

the Courthouse Journal

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Washington Association of County Officials
Washington State Association of Counties

February 25, 2005
Issue No. 8

*Inside the
Courthouse Journal*

Budget, Finance & Taxes
Page 4

**Courts, Public Safety, Law
& Justice**
Pages 5 - 6

**Elections, Licensing
& Recording**
Pages 7 - 8

**Environment, Land Use &
Resources**
Pages 9 - 10

General Government Issues
Page 11

**Public Health & Human
Services**
Pages 12 - 14

**Transportation &
Public Works**
Page 15

**Training & Upcoming
Events**
Pages 16 - 17

Good Things
Page 18

Courthouse Ramblings
Page 18

Calendar of Events
Pages 19 - 20

**National
County Hero's
- National
County
Government
Week - April
10 - 16
See Page 2**

House Committee Hears County Constitutional Amendments

HJR 4211 and 4212, which would allow for the combining of functions between counties and create charter counties without a freeholder election, were heard this week in the House Local Government Committee. Commissioners Mark Linqvist, Wahkiakum; George Raiter, Cowlitz; and Lynda Ring-Erickson testified that the bills would allow counties governance options that they do not have now. They also recognized that

not all county officials were in support of the specific language in the bills, but were willing to work with the committee in perfecting the legislation. They also said that even if they could not get that done this session they would work on it for next year.

Committee Chair Geoff Simpson said that the bills may take more work, but he was committed to working with the counties.

WACO's Response to Constitutional Amendments

WACO President Tom Fallquist, Spokane County Clerk, reaffirmed WACO's commitment to promoting efficiencies in the delivery of local government services and to furthering the dialogue surrounding HJR 4211 and HJR 4212, which were heard this week in House Local Government. The following are excerpts from his response to the resolutions' sponsor, Representative Helen Sommers, and to the members of the committee:

"On behalf of the 261 county assessors, auditors, clerks, coroners and medical examiners, prosecutors, sheriffs and treasurers that I represent, I thank you for your continued interest in solving the fiscal problems plaguing the counties in Washington and, once again, commit the membership of the Washington Association of County Officials (WACO) to working with you to find cost-efficient

and innovative ways for county governments to operate. In truth, WACO's annual legislative package is aimed at those very goals.

"We feel there are many more realistic avenues to achieve efficiencies than the ones outlined in HJR 4212. It is even more important that the county officials responsible to the public for those operations participate in the process. When the discussion began last session with HJR 4215, we accepted your invitation to meet with others at the table to examine all the available options. We would still like to do that.

"HJR 4212 falsely assumes that elimination of elected offices will save money and fails to recognize that nothing is gained by consolidating two county offices that most likely have been operating at a "bare bones" level for years. In the process, valuable checks and

balances will be lost as most offices become accountable to the county legislative authority and not the electorate. Your own King County has one more elected official in

The Courthouse Journal

Published weekly (during Legislative Session) and Bi-weekly (other than Session) by the Washington Association of County Officials (WACO) and the Washington State Association of Counties (WSAC).

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

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CPO PROGRAM

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recent years (the sheriff) and as the election results came in question, the citizens' cry was not to have another county run the election but rather to reinstate an "elected" officer to conduct elections. We believe an open dialogue of state and county will reveal many more effective ways to achieve efficiencies than HJR 4212. Please tell me we will be able to participate."

Honoring County Heroes - National County Government Week - April 10-16

(By Angelo D. Kyle, President, National Association of Counties)

Dear Fellow County Official, National County Government Week (NCGW), celebrated this year from April 10-16, is the perfect time to honor and recognize county employees who serve America. Whether it is policing streets, fighting fires, saving lives in hospitals, keeping families healthy, repairing bridges, plowing snow, helping troubled youth, training laid-off workers, or the countless other jobs county employees partake in, these men and woman deserve to be recognized for the work they do every day.

The theme for this year's National County Government Week celebration is "Honoring County Heroes." Many of the residents in your county don't know how county employees serve America. National County Government Week offers an opportunity to highlight not only their service, but also other programs and services your county runs.

During NCGW, inform and educate your citizens about how your county is serving America.

- Discuss the recent programs your county implemented, which seek new and innovative ways to reduce crime.
- Talk about the new equipment your county has received, which in turn, will make it easier for police officers, emergency workers and fire fighters to do their jobs on a daily basis.
- Emphasize the various programs your county runs to help needy children and families.

First celebrated in 1990, National County Government Week was initiated to raise public awareness about counties. Counties represent diverse and vibrant communities in every region of the country. The activities during NCGW help citizens better understand how counties respond to their needs and, by extension, how counties across America serve the nation.

County Government Week also offers an ideal time for recognition ceremonies. You could recognize employees for the work they do, volunteers for the service they provide or poll workers for the hours they spend working on Election Day.

Nationally, NACo will celebrate County Government Week in a number of different ways. I have launched a year-long national initiative seeking to ensure that county employees can afford to live in the communities in which they serve. I encourage you to study my initiative and think about other ways we can help out our county heroes.

NACo will hold two award ceremonies during National County Government Week. The 3rd Annual Counties Care for Kids Award recognizes innovative and model early childhood county government

NOTE: Legislative Committee schedules and agendas can be found at <http://www.leg.wa.gov/wsladm/calendar.cfm>

programs. The 6th Annual Acts of Caring Awards honor the top county volunteer programs in the country.

There are many ways to celebrate county government. You can hold open houses at county facilities, visit schools to talk about county government, speak to business groups and issue a proclamation.

I encourage you to be one of the more than 1,000 counties that work each year to help citizens better understand the valuable services counties provide. We look forward to hearing from you about the interesting, exciting activities you have planned for the week. Thank you for considering participation in National County Government Week.

Angelo D. Kyle

NACo President

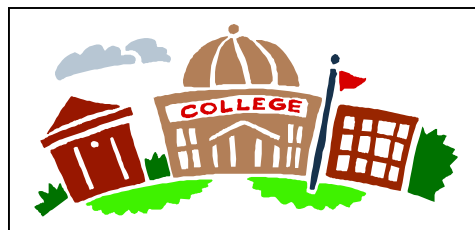
Board Member, Lake County, Illinois

Washington Counties Scholarships Now Available!

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

REET Fee Increase

Treasurers' Legislative Chair Rose Bowman, Lewis County Treasurer, was on hand to testify in support of **SSB 5281** in the Senate Government Operations and Elections Committee Tuesday. This is the Treasurers'/WACO priority bill raising the Real Estate Excise Tax (REET) fee to fund the development of an automated system to process REET. The companion bill, **SHB 1240**, has passed out of the House Local Government Committee, and was referred to the House Finance Committee, where it will receive yet another hearing on Tuesday, March 1, at 10:00 a.m.

Treasurers' Administrative Provisions

Another Treasurers'/WACO priority bill, **SHB 1158**, modifying county

treasurers' administrative provisions, is in the House Rules Committee and we would urge anyone with a member on this committee to call and ask that the bill be pulled to the floor calendar. Representatives on House Rules are Chopp, Chandler, Blake, Anderson, Clibborn, Armstrong, Flannigan, Clements, Grant, Ericksen, Hudgins, McDonald, Hunt, Tom, Kessler, Lovick and Morrell. The Senate companion bill, **SB 5014**, will include one more technical amendment and is on the executive session schedule in the Senate Government Operations and Elections Committee.

Assessor Priority Bill Moves Out of Senate Ways & Means

Congratulations to the Assessors! **SB 5026**, their destroyed property priority bill moved out of Ways &

Means on Thursday, February 24. The bill is still in its original form.

The title of the bill for tracking purposes is "Property Tax Abatement". It would reinstate the destroyed property tax abatement that sunsetted in 2004. It also requires that a structure be involuntary destroyed in order to receive tax relief in the current year.

The bill has moved on to the Senate Rules Committee. Please contact your members on that Committee to pull the bill for a floor vote.

Schedules are subject to change- PLEASE check this link <http://www.leg.wa.gov/wsladm/calendar.htm>

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Bill #	Committee	Description	Time	<u>Location</u> <i>Bldg/Room</i>	Date
SHB 1240	House Finance	Funding the Development of an Automated System to Process Real Estate Excise Taxes – Treasurers'/WACO Priority	10:00	HHR C	3-1-05

Courts, Public Safety, Law & Justice

Late Arrival for Sheriffs

HB 2222, enhancing the sentencing for attempting to elude a police officer, was not introduced until Thursday and has only one shot at being heard and passed out of committee before the first cutoff date on March 2. Sheriffs are encouraged to thank the Chair of House Criminal Justice and Corrections, Representative Al O'Brien, for scheduling. **HB 2222** will be heard on March 1, the only date the committee is set to meet. **HB 2222**, sponsored by Representative Dean Takko, allows the prosecutor to file a special allegation when the person eluding endangers another person. An additional 12 months shall be added to the standard sentence.

Other Late Introductions

HB 2223 prohibits county clerks from charging law enforcement agencies for certified copies of documents related to sex offenders.

HB 2228 has several new sections governing investigations when law enforcement officers are involved in traffic accidents.

Where Are the WACO Bills?

HB 1471, authentication of documents, is on the House Floor Calendar and should come up for vote soon. Clerks are encouraged to contact their representatives for support. WACO thanks Representative John Lovick for his sponsorship and support.

SSB 5035, forensic pathology, passed out of the Senate Floor Calendar today, 46 to nothing. **SSB 5035** eliminates the state forensic pathology specialist program from the University of Washington and allows the Forensic Investigations

Council to move forward in development of a state forensic pathologist. The specialist program has been largely vacant for a number of years. Coroners, medical examiners and FIC members are urged to thank Senator Pat Thibaudeau for her "shepherding" of **SSB 5035** through the process.

HB 1207/SB 5133, the privileged communication bills, led by the prosecutors, are both in their respective Judiciary Committees and could use a shove. Please contact your members.

SB 5242, inmates possessing weapons, is in the Senate Human Services and Corrections Committee. It looks as though the bill will be amended so that possession will be a Class C felony. Sheriffs viewed the compromise as a move in the right direction.

Continued County Clerk Discussion on LFOs

County clerks continue to oppose measures that will either lower the interest rates on the legal financial obligations of convicted offenders or grant them a certificate of discharge and the ability to vote before the legal financial obligation is paid. Included on the list of objectionable bills are **HB 1358/SB 5339**, **HB 1359/SB 5611**. **HB 2062**, a voter registration bill, allows a felon to receive a certificate of discharge and the right to vote (section 3) before payment of legal financial obligations. **HB 2062** is set for hearing on Monday evening at 6:00 in House State Government Operations and Elections. **HB 1358** is in the House Rules Committee; **HB 1359** is in House Appropriations; **SB**

5339 is in Senate Rules; and, **SB 5611** remains in Senate Judiciary. Interested parties are urged to monitor all these bills for movement as the first cutoff looms.

Mental Health Issues in Jails

With only one county jail left to report (and that would be a big one), the costs of psychotropic medications alone in city and county jails is nearing \$2 million annually. Prescription medications will run near \$5 million. The survey compiling costs started with the Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs (WASPC) and has delved into more detail through WACO.

County sheriffs working in concert with WSAC staff have been instrumental in getting the message to the legislature. Monday Grays Harbor County Sheriff Mike Whelan, Mason County Sheriff Steve Whybark, and Pacific County Sheriff John Didion, armed with talking points and the survey, contacted over 20 legislators. They urged them to review the enormity of the problem of the mentally ill and urged their support of **SHB 1219**, a prescription drug consortium bill now on the Senate side in Health and Long-term Care Committee; **SB 5763**, mental disorder treatment in the Senate Human Services and Corrections Committee, and **HB 1290**, if amended to allow local control over mental health programs. Once again, these bills may move at any moment due to the cutoffs in policy and fiscal committees so it helps to let all your legislators know which bills can help solve local problems.

Courts, Public Safety, Law and Justice (continued)

Domestic Violence Bills

SHB 1314, a \$10 fee on marriage licenses and family law filings to fund the Domestic Violence Prevention Account, is in the House Appropriations Committee where the cutoff is March 7.

HB 2087, allowing vacation of domestic violence misdemeanor and gross misdemeanor convictions, will be heard Monday evening, February 28, in the House Judiciary Committee at 6:00 p.m. along with **HB 2122**, that allows a domestic violence advocate to reveal a confidential communication made by the victim if the victim is in imminent danger of harm or death. It provides some immunity to the advocate for the disclosure.

Court Funding

SB 5454, the bill brought forward by the Board for Judicial Administration to increase Superior Court filing fees to \$200 and fund juror payment and indigent defense, continues to reside in the Senate Judiciary Committee.

HB 1984/SB 5984, King County bills to provide a \$30 processing fee for any ex parte court order are in the Judiciary Committees in each house.

Elections, Licensing and Recording

Vote by Mail

Snohomish County Auditor Bob Terwilliger appeared before the House State Government Operations and Accountability Committee on Tuesday to lend the Auditors' Association's strong support to **HB 1754**, authorizing county-wide mail ballot elections, and **HB 1990**, requiring elections to be conducted by mail ballot. Prior to the public hearing on these bills, two elections officials from Oregon discussed Oregon's all vote by mail (VBM) primaries and general elections. Initially, Oregon's Governor vetoed the bill to authorize Oregon as a VBM state in 1997, but an initiative to do so was passed in 1998.

Nellie Bogue-Hibbert, Union County (OR) Clerk, and John Kauffman, Director of Elections in Multnomah County (OR), gave an excellent presentation on Oregon's VBM system. Oregon's primary is held the 3rd Tuesday in May and requires that ballots be in by election day. Their estimates are that VBM has trimmed the costs of elections by 40% in that state.

Elections Bills Moving This Week

The State Government Operations & Accountability Committee passed the following bills out of committee this week:

HB 1755, requiring the Secretary of State (SOS) to publish a primary voters' pamphlet, has been referred to the House Appropriations Committee.

SHB 1748, requiring the state to pay its share of even-year election costs, has also been referred to the House Appropriations Committee.

Both of these bills are SOS request bills and are supported by the

County Auditors' Association. **SHB 1748** has been endorsed by WACO and WSAC as well.

On the Senate floor calendar are: **SSB 5219**, moving the primary to the third week of August.

SSB 5395, requiring voting devices to produce paper records.

Amendments to **SB 5395** included a provision requiring that on one-fourth of the machines selected for an audit, the paper records must be tabulated manually. On the remaining machines selected for an audit, the paper records may be tabulated by a mechanical device determined by the Secretary of State to be capable of accurately reading the votes.

SSB 5499, clarifying and standardizing various election procedures.

SB 5564, requiring the secretary of state to prepare a manual of election laws and rules.

SB 5565, informing out-of-state, overseas, and service voters of rights and procedures.

SB 5744, authorizing county-wide mail ballot elections.

SSB 5745, harmonizing existing primary laws with the provisions and intent of I-872.

SSB 5743, voter registration.

Referred to the Senate Ways and Means Committee were:

SSB 5741, requiring the Secretary of State (SOS) to publish a primary voters' pamphlet.

SB 5742, strengthening review and correction of county election procedures.

SSB 5746, requiring the state to pay its share of even-year election costs.

Licensing Fee Increases to Fund Driver's Education

HB 1879, providing a funding source to assist students with driver's education costs, will be heard in the House Transportation Committee on Wednesday, March 2, at 3:30 p.m. in House Hearing Room B. The bill would require that beginning with vehicle registrations that are due or become due July 1, 2005 and thereafter, at the time of initial vehicle registration or upon periodic replacement of license plates under RCW 46.16.233, the registered owner shall pay and the department shall collect an additional fee of three dollars for each license plate issued, to assist in funding traffic safety education.

Also being heard that day at the same time is another bill that would fund driver's education for low income students. **HB 1880** provides that, at the time of initial vehicle registration or upon periodic replacement of license plates under RCW 46.16.233, the registered owner shall pay and the department shall collect an additional fee of one dollar to assist in funding traffic safety education for low-income students.

Subagent Fee Increase & Recommending a Subagent Successor

HB 1581, revising the authority of a vehicle licensing subagent to recommend a successor is scheduled for a hearing on Wednesday, March 2, in the House Transportation Committee at 3:30 p.m. in House Hearing Room B. Also, to be heard that day is **HB 1582**, increasing certain fees of licensing subagents. This bill increases the amount a subagent is allowed to collect from \$8.50 to \$10.00 for changes in a

Elections, Licensing and Recording (continued)

certificate of ownership with or without registration renewal, or verification of record & preparation

of an affidavit of lost title other than at the time of the application or transfer. It also increases the \$3.00

for registration renewal, issuing a transit permit, or any other service to \$4.00.

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Bill #	Committee	Description	Time	<i>Location</i> <i>Bldg/Room</i>	Date
<u>HB 2062</u>	House State Government Operations and Accountability	Tracking the voter registration of former felons	6:00 p.m.	HHRD	2-28-05
<u>HB 2158</u>	House State Government Operations and Accountability	Modifying Election Laws	6:00 p.m.	HHRD	2-28-05

Environment, Land Use and Resources

GMA Bills Stir Passion Pro and Con

Hearings in both House and Senate Committees this week on a variety of GMA bills brought passionate testimony from those seeking change and from those wanting the law to stay the same. County and city staff both testified in support of **SB 5930**, revising the GMA update schedule and allowing slow-growing counties to defer one update entirely. The deferral is supported by FutureWise (formerly 1000 Friends of Washington) but for fewer jurisdictions – and FutureWise wants to keep the current 7-year update cycle.

City staff and city officials strongly supported **SB 5907** and **HB 1967**, stating that no minimum density is required for any specific development in an urban growth area so long as the jurisdiction is meeting its overall density targets. County staff indicated support for the concept, but urged both Senate and House Committees to keep language that also allowed flexibility in rural areas and suggested clarification to ensure that the amendments not be interpreted by some cities as a license for low-density development.

County staff and the Farm Bureau also supported **SB 5945**, allowing greater flexibility in designating agricultural land of long-term commercial significance. Two Lewis County farmers opposed the bill.

Bills to revise the update schedule will be heard in House Local Government on Monday, February 28, 2005 at 1:30 pm. Also on the agenda that afternoon are **HB 2171**, allowing a one-year delay in critical areas updates, **HB 2194**, increasing public participation requirements,

and **HB 2207**, which puts into statute the existing agency guidance on best available science.

Streamlined Forest Conversion Bill Moves Ahead

HB 1404, a joint effort of WSAC, the Department of Natural resources and the Department of Community, Trade and Economic Development was amended and reported from Committee this week. The bill amends existing law that requires every county and city to adopt regulations consistent with forest practice rules for forest land that will not be replanted, but that is being converted to other uses. Counties and cities with a significant number of conversions will still take over the regulatory role from DNR, but are required to apply their critical areas ordinance and not forest practice rules.

Environment, Land Use & Resources (continued)

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Bill #	Committee	Description	Time	<i>Location</i> <i>Bldg/Room</i>	Date
<u>SB 6030</u>	Senate Government Operations & Elections	Precluding GMA appeals of issues not updated	10:00 am	JAC-1	02/28/05
<u>HB 2079</u> <u>HB 2171</u> <u>HB 2194</u> <u>HB 2207</u>	House Local Government Committee	GMA bills addressing update schedule, public participation requirements and best available science	1:30 pm	JLOB E	02/28/05/
<u>HB 1657</u>	House Natural Resources, Ecology & Parks	Prohibiting DNR from charging counties and cities for air space over aquatic lands when building or repairing a bridge	8:00 pm	JLOB D	03/01/05

General Government Issues

WACO/Auditor Priority Bill Passes Out Committee With Amendment

SB 5458, 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 last night in an amended form. The new bill increases the surcharge on recorded documents from \$2 to \$4 with the caveat that one dollar of the surcharge be deposited in the county general fund to be used at the discretion of the county commissioners to promote historical preservation or historical programs, which may include preservation of historic documents. The companion bill HB 1386 is still in its original state and is awaiting a hearing in the House Finance Committee.

Public Health and Human Services

HB 1290, Cody Bill on Mental Health Restructuring Heard in House Appropriations

Representative Eileen Cody's bill, **HB 1290**, on mental health restructuring was heard before House Appropriations on Wednesday, February 23. When bills get to the Appropriations Committee, the public hearing on individual bills is usually quite short. And this was no exception. The bill is improved from its original form with several of the county amendments included such as clarifying who designates the tribal role on a county governing board and the ability for a county to be a licensed service provider. It still has two major issues where counties disagree with the bill as well as a few little technical issues. The big issues include the undefined procurement process run by the Department which is open to any entity, and the state designating the mental health professional who would be responsible for administering the involuntary commitment act. The technical issues include the state designing the duties and membership of the local mental health advisory board, which would include county elected officials and law enforcement, and some inconsistency in the dates. The bill has an emergency clause which would put all the deletions of "county" into effect, yet the "new system" wouldn't go into effect until July 1, 2005.

With the help of county sheriffs everywhere and Debbie Wilke, Executive Director of WACO, WSAC staff had some very nice hand-outs detailing the costs of the mentally ill in jails which she gave to the committee. She also gave them the

recommendations from the RSN Administrators for improving the system along with a renewed plea for restoring the \$82 million. Others who testified included Secretary Braddock, DSHS; Eleanor Owen representing all of NAMI; Melanie Stewart representing Timberlands and small RSNs generally; and Ann Christian representing the Washington Community Mental Health Council. Aside from Stewart, who has become a partner with WSAC in talking to a number of legislators, the others all spoke in support of the bill. The Committee was very attentive and asked a number of good questions. Rep. Hinkle asked WSAC staff about county property tax millage dedicated to mental health and where it goes. What would happen to that money, which is about \$8 – 10 million per year, is certainly up for debate.

Representative Cody has indicated that the bill will come out of House Appropriations on Monday with some amendments. Those are unknown at present.

In another related note, Senator Hargrove's bill, **SB 5763**, will be passed out of his committee Thursday evening, February 24. It is expected to be substantially modified with pieces dropped, changed and possibly even added. A draft was not available at the time of this writing.

Housing Bills of Special Interest in New House Housing Committee

HB 2163 and **HB 2026**, sponsored by Representative Timm Ormsby from Spokane, were heard Thursday, February 24. Both these bills present some problems for both WSAC and

WACO. They both have the best of intentions and in concept are wonderful. **HB 2163** requires state and local plans plus full implementation to end chronic homelessness in every county and on a statewide basis in 10 years. **HB 2026** would create a state rental assistance program for low income persons in response to the recent cuts in Section 8 rental vouchers. The down side is that **HB 2163** requires counties to be responsible for coming up with the plan and ending homelessness, along with copious amounts of accompanying bureaucracy such as daily censuses of homelessness, monitoring, data collection, advisory boards, and reports. DCTED is responsible for the state side of the plan and implementation.

The funds to pay for this plan are from the county document recording fee which would be increased in three different increments with different funding formulas and for different specific purposes. The existing fee, which was raised \$10 to fund local housing programs in **HB 2060** a few years ago, would be raised to \$12, an additional \$2. A separate \$10 surcharge would be added and finally a county option, an additional \$5 surcharge, would be added on top of that. Just to make things even more complicated, the other bill, **HB 2026** also raises the surcharge by an additional \$10. That's a total of \$27 in new fees. Each \$10 raises about \$12 – 18 million per year. However, whispered among the audience was a reality check that to actually end homelessness could cost as much as several billion dollars on a statewide basis. In addition to both transitional and permanent housing, support

Public Health and Human Services (continued)

services including mental health, substance abuse, domestic violence, and employment would be necessary to keep people in housing. These costs are understood by the advocates but not emphasized adequately in the bills.

Both WSAC and WACO, ably represented by Kim Wyman, Thurston County Auditor, were quite clear about their concerns. Counties are not looking for additional programs to manage, especially at this time. All the varying funding appropriations and different formulas for parceling out would require a significant amount of administrative cost for the auditors which are not adequately covered. Both Wyman and WSAC staff expressed a willingness to work with the bi-partisan sponsors to see if there is room for some compromises on what are well-intentioned pieces of legislation.

Late word is that the Committee went ahead and passed out **HB 2163** on a partisan vote of 5 – 4 with the Democrats voting for the bill. It is agreed that it remains a work in progress, so both WSAC and WACO will continue to work on this bill.

Public Health and Human Services (continued)

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Bill #	Committee	Description	Time	Location Bldg/Room	Date
<u>HB 1663</u>	H. Appropriations	Creating the prevention and intervention investment council.	3:30	JLOB A	2/28/05
<u>HB 2115</u> <u>HB 2169</u> <u>HB 2160</u>	H. Children & Family Services	Providing information to pregnant women about opiate treatment programs. Authorizing specified counties to regulate day care. Creating a commission to study care for persons with developmental disabilities.	1:30	JLOB D	2/28/05
<u>HB 2181</u> <u>HB 2182</u>	H. Children & Family Services	Creating an autism task force. Prohibiting use of public assistance electronic debit cards for nonnecessities.	8:00 a.m.	JLOB D	3/2/05
<u>HB 1685</u>	H. Health Care	Concerning health insurance policy mandates.	8:00	JLOB A	2/28/05
<u>HB 2140</u>	H. Housing	Making short-term loans available for low-income housing purposes.	8:00	JLOB D	3/1/05
<u>HB 2126</u>	H. Judiciary	Providing accommodations to dependent persons who are victims and witnesses.	10:00	JLOB B	3/1/05
<u>HB 2073</u> <u>HB 2153</u>	H. Juvenile Justice & Family Law	Revising juvenile sentencing alternatives. Revising provisions pertaining to at-risk youth proceedings.	6:00	JLOB E	2/28/05
<u>SB 6044</u>	S. Financial Institutions, Housing & Consumer Protection	Providing assistance for low-income persons.	3:30	JAC 2	3/1/05
<u>S-1459.1</u>	S. Judiciary	Establishing a commission on psychoactive substance control.	3:30	JAC 1	3/2/05

Transportation and Public Works

Commissioner Dane Keane is My Hero

(By Michael Shaw, WSAC)

Douglas County Commissioner Dane Keane is not my hero for driving across the state to represent his association without pause or complaint, or for testifying brilliantly before both the House and Senate Transportation Committees concerning transportation funding for counties - converting several key legislators to our cause. Nor is he my hero for surviving several harrowing years with former Douglas County Commissioner, now CRAB director, Jay "Big Dog" Weber. Nope.

Dane Keane is my hero because, in addition to doing all of the above, all very impressive and worthy of praise, he found, figured out and stoically wore a neck tie for the first time in God-knows-how-many years (according to Mr. Weber, it has been quite a few) just for the hearings. He did us all proud despite of the obvious discomfort he inflicted on himself for the greater good. I salute you sir!

Comm. Keane spoke concerning companion bills **HB 1989** and **SB 6016**, which are the product of the Association of Washington Cities. These bills each contain four local funding options for transportation: a vehicle license fee, a vehicle weight fee, a gas tax (increasing the current option from 10% to 20% of state gas tax), and a street-utility tax (just for cities).

Comm. Keane focused on Section 1 of the bill, which concerned the local option vehicle license fee. He offered the unique perspective of a county that once implemented a similar fee only to have it repealed by Initiative 776. He focused on the

importance of those lost vehicle license fee dollars to his county and to his cities – cities that were initially reticent, but became strong supporters of the fee due to the road improvements it allowed. Particularly compelling, Comm. Keane noted that, for a rural county, these dollars made a big impact because the county used every penny for rock, gravel or asphalt – improvements that citizens could see and support.

Pierce County's George Walk also testified powerfully on behalf of the counties regarding the loss of the vehicle license fee and the need to again have this resource available to the counties. He noted that when the initiative abolished the local funding option, it created a big hole in Pierce County's six-year transportation plan and made many citizens angry over the loss of anticipated road projects that had been set to proceed but had to be stopped for lack of funds.

Thanks to rural county lobbyist, Jim Potts, for working with the legislators on this issue and for helping Comm. Keane find his way in spite of my attempts to completely confuse him. Jim's work behind the scenes always eases the way for the rest of us.

Training and Upcoming Events

Workshop Name

Public Meetings, Public Disclosure & More
Do You Know the Rules?

Dates & Locations

March 30	Colfax
March 31	Ellensburg
April 6	Mt Vernon
April 7	University Place/Tacoma

Co-Sponsors

Association of Washington Cities
Municipal Research & Services Center
Certified Public Officials Program

About this Workshop

This short course is designed to provide specific training for elected officials, as well as management staff, on a number of legal issues that may get you into trouble and onto the front page of your local newspaper.

For example, what about that meeting to discuss controversial contract negotiations or contemplated budget reductions? Can the meeting be held in private? Do e-mails between elected officials constitute a meeting and must they be released to the public? Is it okay for the mayor to phone individual council members prior to a council meeting to find out how they will vote on an issue? This training will give you guidelines to follow in dealing with such issues, as well as provide answers to your specific questions.

Agenda

Registration: 8:30 - 9:00 am

The Program: 9:00 am - 12:30 pm

- Open Public Meetings Act
- Executive Sessions
- Public Records and Disclosure Requirements
- Appearance of Fairness Doctrine & Quasi-Judicial Hearings
- Potential Conflicts of Interest and Ethical Guidelines

Who should attend

Several associations representing cities and counties have joined together to offer this important workshop for local elected officials, attorneys and management staff. Officials from special purpose districts are also welcome to attend.

Workshop Presenters & Background

Pat Mason and *Paul Sullivan*, legal consultants with the Municipal Research & Services Center, advise city and county officials daily on the legal issues covered in this workshop. Paul Sullivan also was formerly City Attorney for the City of Ellensburg.

Locations

This workshop will be presented at 4 locations. See below for specific locations and directions.

Colfax, March 30

Community Education Training Center (CETC), N. 123 Main Street, Colfax.

The CETC is the old Elks Lodge, across from Bulldog Pizza Parlor, at the first stop light going south on Main Street, in downtown Colfax.

Training and Upcoming Events (continued)

Ellensburg, March 31

Hal Holmes Community Center

201 North Ruby, Ellensburg, WA

Take Exit 109 off I-90, continuing north into town. Turn right on 3rd Avenue and right on North Ruby Street. Hal Holmes Center is between 2nd & 3rd Avenues.

<http://epl.eburg.com/holmes/hhmap.jpg>

Mt. Vernon, April 6

McIntyre Hall, Skagit Valley College

2501 East College Way, Mount Vernon

From I-5 North or South, take Exit 227, College Way. Go East on College Way until you pass the light at LaVenture Ave. Go past the entrance to Skagit Valley College. Turn left into the McIntyre Hall parking area.

http://www.mcintyrehall.org/news.asp_Q_pagenunder_E_1319

University Place/Tacoma, April 7

Pierce County Environmental Services Building

9850 - 64th Street West, University Place

From I-5 North or South, take Exit 130 and follow S 56th St West. 56th St W will become Cirque Drive W when you cross over Orchard St W. Continue on Cirque Dr W until you reach Bridgeport Way W. Turn left and follow Bridgeport to Chambers Lane W. Turn right onto Chambers Lane W. Chambers Lane W will become Chambers Creek Road W and then 64th St W. Continue to 9850-64th St W. The entrance to the parking lot is located at the first roundabout.

<http://www.co.pierce.wa.us/pc/services/home/environ/esbrental/reservations.htm>

Registration and Fees

The workshop registration fee is \$60 per person. Registration fees include the cost of refreshments and workshop materials. Registration instructions for our new online system will follow shortly.

For further information, please contact Program Manager Julie Kaufman at jkaufman@wacounties.org

Good Things

Mason County Receives Rural Health Works Grant

(Submitted by Mason County Commissioners - New Release dated February 22, 2005)

Mason County was one of three counties nation-wide to receive a National Association of Counties "Rural Health Works" Technical Assistance grant. The purpose of the grant is to understand the economic impact of the local health care sector on the larger Mason County

economic. Mason General Hospital is our fifth largest employer. If we consider our other health service providers such as our physicians, dentists, mental health counselors, drug and alcohol counselors, home health workers, Public Health, and rehab facilities; then the economic impact is considerably higher. The Rural Health Works grant should help us more fully understand and realize this economic potential. Partners in the grant are Mason

Matters, Mason County Department of Health Services, Economic Development Council, Mason General Hospital, and CHOICE Regional Health.

For additional information, you may contact Steve Kutz at 360-427-9670, Ext. 260, or Kim Klint at ext. 543.

Courthouse Ramblings

Several people have requested an email address for **Darcie Nielsen**, former San Juan County Commissioner. Darcie is now working in Turkey and can be

reached at darcie@superonline.com or darciensjc@yahoo.com.

Calendar of Events

Meeting	Location	Date	Information
For your convenience training and workshops are bolded.			
<u>MARCH 2005</u>			
Property Records Industry Association (PRIA) Legislative Conference	Marriott Wardman, Washington D.C.	March 2 - 3	www.pria.us
WSAC Rural Issues Sub-committee	WA Counties Bldg, Olympia	March 3	(360) 753-1886
Urban County Caucus	Mercato Ristorante', Olympia	March 3	(360) 753-1886
WSAC Legislative Steering Committee	WA Counties Bldg, Olympia	March 4	(360) 753-1886
National Association of Clerks, Recorders and Elections Officials (NACRC) Legislative Conference (with NACo)	Marriott Wardman, Washington, D.C.	March 4 - 6	www.nacrc.org
National Association of Counties' (NACo) Annual Legislative Conference	Marriot Wardman Park Hotel, Washington, DC	March 4 - 8	www.naco.org
'Your Path to the Marketplace'	Pend Oreille County	Mar. 5 – Apr. 16	(509) 447-2401
WA Association of Coroners and Medical Examiners' (WACME) Medicolegal Training	WA State Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs Bldg, Lacey	March 7-11	(360) 753-7319
Washington State Association of County Auditors' Recording Conference	Red Lion Hotel, Wenatchee	March 15-16	(360) 753-7319
Assn of County Human Services	Skamania County	March 16 - 18	(360) 753-1886
Washington Counties Insurance Fund (WCIF)/Washington Counties Insurance Pool (WCIP) Boards and Insurance Advisory Committee	Red Lion at the Park, Spokane	March 17	(360) 586-0466
Washington Counties Risk Pool (WCRP) Focus Training "Land Use Issues 2005"	LaQuinta Inn & Suites/Conference Center, Tacoma	March 22	(360) 586-7447
WCAA Annual Conference – Winter	Enzian Inn, Leavenworth	March 23 – 25	(360) 753-1886
Washington Counties Risk Pool (WCRP) Focus Training "Land Use Issues 2005"	Best Western Lake Inn/Conference Center, Moses Lake	March 24	(360) 586-7447
WSAC Rural Issues Sub-committee	WA Counties Bldg, Olympia	March 24	(360) 753-1886
Urban County Caucus	Mercato Ristorante', Olympia	March 24	(360) 753-1886
WSAC Legislative Steering Committee	WA Counties Bldg, Olympia	March 25	(360) 753-1886
CPO Elective Course: Public Meetings, Public Disclosure & More - Do You Know the Rules?	Colfax	March 30	http://d30060429.purehost.com/CPO/CPO.htm
CPO Elective Course: Public Meetings, Public Disclosure & More - Do You Know the Rules?	Ellensburg	March 31	http://d30060429.purehost.com/CPO/CPO.htm

Calendar of Events (continued)

<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 Legislature	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
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	www.wacounties.org/wsac
WA State Association of Sheriffs & Police Chiefs' Spring Conference	Coast Hotel, Wenatchee	May 23-26	(360) 486-2380
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