



BOARD OF HEALTH

The Thurston County Board of Health has responsibility and authority for public health in both incorporated and unincorporated areas of the County.

Minutes of December 4, 2012

Public Hearing to receive testimony regarding proposed amendments to Article I Appendix A and Article II, Section 5.2 of the Thurston County Sanitary Code

CALL PUBLIC HEARING TO ORDER

Attendance: Sandra Romero, Chair; Karen Valenzuela, Vice-Chair; Cathy Wolfe, Commissioner; Don Krupp, County Manager; Art Starry, Environmental Health Division Director; and La Bonita Bowmar, acting Clerk of the Board of Health.

Chair Romero called the public hearing to order at 6:35 P.M. She explained the purpose of the hearing was to receive testimony on an ordinance that will amend the fee schedule for the Environmental Health Division of Public Health and Social Services Department and modify the county food service regulations to implement the proposed fees.

Chair Romero requested all those present who wished to testify on the matter to sign in on the available sign in sheet and explained testimony would begin after a brief presentation by Art Starry, Environmental Health Division Director.

Art Starry, Public Health & Social Services Department, Environmental Health Division Director, provided a summary of the proposed amendments to Article I Appendix A and Article II, Section 5.2 of the Thurston County Sanitary Code. He explained the Environmental Health Division sets fees to recover the full cost of reviewing permit applications and providing services to the public. This practice started in 2006. The hourly rate used to calculate the fee schedule has been adjusted twice since then, most recently in 2009. This year (2012) the Department analyzed permit volume, labor, revenue and cost data to determine if the fee structure meets the established cost recovery goals. This evaluation revealed that payroll, overhead and administrative costs have increased the cost of providing services, resulting in a program budget deficit. This deficit will continue to grow without further action by the Department. Based on analysis the hourly rate and most Environmental Health fees need to be increased by 8% to fully recover costs and provide needed staffing levels. Environmental Health Division staff briefed the Board of County Health on August 7, 2012 and October 25, 2012 about proposed adjustments to the Environmental Health Division fee schedule. The Board directed staff to hold a public hearing to solicit public testimony regarding the proposed fee adjustments. Mr. Starry also described examples of proposed modifications to the County Food Service Regulations which would enable the proposed fees to be implemented. He explained an annual fee adjustment element has been restored in the proposed fee schedule which was dropped when the fee schedule was revised in 2006 to include the cost recovery element. The annual fee adjustment is based on the consumer price index. Mr. Starry stated the 8% proposed fee increase does not affect the rates and charges for Henderson Inlet and Nisqually Reach which are covered by a separate ordinance previously adopted by the Board.

Mr. Starry stated the hearing notice was published in The Olympian (paper of record), Nisqually Valley News and the Tenino Independent. The hearing notice, fee schedule and the proposed ordinance were posted on the Thurston County Public Health and Social Services web site and at the County Permit Assistance Center. Notification letters were also sent to food service permit holders, schools, swimming pool operators and onsite sewage system professionals. Mr. Starry stated two public comments were received and provided an explanation of the comments. One comment was from a food service operator having difficulty with their permit fees, for which Sammy Berg the program Supervisor provided options to potentially decrease their permit fees. Another comment was from a small independent school expressing their appreciation of staff's work when the school initially opened and requesting possible adjustments to their inspection schedule which in turn could reduce their inspection fees. Mr. Starry will provide the Board Members copies of the comments.

Vice Chair Valenzuela requested clarification of proposed revisions to Land-use fees which appear to all be increasing. Mr. Starry stated although it is proposed to increase the Land-use review hourly rate, adjustments have been made to review times for some project reviews.

Commissioner Wolfe requested and Mr. Starry provided additional clarification of the annual fee adjustment (based on the consumer price index) versus automatic cost recover.

Chair Romero stated testimony on the proposed ordinance would be taken after La Bonita Bowmar, acting Clerk of the Board explained how the timer and light system works. Ms. Bowmar explained the process and stated each individual is allotted 3 minutes to speak.

Glenn Sutt, owner/operator of two Papa Murphy's stores in Thurston County and one in Shelton, addressed the Board. Mr. Sutt thanked the Department for adjusting the fee schedule in 2012. He then expressed concerns regarding the high rates that are being proposed and how they are to be adjusted based on the consumer price index. He requested the high rates be reviewed again. Chair Romero asked, and Mr. Sutt addressed the question, if Papa Murphy still charges sales tax on uncooked food. Mr. Sutt stated sales tax is charged and provided a brief explanation of why.


Vice Chair Valenzuela asked if, and Mr. Starry confirmed, the Department's 2013 budget does assume the proposed fees increases.


Vice Chair Valenzuela moved to approve Ordinance H-6-2012 amending the Sanitary Code for Thurston County. Chair Romero questioned the amount of time it takes to review a temporary food service establishment application. Mr. Berg addressed the question. **Chair Romero seconded the motion. The motion carried.**


Vice Chair Valenzuela moved to close the Public Hearing. Commissioner Wolfe seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Thurston County Board of Health
Minutes of December 4, 2012 Public Hearing


BOARD OF HEALTH
Thurston County, Washington


SANDRA ROMERO, Chair


KAREN VALENZUELA, Vice-Chair


CATHY WOLFE, Commissioner

ATTEST:


La Bonita Bowmar, Clerk of the Board

Date: January 8, 2013