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Residential Customer

PLEASE JOIN US!

July 11, 2016
7:00 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.

Coffman (4-H) Building on the Fairgrounds
819 Camano Rd., Langley

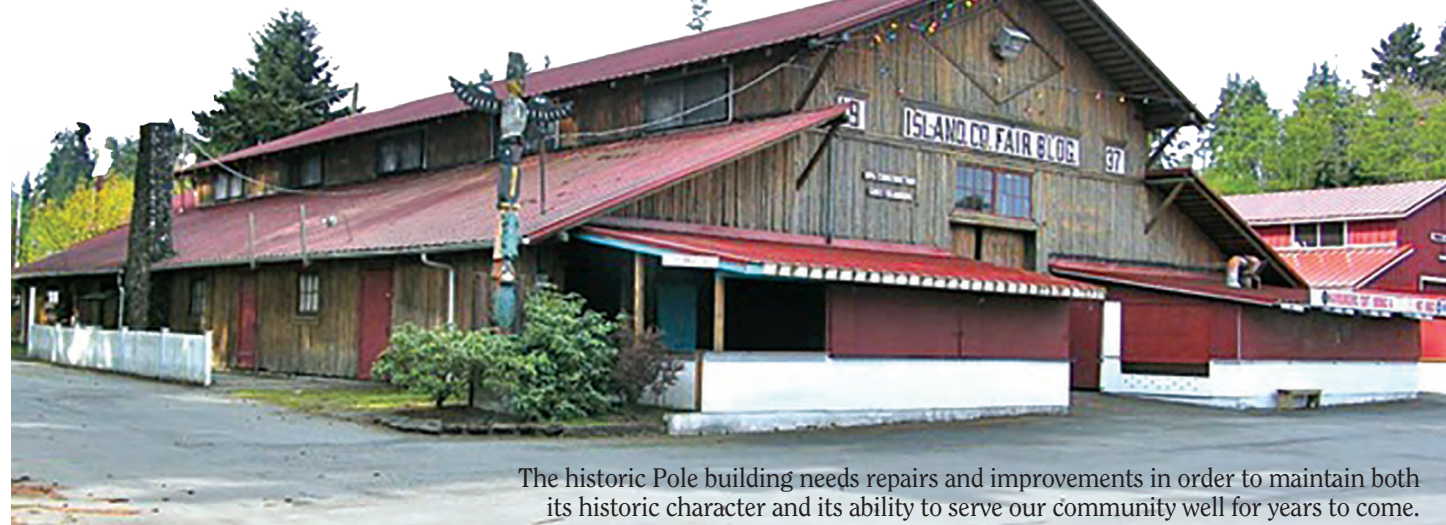
Learn about the proposal and have your questions answered!
Open House format — All are welcome; stay as little or as long as you'd like.

HOW TO GET MORE INFORMATION:

Angi Mozer OR Jan-Marc Jouas
(360) 331-5494
execdir@portofsouthwhidbey.com
www.portofsouthwhidbey.com



ABOVE: Preparations for the 2016 South Whidbey High School Prom



The historic Pole building needs repairs and improvements in order to maintain both its historic character and its ability to serve our community well for years to come.



VOTER INFORMATION GUIDE

Port of South Whidbey • 1804 Scott Road Suite 101, PO Box 872 • Freeland, WA 98249

Decide Fairgrounds' Future! Vote by August 2



Commissioner
Curt Gordon

Our community has a decision to make about the ownership of the Island County Fairgrounds. The current owner, Island County, has been able to keep the annual Fair going, but they haven't been able to adequately maintain the grounds. As a result the Fairgrounds have deteriorated to the point where significant improvements are needed for health, safety and the practical operation of the Fair and other events. The Island County Commissioners have asked for the Port's help and we believe the people in our district deserve our efforts to preserve the Fairgrounds and ensure the permanent continuation of our annual Fair and 4H events.

If the proposed ballot measure is approved, transferring ownership of the Fairgrounds to the Port would allow us to pursue grants and loans for upgrades that are not easily acquired by Island County. The 5 cent Levy lift will provide needed maintenance and operational funds, and just as importantly matching funds for upgrades and improvements. South Whidbey would benefit directly from year-round events at the Fairgrounds while the 4H and annual Fair events will be assured a permanent home, free of concern for continued maintenance. This measure also ensures the preservation of important historical structures that truly reflect the cultural history and rural character of South Whidbey.

Please take the time to be informed about the proposal. Additional facts about the measure, including costs and Q&A, are included in this Voter Guide. You can contact Angi Mozer or Jan-Marc Jouas at (360) 331-5494, execdir@portofsouthwhidbey.com to get your questions answered, or stop by our open house, July 11, 2016, 7:00 p.m. in the Coffman Building on the Fairgrounds. Ballots must be returned by Tuesday, August 2. **Please remember to vote!**

— Commissioner Curt Gordon,
Port of South Whidbey

ELECTION FACTS AT A GLANCE

- ✓ Remember to vote! Election day is August 2
- ✓ If approved, this measure will transfer ownership of the Fairgrounds in Langley from Island County to the Port of South Whidbey and increase the Port's tax levy by 5 cents to provide about \$200,000 per year to improve facilities and pay maintenance and operations costs
- ✓ Tax Levy Increase: \$0.05 per thousand dollars of assessed property value, which is \$15 per year or \$1.25 per month for the owner of a home assessed at \$300k
- ✓ Ballots mailed around July 13, due Aug 2; simple majority yes vote (50% + 1) required for approval

MORE INFORMATION:

www.portofsouthwhidbey.com, 360-331-5494;
www.islandcountywa.gov/auditor/elections/pages/home.aspx



COMMISSIONERS: Ed Halloran, Jack Ng, Curt Gordon

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR: Angi Mozer

Our mission is to enhance the economic well-being of the community and improve public access to marine areas while respecting the unique rural character and environment of South Whidbey Island.

Q & A

What's on the ballot?

If approved, this ballot measure will transfer ownership of the Fairgrounds in Langley from Island County to the Port of South Whidbey and increase the Port's tax levy by 5 cents in order to support the ongoing maintenance and operation costs.

What will this proposal cost?

If approved, the measure would increase the Port's levy by 5 cents per thousand dollars of assessed property value. This would cost the owner of a home assessed at \$300,000 an additional \$15 per year (\$1.25 per month).

What would the increased funding pay for?

After revenues, it costs about \$100,000 per year to maintain the Fairgrounds and support current activities. In addition, many of the buildings on the Fairgrounds are old and need ongoing repairs and maintenance in order to remain safe and functional.

If the ballot measure is approved, the 5-cent levy increase would provide the Port with about \$200,000 per year. About \$100,000 would be used to pay annual operating costs and the remaining funds would be used to pay for ongoing maintenance, repairs, and future renovations to Fairgrounds facilities.

The Port plans to continue to improve the currently existing structures on the Fairgrounds to make them more marketable for additional uses (like dances or weddings), while maintaining their use for the Fair. For example, the historic Pole building needs to be heated in order for it to be used for events during colder months, and the campgrounds infrastructure needs to be updated and improved. The Port will also rely on the newly established Fairgrounds Advisory Committee to identify higher priority projects.

If this is approved, what would happen to the Fair?

The annual Fair event will continue to occur and will continue to be managed by the Fair Association.

What protections are in place for 4-H and other current users of the Fairgrounds?

The Port and Island County have already agreed to terms and conditions related to the property transfer. Several of the conditions for transfer are designed to protect current users of the Fairgrounds. In order to receive ownership of the Fairgrounds from the County, the ballot measure must be approved and the Port must:

1. Continue to make the property available for Island County 4-H programs and an annual agricultural fair

(as defined in RCW Ch. 15.76), without placing an insurmountable financial burden on the Island County 4-H programs or the Island County Fair Association's annual fair;

2. Preserve the historical nature of the Pole Building;
3. Continue to provide a satisfactory location for any historic structures owned by the South Whidbey Historical Society that are currently located on the Fairgrounds;
4. Receive voter approval before the Fairgrounds could be sold to another party; and,
5. Form an advisory committee for management of the property, including representation from Island County and the City of Langley.

Would future activities on the Fairgrounds create competition with local businesses?

Part of the Port's mission is economic development. We support all existing businesses and will never intentionally infringe on their success. It is the Port's intention to complement and enhance the South Whidbey business environment, not compete with it.

How would the Fairgrounds fit into the Port's larger mission?

In addition to supporting economic development and public access to marine areas, the Port's mission speaks specifically to the unique rural character and environment of South Whidbey Island. Port commissioners see the Fairgrounds and the annual Fair as important expressions of our community's culture and heritage, worthy of protection for future generations. The commissioners also see great potential for the Fairgrounds to support economic development outside of and balanced with the annual Fair and community events, which are dependent upon the Fairgrounds.

What happens if this ballot measure is not approved?

If this ballot measure is not approved, the Fairgrounds will continue to be owned by Island County. There are many competing requirements for Island County resources and appropriate funding for the success of the Fairgrounds may not be guaranteed. The Port would continue to manage the Fairgrounds property only through March 31, 2017. Without the funding provided by the tax increase in this ballot measure, the Port will not have the resources to continue to manage the property for Island County beyond that point in time.

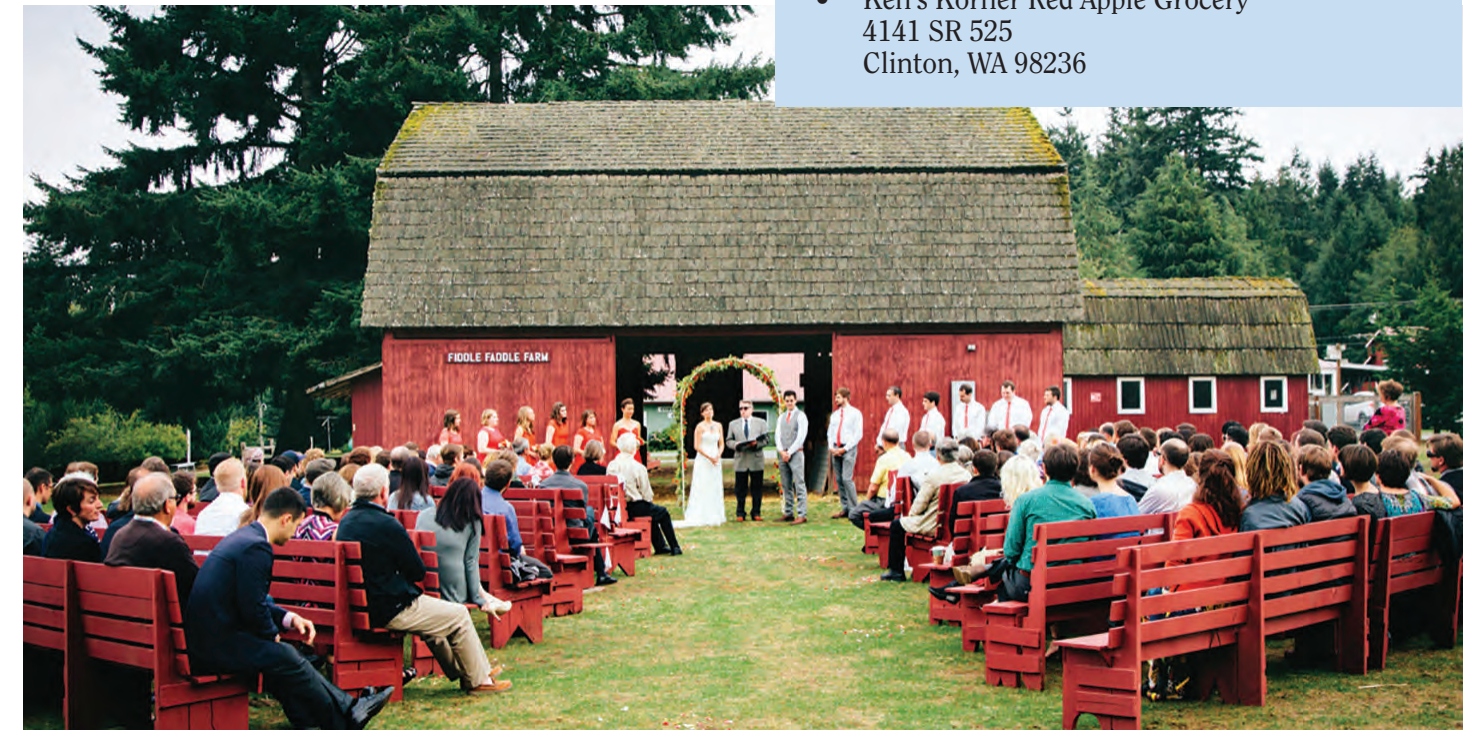
Tax Exemption Information

Low-income senior citizens and individuals with disabilities may be exempt from part or all of these taxes. Please refer to the back of your tax statement for general eligibility requirements and contact the Island County Assessor's Office at 360-679-7303 for more detailed information.



ABOVE: The fairgrounds are home to two commercial kitchens. Last year, 5 businesses rented the kitchen for their food-related ventures. Pictured here: Jon-Paul Dowdell, Caitlin Voss, Hannah McCabe and Jessica Dowdell from Roaming Radish.

BELOW: More than just a home for the annual fair, the fairgrounds also provide a great place for community and family functions.



Ballot Language & Voter Information

The Board of Commissioners of the Port District of South Whidbey Island, Island County, Washington, adopted Resolution No. 16-03 concerning Fairgrounds property and a property tax increase to support it. If approved, this proposition would authorize the District to accept the transfer of the Fairgrounds property from Island County, and increase its regular property tax levy rate to support Fairgrounds expenses by five cents per \$1,000 of assessed valuation, from its current rate \$0.133 per \$1,000 of assessed valuation, to \$0.183 per \$1,000 of assessed valuation for collection in 2017. Thereafter, such new levy amount would be used to compute limitations for subsequent years as allowed by chapter 84.55 RCW. Should this proposition be approved?

Ballots must be postmarked or returned to a drop box by Tuesday, August 2

Drop box locations :

- Trinity Lutheran Church
18341 SR 525
Freeland, WA 98249
- Ken's Korner Red Apple Grocery
4141 SR 525
Clinton, WA 98236