COMMISSIONERS' MINUTES
KITTITAS COUNTY, WASHINGTON
PUBLIC HEARING

TUESDAY 4:00 P.M. SEPTEMBER 28, 2004

Board members present: Chairman Perry D. Huston and Commissioner Max Golladay. Absent: Vice-Chairman Bruce Coe.

Others: Julie Kjorsvik, Clerk of the Board; Joy Potter, Public Works Staff and approximately 15 members of the public.

PUBLIC HEARING SURPLUS GLADMAR PARK PUBLIC WORKS

At 4:00 p.m. CHAIRMAN HUSTON opened the public hearing to consider the surplus of Gladmar Park.

JOY POTTER, PUBLIC WORKS STAFF read the Engineer’s Report dated September 28, 2004. She said the Board of County Commissioners received a request to sell a portion of Gladmar Park to an adjoining property owner, and had instructed their department to determine if Gladmar Park was surplus to the County needs or not. She submitted a corrected map which included the Conservation Districts boundaries.

She reviewed potential uses including a County park, County gravel pit, County Wetland Mitigation Bank, Public Educational Facility, private fishing area, private gravel pit and an underdeveloped riparian habitat. The area is currently identified as a County park and the Public Works Department has had budget authority for expenditures for at least the past seven years, but there has been no funds spent on park maintenance during those years. Funds had been spent on maintenance of the Gladmar Levee to preserve the Cascade Canal and Packwood Canal diversion in 1998 and 2003. The area is not an approved rock source facility, and it is unlikely that environmental permits could be obtained to conduct pit activities at the location. The County retained approximately 78 acres at Hansen Pit for potential wetland mitigation banks. The Public Works Department did not believe the County needs two areas for those banks. She presented two options including if the internal roads were not vacated, the system would remain open to the public. If the property is declared surplus, the property could be offered to both public agencies and private parties. Easement restrictions could be placed on the property that states “any and all roads and easements past, present and future shall remain open to the public forever”. If a private individual or organization is the successful purchaser of the property, it should be known that
the road system would allow public access and this access cannot be
denied, in accordance with RCW 36.87.130. If the Board determined
to vacate the internal road system within the park, the vacation
will have to be in accordance with RCW 36.87.130 which restricts the
vacation to a public entity or for industrial purposes. The
property is not zoned for industrial use and the Comprehensive Plan
does not identify the area as appropriate for an industrial
operation. City and County governments are restricted in the
vacation of roads that abut waters according to RCW 35.79.035 and
36.87.130. Surplus methods were reviewed including public auction,
sealed bids and land exchange.

The Public Works Department recommended declaring Gladmar Park as
surplus to the County needs, and further recommended that the Board
take no action on the method of disposal until the question
regarding the vacation of the internal road system has been
resolved; that the successful purchaser would be responsible for the
maintenance and operation of the Gladmar Levee; and that the County
should have no liability or responsibility in the levee, if the
property was sold.

THOSE PRESENT & TESTIFYING: GORDON BLOSSOM REPRESENTING HIMSELF AND
THE FIELD & STREAM CLUB encouraged the Board to not surplus Gladmar
Park. He said as the population within the County increases, so
does the need for recreational areas. WAYNE QUIRK, REPRESENTING
CENTRAL WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY, spoke in support of the proposed
vacation. He said Central Washington University has a proposed
project which Gladmar Park would be the ideal setting for a field-
based research and educational site. He reviewed the many benefits
their project could provide, and felt it would be in the best
interest of the County and its citizens. CWU would continue the
regular maintenance and responsibilities, and would partner with
various agencies to protect and preserve the area. ANNA LAEL,
REPRESENTING THE KITITITAS COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT wanted to be
sure their property was not going to be effected if the County
surplus the area. ANTHONY JANTZER REPRESENTING THE CASCADE
IRRIGATION DISTRICT submitted two aerial photographs of Gladmar Park
into the record, which were taken the week prior. He commented on
the high cost in the future to maintain the area, and if it weren’t
maintained, their channel could possibly go dry. He wanted
assurance that they would have the ability to still access what they
needed in the future. ALLEN SULLIVAN REPRESENTING CENTRAL
WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY testified in favor of the proposed vacation.
He felt there had always been problems with litter, access, vandalism, etc. in the park area. He said the proposal from CWU
would address all the issues and encouraged the Board to approve the
request. JIM DEPAEPE said he has always provided access by
permission. He advised the Board that he was going to seek legal
council to draw up specific agreements for Cascade Irrigation etc.
to ensure they continue to get access for their needs. JEFF COMELLA said he was a fly fisherman and guide on the Yakima River, and he accessed the river by Gladmar Park. He encouraged the Board to keep Gladmar Park open for public access. JEFF SLOTHOWER, ATTORNEY REPRESENTING PACKWOOD IRRIGATION expressed concern if the County declared Gladmar Park surplus. He wanted assurance that they would still have the ability to operate and maintain their canal. COMMISSIONER COE asked who did the maintenance on the levee prior to 1996. The Public Works Department was directed to research the answer who did the maintenance on the levee prior to 1996. STEVE WAGONER agreed that the County should surplus the property to CWU to use as a natural preserve. BRENT RENFROW REPRESENTING THE DEPARTMENT OF FISH & WILDLIFE described the habitat of the area. He felt if Gladmar Park was declared surplus, it should go to CWU or another entity similar. JEFF BALDY submitted a letter into the record opposing the request to surplus Gladmar Park. He felt there were many economics benefits to having recreation in our area. HAL LINDSTROM felt the County should support public parks. WAYNE QUIRK clarified CWU’s proposal with rights to access. TONY JANTZER outlined the benefits of wildlife enhancement in the area. He felt if CWU obtained the park, the public would lose input on what happens with the property in the future. He felt the County should maintain ownership so everyone could continue to use it. THERE BEING NO ADDITIONAL TESTIMONY, THE PUBLIC PORTION OF THE HEARING WAS CLOSED.

CHAIRMAN HUSTON reviewed the process, stating that if the property was surplus, the Board would need to decide on the type of disposal, and said they could put any conditions on it, that was within the law. COMMISSIONER GOLLADY recognized the County was not in the park’s business, and said they have no revenue stream to fund it. CHAIRMAN HUSTON felt the public benefit was underutilized and the County could continue to own it, but they would need to determine what and how to use it. He mentioned the County could lease the area for specific uses (research etc.). COMMISSIONER COE said he had listened to a lot of public needs, but no indication that the County’s desire to be in the park business. He said the County could condition the surplus in order to try and satisfy everyone’s needs. He was sympathetic to the recreation needs, but felt they could be addressed within the conditions, if the County chose to surplus the property.

COMMISSIONER COE moved to surplus Gladmar Park as recommended by the Public Works Department. COMMISSIONER GOLLADAY seconded.

CHAIRMAN HUSTON said he has the desire to go through the entire County portfolio of property. He felt he could support the motion, but he would need to load it up with conditions in order to protect the interests expressed by the public. He explained how the County
could lease it, with a periodic review, without totally giving it up, and with possibly a reversion clause. He did not feel he could make a final decision today, and said he would need additional time to go through the materials that have been submitted. He said he was confused and thought that although it was not efficient use of County dollars to deal with parks, he could see it possibly developing some time in the future.

CHAIRMAN HUSTON moved to postpone consideration of the motion until Wednesday October 13, 2004. COMMISSIONER COE seconded. Motion carried 3-0.

COMMISSIONER HUSTON moved to continue the public hearing to consider the surplus of Gladmar Park, to Wednesday October 13, 2004 at 4:00 p.m. in the Commissioner’s Auditorium, Room 109, County Courthouse, with the written record to remain open up until the time of the hearing. COMMISSIONER COE seconded. Motion carried 3-0.

COMMISSIONER GOLLADAY reiterated the issues that the Public Works Department would need to define, including: How is the existing levees accessed now; who maintained the park prior to 1996; where are the County roadways and how are they accessed, whether they are private agreements, written/verbal agreements) and to submit a “white” paper on those.

The public hearing was recessed at 5:30 p.m.

CLERK OF THE BOARD

KITTITAS COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
KITTITAS COUNTY, WASHINGTON

Julie A. Kjorsvik
Perry D. Huston, Chairman