Institutions, Housing and Consumer Protection Committee. It now goes to Senate Ways & Means since it involves revenue. Since its first incarnation, the recording fee surcharges have been reduced to a single additional fee of \$10. This will raise about \$10 million per year. The bill has been vastly changed in substance as well since that first inception. It is no longer mandatory for counties to participate in completing a 10 year plan to end chronic homelessness and to implement that plan with required performance standards each year in order to eliminate homelessness by 2015 at a set

percentage each year, including having everyone in some form of transitional housing within the first two years. There are now a number of protective provisions that allow counties to opt out entirely, delegate tasks to existing groups or entities and engage their largest cities in this effort. Administrative costs are allowed that total 8% - 2% to the auditor and 6% to the county. The auditors added an amendment in the Senate that will improve the process of sorting out county versus city revenues where a city decides to operate a program on its own, separate from the county, and more closely provide a nexus with the recording document by collecting the surcharge only on real estate transactions.

In concert with the funds raised in **HB 2060** that was enacted a few

years ago, this is a major investment in reducing homelessness, providing necessary supportive services and reducing costs in other county and city systems.

A change is also made to the existing language in **HB 2060** that directs no more than 5% of the funds to the county instead of the auditor for administration. This was a change that was suggested last year that was not enacted due to varying degrees of support and opposition within the county family.

Thanks are due to the sponsors of the bill, especially Rep. Timm Ormsby and the Chair of the House Housing Committee Rep. Mark Miloscia, as well as both committee and caucus staff who worked diligently on this bill with all stakeholders.

Transportation and Public Works

Senate Democrats set to Unveil Transportation Budget

Now that the Senate has passed an operation budget (**SB 6090**), attention turns to the transportation budget. Toward that end, a press conference and a Senate hearing are planned for Monday, April 4, during which Senator Mary Margaret Haugen (Democrat – 10th District) will unveil her funding proposal and a project list. Over the last several days, the anticipated Senate transportation proposal has changed substantially.

For the last several weeks, the Senate Transportation Committee Chair, Senator Haugen, has floated a proposal with three major parts:

- indexing the state gas tax to a growth factor,
- a four cent gas tax increase (spread over two years), and
- a weight fee on passenger cars and trucks.

While no written proposals have been circulated, during a meeting with several county lobbyists last week Haugen said her proposal would provide one cent of the increase for local government direct distribution, a half cent for counties and a half cent for cities. The local distribution would not be indexed. Rather, Sen. Haugen intended to provide additional funds (about \$12 million) to the Transportation Improvement Board (TIB), which funds local projects in the urban areas of the state. According to Haugen, she did not intend that the County Road Administration Board (CRAB) receive additional funding from the gas tax increase or the weight fee – a problem for rural areas of the state. The proposal would include several local funding options for local governments,

including a reinstatement of the vehicle license fee, an expanded employer fee, a household fee, and a transportation fee of \$50 per lot. Counties and cities are not in agreement on how the local options should be structured.

On Wednesday, March 30, Haugen appeared before the Highway Users Group and said that she had changed her proposal that she would unveil on April 4. It no longer would include a four cent gas tax increase with indexing. Instead of indexing, the proposal includes yearly step increases for a finite time – a change that was welcomed by the oil interests and the Association of Washington Business. The package would now include:

- a fifteen cent gas tax increase spread over twelve years: three cents the first year, two cents the second year, and a penny thereafter for ten years, and
- a weight fee on passenger cars and trucks.

Approximately 77% of the revenues would be bonded and Haugen intended to spend half of the weight fee proceeds on rail. Local jurisdictions would still receive one cent of the fifteen cent increase (again, split 50/50 between counties and cities) and TIB would receive additional revenue. Local funding options would still be included as well.

A proposed project list has not been made available to public, so counties will have to wait until April 4 to see whether this package funds road projects in their jurisdictions. It is certain that the bulk of this funding package will be spent on replacing the Alaskan Way viaduct, and the SR-520 floating bridge. This

funding proposal assumes that a regional transportation partnership (RTID or RTIA) will help fund a large share of these projects. Since the RTID or RTIA local option funding tools are subject to voter approval, this may be a questionable assumption.

House leadership has not yet made clear their intentions concerning this funding proposal, but the Speaker of the House has mentioned that any transportation funding package will require bipartisan support – meaning a significant amount of votes from the minority caucus. Whether that occurs remains to be seen.

Boards and Commissions

Municipal Research and Services Center Board Vacancy

The Municipal Research and Services Center (MRSC) is seeking a county official to fill a vacancy on its board of directors. A Nominating Committee of the MRSC board will review candidates. If you are interested in serving please contact Rich Yukubousky, MRSC's Executive Director, at 206-625-1300 or e-mail at ryukubousky@mrsc.org. Vacancies are filled by the MRSC board.

The Municipal Research & Services Center (MRSC) is a non-profit, non-partisan organization created in 1969 to continue programs established in 1934 at the University of Washington; its mission is "working together for excellence in local government through professional consultation, research and information services."

The Center is governed by a volunteer board of directors drawn from current and former local government officials. MRSC works cooperatively with the Association of Washington Cities, the Washington State Association of Counties, and the Washington Association of County Officials.

Programs are funded out of a small portion of the cities' distributions of the Liquor Board profits and the counties' distribution of the Liquor Excise tax. Funding is provided through a biennial contract with the Municipal Research Council (MRC), a state agency.

The MRSC board meets quarterly; remaining dates for 2005 are June 22 at the Association for Washington Cities Conference in the Tri Cities, September 23 at the MRSC office in Seattle, and December 2 at the MRSC office. Meetings generally

take 2-3 hours. There is no compensation for serving on the board but expenses are fully reimbursed.

There may be some confusion about the difference between the Municipal Research Council (the state agency) and the Municipal Research and Services Center (the contractor who carries out the MRC statutory charge). The MRSC board meets more frequently and gets involved in programs and operational policy in greater detail than the Municipal Research Council.

MRSC programs and services available to Washington's 281 cities and 39 counties are:

Inquiries ("Help Desk") - A principal service of the Municipal Research & Services Center is to respond to inquiries and provide advice and information on all aspects of local government. Staff experience includes budget and finance, municipal law, public management, growth management, public works, utilities, and local government policies. Last year MRSC responded to 7300 requests for professional assistance.

Web site - MRSC operates one of the most comprehensive local government web sites in the United States. More than 400,000 visitors per month currently use the site.

Library - The MRSC library contains the state's largest collection of local government reference documents, including local ordinances, codes, budgets, comprehensive plans and reports illustrating virtually every function and operation of local government.

Publications - MRSC produces comprehensive and timely publications about a broad range of

local subjects. We also work with local officials to develop professional training opportunities.

If you have questions please call Rich Yukubousky.

Training and Upcoming Events

Eastern District Meeting May 19 – 20 in Kennewick

The Eastern Washington commissioners would like to invite all of our Westside counterparts to our Spring Eastern District Meeting in Kennewick on May 19 and 20 at the Red Lion – Columbia Center. We think you'll find our agenda exceptionally informative (see the attached draft agenda). As it is in Benton County, travel and cost should be more affordable. Our next Board of Directors' meeting will also be held in Kennewick at the Red Lion on Wednesday, May 18 from 2 – 5 PM, preceded by a Tri-Association meeting Wednesday morning. Since it corresponds with this meeting, we hope many of you on the Board will stay over. We encourage commissioners not on the Legislative Steering Committee to come too. As our strength is truly in our statewide association, our association between each other is key to the future. Please contact Ginni Peppert or Jean Wessman if you have any questions and want to register.

Thanks,
Greg Partch, President

Eastern District Meeting Roundtable Discussion

Attention Eastern Washington Commissioners:

Again this year, we will be dedicating the first part of our Eastern spring conference May 19-20 to roundtable discussions. We continue to believe that the most important part of our conference is the sharing of information and the planning goals for the upcoming year. In order to allow all of you time to prepare your thoughts on topics of discussion, we would like you to submit items of interest or concerns to be discussed by April 29th to Jean Wessman at WSAC.

We will then bring your submissions together and put out an agenda for discussion by the first week in May. We will also be having a 2005 legislative update following the roundtable.

Please take the time now to get your ideas to us. We look forward to a spirited and valuable roundtable.

Thanks,
Greg Partch

Department of Ecology Water Quality Program Hosts Workshop for Local Jurisdictions to Address Repair/Replacement of Failing On-Site Septic Systems

The Department of Ecology (DOE)'s Water Quality Program will host a workshop for local jurisdictions interested in learning more about local governmental loan programs to address the repair or replacement of failing on-site septic systems. The workshop, which is funded through the State Revolving Fund, will take place June 23 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Pierce County Library Administrative Service Center in Tacoma. Official notice of the workshop will come out in a week or two.

If interested in attending the workshop, reserve a spot by emailing Cindy Price at cpri461@ecy.wa.gov or by calling (360) 407-7132.

Courthouse Ramblings

Directory Correction: Page 37,
Skagit County Assessor address is
incorrect. It should read Admin
Bldg, Room 204, 700 S. 2nd Street, Mt.
Vernon, WA 98273.

Calendar of Events

Meeting	Location	Date	Information
For your convenience training and workshops are bolded.			
<u>APRIL 2005</u>			
CPO Elective Course: Public Meetings, Public Disclosure & More - Do You Know the Rules?	Mt. Vernon	April 6	http://d30060429.purehost.com/CPO/CPO.htm
WACO Board of Trustees' Meeting	Washington Counties Building, Olympia	April 6-7	
CPO Elective Course: Public Meetings, Public Disclosure & More - Do You Know the Rules?	Pierce County	April 7	http://d30060429.purehost.com/CPO/CPO.htm
16 th Annual National County Government Week		April 10-16	
Washington Counties Insurance Fund (WCIF)/Washington Counties Insurance Pool (WCIP) Ace Committee (HR & Payroll Only)	Yakima Convention Center	April 13	(360) 586-0466
Washington Counties Risk Pool (WCRP) Risk Managers Roundtable, 1- 5 pm	Best Western CottonTree Convention Center, Mt. Vernon	April 13	(360) 586-7447
Washington Counties Risk Pool (WCRP) Spring Board Meeting, 9 am	Best Western CottonTree Convention Center, Mt. Vernon	April 14	(360) 586-7447
WSAC Rural Issues Sub-committee	WA Counties Bldg, Olympia	April 14	(360) 753-1886
Urban County Caucus	Mercato Ristorante', Olympia	April 14	(360) 753-1886
WSAC Legislative Steering Committee	WA Counties Bldg, Olympia	April 15	(360) 753-1886
Washington STATE	Sine Die - 59th Legislative Session Ends	April 25	http://www.leg.wa.gov/wsladm/calendar.cfm
Washington Association of Prosecuting Attorneys (WAPA) Spring Training Program	La Quinta Inn, Tacoma	April 27-29	(360) 753-2175
<u>MAY 2005</u>			
WA Association of Prosecuting Attorneys-Support Enforcement 2005 Training	Red Lion Hotel, Olympia	May 2-6	(360) 753-3953
WA State Association of County Auditors' Elections Conference	Shilo Inn, Ocean Shores	May 9-12	(360) 753-7319
WA Association of Prosecuting Attorneys' Support Staff Training Program	WestCoast Ridpath Hotel, Spokane	May 11-13	(360) 753-2175
Washington Counties Risk Pool (WCRP) - Collision Investigation 2005	La Quinta Inn & Suites/Conference Center, Tacoma	May 17	(360) 586-7447
Assn of County Human Services	Kennewick	May 18-20	(360) 753-1886
WSAC Spring Eastern District	Red Lion Hotel Columbia Center, Kennewick	May 19-20	(360) 753-1886
Washington Counties Risk Pool (WCRP) - Collision Investigation 2005	Best Western Lake Inn & Conference Center, Moses Lake	May 19	(360) 586-7447
WA State Association of Sheriffs & Police Chiefs' Spring Conference	Coast Hotel, Wenatchee	May 23-26	(360) 486-2380

Calendar of Events (continued)

NACo – Western Interstate Region Conference	Tacoma, WA	May 25 - 27	http://www.naco.org/Content/NavigationMenu/About_NACo/Committees_and_Caucuses/Western_Interstate_Region/Western_Interstate_Region_Intro.htm
MEMORIAL DAY	WA Counties Bldg CLOSED	May 30	(360) 753-1886
<u>JUNE 2005</u>			
WA State Assn of Local Public Health Officials	Davenport Hotel, Spokane	June 1 – 2	(360) 753-1886
Washington Association of Prosecuting Attorneys (WAPA) District Court Training Program	Holiday Inn Select, Renton	June 2 - 3	(360) 753-2175
International Association of Coroners and Medical Examiners' Annual Conference	Golden Nugget, Las Vegas, Nevada	June 5-9	(360) 753-7319
WSAC Spring Western District	Red Lion Hotel, Kelso	June 9 - 10	www.wacounties.org/wsac
Washington State Association of County Assessors' Annual June Conference	Ellensburg Inn, Ellensburg	June 13-15	(360) 753-7319
Washington State Association of County Auditors' Annual Conference	Marcus Whitman Hotel & Conference Center, Walla Walla	June 14-16	(360) 753-7319
Washington Association of Coroners and Medical Examiners' (WACME) Annual Conference & Training	Campbell's Lodge, Chelan	June 20-21	(360) 753-7319
Washington State Association of County Clerks' Annual Conference	Red Lion Silverdale Hotel, Silverdale	June 20-24	(360) 753-7319
Washington State Association of County Treasurers' Annual Conference	Clarion Hotel, Yakima	June 20-24	(360) 753-7319
Association of Washington Cities' (AWC) Annual Conference	Tri-Cities	June 21-24	(360) 753-7319
WA Association of Prosecuting Attorneys' Summer Training Program	Campbell's Lodge, Lake Chelan	June 22-24	(360) 753-2175
National Sheriffs' Association Annual Conference	Louisville, Kentucky	June 25-29	(360) 753-7319
Government Finance Officers' Association (GFOA) Annual Conference	San Antonio, Texas	June 26-29	(360) 753-7319
International Association of Clerks, Recorders, Election Officials and Treasurers' (IACREOT) 34th Annual Conference	New York, New York	June 29 – July 6	(360) 397-2003 or joanne.mcbride@clark.wa.gov

Attachments

FOR YOUR BENEFIT Washington Counties Insurance Pool Offers a 24- Hour Phone Support by INTRACORP NURSES

"Nurseline"
1-800-578-7816

This service is available to all WCIP medical subscribers. As consumers we are often confused about when and where to seek medical attention. Nurseline nurses can answer your questions and offer appropriate information, saving you time, worry, and frustration.

Nurses will be available to:

- ⊙ Answer medical and health-related questions
- ⊙ Offer health care options
- ⊙ Direct members to the appropriate provider at the right time
- ⊙ Suggest self-care techniques for common symptoms
- ⊙ Explain treatment plans and technical terms
- ⊙ Provide information to minimize concerns and increase peace of mind
- ⊙ Direct members to local and national support group resources

The nurses at INTRACORP are educated to answer medical questions and offer suggestions. The nurse may recommend that you seek treatment by your provider, hospital emergency room or any other facility.

This does not guarantee payment for services rendered, as to the nurses **are not** informed about insurance plan design.

All claims will be processed and paid according to contract benefit schedules for your particular WCIP medical plan.

Group Health Options subscribers will continue to call the consulting nurse after business hours, weekends or holidays at the phone numbers shown below:

**Western Washington 1-800-297-6877
Central/Eastern WA 1-800-826-3620
For more information about
Washington Counties Insurance
Fund/Pool, please call (360) 586-0466.**

CD's Aim Is To Guide Teens' Choices

From the TriCity Herald, March 28, 2005 by Genoa Sibold-Cohn

Two years ago, thespian Graham Klym played the role of a teenager given some tough choices about alcohol in a videotaped scenario on underage drinking.

Klym, a 20-year-old Kamiakin High School graduate, posed as a boy left home alone with his mischievous best friend for the weekend.

The production gives kids who view it the opportunity to decide if Klym's character would drink vodka and have a party at his parents' home.

He does. In fact, the boy and his friend get intoxicated and are rushed to the emergency room for alcohol poisoning.

It's these consequences that producers of the scenario and similar videotaped short plays want middle school and high school kids to see and understand.

"It's making them part of the learning process," said Klym, now a junior at Evergreen State College in Olympia.

The scenarios are part of an interactive CD-ROM being developed by Franklin County

Coroner Dan Blasdel, the Benton-Franklin Substance Abuse Coalition in Richland and ImageWorks Media Group in Pasco. The CD, People Learning About Destructive Decisions (PLADD), also has scenarios on drinking and driving, date rape and domestic violence. The goal is to supply the CDs to schools and driver's education classes for free.

The scenarios are designed to teach kids the consequences of risky behavior by navigating through the CD and answering yes and no questions. Kids even can make it more personal by adding their names and their best friend's names to the scenarios, Blasdel said.

Blasdel's group also is in the process of coming up with an animated cartoon character to narrate for people who have difficulty reading.

Blasdel started working on the CD-ROM more than five years ago and wanted to supply it to driver's education classes. Then he met with officials with the Benton-Franklin Substance Abuse Coalition and ImageWorks, and the CD morphed into a bigger project aimed at targeting the general population on middle school and high school campuses.

So far, \$75,000 in donations have helped develop the project. A \$10,000 Women Helping Women Fund grant helped pay for adding vignettes on domestic violence and date rape to the CD.

The CD is at least six months from arriving in schools and driver's education classes, or until the group can raise \$50,000 to finish it, Blasdel said. This money would go toward a fun-and-games section, adding a wizard to navigate the user through

Attachments

the CD and for final production costs.

"We made a commitment to ourselves that we didn't care how long it took, we were going to see this project through," Blasdel said.

Washington State University and the University of Iowa also are helping the group study the CD's effectiveness. Focus groups made up of Pullman high school students were set up last May at Washington State University, where the students watched the scenarios.

Members of the groups told moderators that the CD provides insightful messages about drinking and driving, but that the messages aren't effective unless they are realistic and individually tailored. The students said the CD was better suited for eighth-graders.

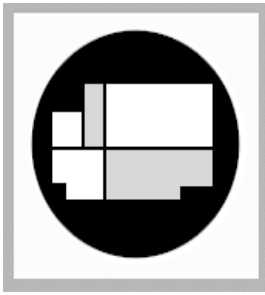
The teens also expressed great concern about parents' reactions to adolescent drinking and any retribution for their actions.

Blasdel said when he thinks of the reasons to finish the CD and get it out to students, 16-year-old Trent Skidmore of Moses Lake comes to mind.

Skidmore was killed in October 1993 when a driver, with a blood alcohol content three times the legal limit and heading the wrong way, struck his car head-on. The accident occurred north of Pasco on Highway 395. It was the first time Skidmore had been allowed to drive out of town, to a football game between Kennewick and Moses Lake high schools.

Skidmore's story was so powerful that one of the scenarios includes a re-enactment of that day. The Skidmore family also donated \$2,500 to the CD project in 2001 after Trent's father, Bob, died. The family asked for donations to go to the CD in lieu of flowers.

Tri-City residents interested in making a donation to the project can send money to People Learning About Destructive Decisions, 1776 Fowler St., Suite 37, Richland, WA 99352.



**Washington State
Association of Counties**

Eastern District Meeting



**Red Lion Hotel
Columbia Center ♦ Kennewick
Benton County
May 19 - 20, 2005**

Agenda

Wednesday, May 18

2:00 - 5:30 p.m.

Board of Directors Meeting

Clearwater Room

Thursday, May 19

7:30 a.m.

Breakfast Buffet (full breakfast)

8:00 a.m.

Opening Ceremonies

- Call to Order - *Greg Partch, Whitman County Commissioner & Eastern District President*
- Presentation of Colors - *Benton County Sheriff's Color Guard*
- Flag Salute
- Invocation
- Introduction of Eastern District Officers, WSAC staff, Jim Beaver, Mayor of Kennewick and other local dignitaries - *Claude Oliver, Chair, Benton County Commission*
- Guest Remarks

9:00 a.m.

Roundtable Discussion

9:45 - 10:00 a.m.

Break

10:00 a.m.

Reconvene Roundtable Discussions

11:30 a.m.

Summaries of Roundtables

Noon - 1:30 p.m.

Lunch

*Pre-briefing from Homeland Security Representatives
Michael diPreto, Office of Defense Preparedness
Rosanne Garrand, Military Department*

1:30 p.m.

Legislative Update:

WSAC Staff and Legislators

3:30 p.m. **Business Meeting**

- Approval of Minutes
- Old Business
- New Business - election of new officers including Secretary/Treasurer and board members as necessary
- Additional summarization of roundtable issues in preparation for Friday session

4:30 p.m. **Adjourn**

6:00 p.m. **Reception and Dinner - Hedges Winery**

Friday, May 20

7:30 a.m. **Breakfast (plated)**

8:00 a.m. **Homeland Security Briefing**
Michael diPretoro, Office of Defense Preparedness
Rosanne Garrand, Military Department

9:45 - 10:00 a.m. **Break**

10:00 a.m. **Breakout Sessions:**

- 1) Continuation of Rural Issues Subcommittee briefing on CTED facilitation of rural economic development
 - *Victor Vasquez, Assistant Director for Economic Development*
 - *Brent Bahrenburg, Department of Community, Trade and Economic Development*
- 2) Roundtable Discussion Wrap-up: Prioritization of Thursday Discussions and Summarization of Issues for Report

11:30 a.m. **Closing Business**
Wrap-up from roundtable groups, comments from meeting hosts, vote on location and date for next meeting, announcement of upcoming meetings

Noon Adjourn