

Olsen needs to resign post

Editor, *The Herald*:

Approximately two years ago the people living in and around the port district of Tahuya became aware of the port commission's completed plan to saturate the district with all kinds of park and recreational facilities. The initial capital required to implement this plan topped \$8 million. Since then, the community has attended port meetings in record numbers opposing the plan and requesting information surrounding the plan and how it was created.

Unfortunately, the commissioners were not responsive and actually went out of their way to

discourage the public from getting information. The port was sued for failing to follow public records laws, and lost; the port was also sued to have the adoption of the massive plan nullified, and the port lost this suit through default.

Commissioner Cynthia Olsen and ex-commissioner Bob Gilbert are currently being sued in violation of the Open Meetings Act.

Although two of the three original commissioners have been replaced with more responsive individuals, we are still left with "ringleader" Cindy Olsen. She has been formally asked to resign multiple times. She did agree to

resign just after the port lost the public records suit, but only if she would be held harmless for all her actual and alleged wrongful acts.

Her offer was unacceptable. To date the port/taxpayer and our Residents group, combined, have spent over \$100,000 surrounding the nullified plan.

All this expense and time could have been avoided had the commissioners simply listened and responded to the majority of the community's concerns. Even the port's attorney and the citizens advisory committee recommended the plan be un-adopted. Olsen refused to listen. After all this, our questions have still not been answered.

New commissioners Jim Christen and Dan McPhee are also asking the same questions of Olsen, attempting to get to the truth. She is refusing to answer them as well.

Specifically, Christen and McPhee are asking Olsen about her and Gilbert's scheme of resolutions to indemnify, which transferred the liability for any legal fees and judgments over to the taxpayers. Olson and Gilbert both voted for their own resolutions from which they would directly benefit. This wasn't just for past or present claims, but for all future claims as well.

What is really troubling is that Olsen and Gilbert planned and prepared the entire process without working through the commission in open meetings. Christen and McPhee have asked Olsen for

her insurance company's letter denying her claim and she doesn't seem to be able to produce it.

Olsen and Gilbert transferred all personal liability for port-related claims to us (the public). As these resolutions are reconsidered by Christen and McPhee, Olsen seems to have either forgotten what happened or simply doesn't answer the question in order to avoid self-incrimination. She is refusing to be forthright and is again acting in bad faith. Her conduct is very disruptive. She believes she can saddle the taxpayer with port claims filed against her without disclosing anything. How is the commission supposed to manage that arrangement and approve invoices as well as manage the attorney and minimize risk to the taxpayer?

Olsen needs to resign before the recall election. It is very selfish for her to drag the community and county through the expense of a recall election. The questions and public records needed to understand what really went wrong in the Port of Tahuya must be answered and obtained. The state legislature passed the Public Records Act and Open Meetings Act so that we the people who insist on remaining informed can do so. It is the only way we can maintain control over the institution we have created

Brad Carey

Residents for Preserving the
Quality of Life on Hood Canal
Tahuya

Food bank needs more donations

Editor, *The Herald*:

Here we are, well into the new year, and we find that the demand for food is once again on the rise.

At a recent board meeting, the North Mason Food Bank learned their monetary resources are down considerably from what they have been in past years.

Why? Well, maybe September 11 has been part of the problem.

Now we are in the property tax and income tax time of year. So, whatever the cause, it is a rather tough state of affairs to be in.

Unfortunately, hunger never goes on strike nor does hunger take a vacation.

The food bank is located at 22471 State Route 3, and our hours are from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays and from 1 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. on Wednesdays. Our mailing address is P.O. Box 421, Belfair, 98528, and our phone number is 275-4615.

Please donate if you can.

Bev Weston
Belfair