

**BEFORE THE WASHINGTON UTILITIES AND
TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION**

In the Matter of the Petition of:
Douglas and Jessica Rupp; Kathie
Dunn and Chris Hall; Melinda
Inman; Verlin Jacobs; Anthony
Williams; Christine and Samuel
Inman; Robert Jacobs; and Sam
Haverkemp and Chris Portrey,
Petitioners

NO. UT-050778

v.

Verizon Northwest, Inc.,
Respondent.

DIRECT TESTIMONY OF

RAYMOND A JUSSAUME, JR

**ON BEHALF OF
RUPP, et al**

ISSUE: Is Skyko 2 a Community?

OCTOBER 12, 2005

1 **Q. What is your name and address?**

2 A. My name is Raymond A. Jussaume Jr., and I live at 140 NW Thomas Street,
3 Pullman, Washington.

4

5 **Q. What is the general topic of your testimony?**

6 A. I am going to testify about sociological conceptualizations and definitions of
7 community. I will also apply these conceptualizations and definitions to the
8 specific case of what is known as the Skyko 2 area in Snohomish County,
9 Washington.

10

11 **Q. What are your qualifications to testify on this topic?**

12 A. I am Professor and Chair of the Department of Community and Rural
13 Sociology at Washington State University. One of my areas of specialization is
14 community studies. I have written professionally on this topic, I co-teach a
15 graduate level seminar on the "Sociology of Community," as well as an upper
16 division class on "Cross-National Perspectives on Community." I am also
17 currently involved in research on the community dimensions of agricultural
18 development strategies, using a comparative analysis of conditions in
19 Washington State, USA and the Languedoc-Rouisson region of France.

20

1 **Q. How would you define community?**

2 A. There is **NO** single, definition of community that is agreed upon by all social
3 scientists who study communities. Fifty years ago, one sociologist reviewed the
4 existent literature on communities and discovered that there were dozens of
5 definitions in use (Hillery, 1955)! Today, there are more definitions than there
6 were when Hillery wrote his article. It would be a challenging project to account
7 for them all.

8

9 **Q. Why are there so many definitions of community?**

10 A. There are numerous reasons why there are so many definitions of community.

11 One is that human communities arise in different contexts, such as culture,
12 geographical region, demographic conditions, etc. Thus, for example, the
13 nomadic Fulani of West Africa structure and think of their communities in very
14 different ways than the people who live in and around Republic, Washington.

15

16 Another reason has to do with history and the process of social change. Human
17 societies are in constant flux and this process of change affects every aspect of
18 our lives. This is as true for communities as it is for families. Thus, one
19 interesting topic of debate in contemporary sociological communities is whether
20 a group of people who have never met each other face to face, and who do not

1 live within geographical proximity of each other, but who communicate with
2 each other on a regular basis via the internet, can be considered to be members of
3 a community.

4

5 However, while there are a large number of definitions of community that are in
6 use, a general review of the literature can yield a number of attributes that are
7 commonly found in the literature. Two of these attributes can be considered to
8 be indispensable to any definition of community. Other attributes are not
9 necessary but are important attributes for making a case that a community does
10 exist.

11

12 **Q. What are these two indispensable attributes of a definition of community?**

13 A. The first is that the community be comprised of people. Thus, an uninhabited
14 ghost town would not be considered to be a community. This may seem absurd,
15 but the point is that a community is not determined by man-made or geological
16 structures (e.g. a four corners with a supermarket and a gas station or a
17 particular type of valley or mountain setting). From a sociological perspective, a
18 community is created and formed by people.

19

1 The second is that these people must form a field of social interaction. This
2 means that the people involved must be engaged in forms and patterns of
3 interaction with each other. This includes forms of economic, political and
4 cultural interaction. Thus, residents of a suburban area where people live next to
5 each other, but do not know each other and never interact with each other would
6 conceivably **NOT** be considered a community from a sociological perspective.

7

8 **Q. What other attributes could be considered important for a definition of**
9 **community and could be used for determining whether a particular group of**
10 **people could be thought to constitute a community?**

11 A. One important attribute would be to determine the physical setting of the
12 community. Traditionally, and in many contemporary cases, the setting and
13 boundaries of a community would be geographical and would be useful in
14 establishing the context within which social interaction takes place. Thus,
15 members of a rural community might utilize a mountain, a river, a road or some
16 other geographical attribute of their surroundings to determine the area within
17 which community members co-exist. In an urban setting, community can
18 revolve around a street corner.

19

1 Another attribute would be self-identity. While it is not necessary for members
2 of a community to use the word “community” when they refer to themselves as a
3 group, many communities do share a sense of who they are as a group. Thus,
4 they might refer to themselves as the “Jones community” or “Jonesians,”
5 particularly when they meet with outsiders.

6

7 A shared sense of history, as well as the future, would be another attribute that
8 could be used in helping a scholar to identify a community. Of course, like all
9 social organizations, communities do have a beginning and an end, but they also
10 have the power to reproduce, to pass on a legacy to the newest members of the
11 community, and through an interpretation of a shared history often develop a
12 shared understanding of who they are, as a community, and where they are
13 headed or would like to evolve.

14

15 There are numerous other attributes that have been identified over the years by
16 community scholars. The ones I have outlined above are much more commonly
17 used.

18

19 **Q. In order to be a community, must all of the above attributes be present?**

1 A. It would be necessary for the indispensable attributes to be present. As for the
2 others, the more attributes present, the easier it becomes to make a theoretical
3 argument that a community does exist.

4

5 **Q. Is the existence of full-time residents in an area an indication that a**
6 **community exists?**

7 A. Not by itself. If there is little or no interaction between the residents of a
8 place, even if they were all full-time residents, then it could be argued that there
9 was no community, or at the very most, a very weak community. However, if at
10 least some of those residents come together in a field of social interaction, then
11 this would indeed be a very good indication of the presence of community.

12

13 **Q. Is the existence of part-time residents in an area an indication that a**
14 **community exists?**

15 A. Again, this would be dependent on the existence of a field of social
16 interaction. Arguably, it would be more difficult for part-time residents to form
17 a field of social interaction, share a sense of identity, have a common history, etc.
18 In addition, a part-time resident may have a stronger sense of community
19 attachment elsewhere. On the other hand, the area where the part-time residents
20 come together may provide a stronger sense of community than anywhere else

1 these residents reside, and of course, we must remember that such individuals
2 would actually be part-time residents in both residential locations.

3

4 In centuries past, residence in two locations was rare, and so the issue of part-
5 time residence would not have been important in determining the existence of
6 community. However, in contemporary times, "Where do people feel a strong
7 sense of community attachment, and where do they not," have become central
8 empirical and theoretical questions. In addition, the issue now exists of whether
9 individuals can belong to two or more communities simultaneously. Although
10 this has not been completely resolved, most scholars would accept the possibility
11 of individuals being able to maintain membership in more than one community.
12 These two communities could both be residential communities, although
13 examples are also cited of cases where a person or family belongs simultaneously
14 to a residential and a non-residential community. One example would be a
15 family who belongs to a particular church or faith based community, while
16 simultaneously maintaining membership in a physical community where they
17 reside. If both the church and the physical community exhibit the characteristics
18 of a community, and the family in question feels a strong attachment to both,
19 then it becomes easy to argue that the family has membership in two
20 communities.

1

2 In conclusion, therefore, I would argue that it certainly would be possible for a
3 community to consist of part-time residents who also feel a strong sense of
4 attachment to another community. However, just because there are part-time
5 residents who live together in a place does not mean that community exists.

6

7 **Q. Is the existence of a Commercial Enterprise in an area an indication that a**
8 **community exists?**

9 A. It would be unlikely for a single enterprise to be considered a community.

10 However, if that enterprise helped provided an economic infrastructure or
11 context for economic interaction, then a single business could certainly be
12 considered to be an important part of a community. More importantly, the
13 presence of a business can be useful in a determination of a community if its
14 presence reveals that locally embedded economic activity takes place. While
15 local economic activity is not a required element of community, the presence of
16 such economic activity, as well as of political and cultural activity, can provide
17 compelling evidence that a community does exist.

18

19 **Q. What is a “portion” of a community?**

1 A. "Portion" is not a term that is commonly used by community scholars. Thus,
2 I am unsure as to what the legislators who employed this term had in mind
3 when they used it. However, it might be reasonable to assume that "portion"
4 was used to mean a part, or an element of a community. One might reasonably
5 assume that formal and informal organizations that sometimes provide a
6 foundation for a community could be a "portion," or part of a community.

7

8 **Q. Do you have an opinion at this time as to whether the Skyko 2 area**
9 **constitutes a community or a portion of a community?**

10 A. Yes, I have been able to make a preliminary determination based on evidence
11 submitted to me by one of the petitioners who lives in the Skyko 2 area.

12

13 **Q. What kind of evidence did the petitioner provide you?**

14 A. The petitioner provided me with evidence collected through a series of formal
15 interviews that the petitioner conducted with seven other Skyko 2 households. I
16 provided methodological advice to this petitioner on how to develop the
17 measuring instrument and how to conduct the survey. In addition, the petitioner
18 provided me with a description of the Skyko 2 area that includes information on
19 the geography of the area, where the buildings are located and other pertinent
20 information.

1

2 **Q. So, what is your opinion as to whether the Skyko 2 area constitutes a**
3 **community?**

4 A. Based on the evidence provided by the petitioner, I would conclude that there
5 is indeed a community present in the Skyko 2 area at this time. In addition, I
6 conclude that there is significant potential for that community to grow and to
7 reproduce itself into the future.

8

9 My conclusion is based on the fact that there are indeed people living in the
10 Skyko 2 area and that these people clearly engage in various forms of social
11 interaction on a routine basis. This satisfies the two primary elements of a
12 definition of community. According to the evidence provided by the petitioner
13 who conducted the Skyko 2 research, there are sixteen households that have been
14 established in the Skyko 2 area. Of these sixteen households, ten households
15 reside in Skyko 2 on a permanent basis. In addition, many of the households do
16 interact with each other, including the part-time residents. It would appear that
17 the full-time residents form the core of the sphere of social interaction, but that
18 part-time residents are connected to this core. One very strong indication of the
19 sphere of social interaction is that in the interviews, without any prompting,
20 household residents were easily able to identify other Skyko 2 residents through

1 the use of first names, as well as to indicate the manner in which they interact
2 with those other residents.

3

4 In addition, the information presented by the residents through their responses
5 to the survey questions indicate that a number of other community attributes
6 exist in the Skyko 2 area as well. One of these is the presence of an informal
7 economy that serves as one of the foundations for social interaction. Some of this
8 informal economic activity involves the exchange of goods for money (e.g. the
9 sale of firewood), while other activity involves the reciprocal exchange of
10 services (e.g. the clearing of snow from driveways) and the joint management of
11 resources that are cooperatively owned (e.g. local roads).

12

13 Another attribute that indicates community is the presence of forms of cultural
14 interaction. One of the forms mentioned most frequently by a number of those
15 who responded to the survey are the summer barbeques that Skyko 2 residents
16 apparently hold for each other. Would I to engage in further research on Skyko
17 2, I would certainly want to examine how these barbeques are held and
18 constructed, and use data collected from these cultural events to test the
19 hypothesis that the barbeques are used, in part, to establish the norms for the
20 social interaction that takes place in Skyko 2.

1

2 To summarize, given that the two required elements of community exist in the
3 Skyko 2 case, and that additional important elements also exist, in particular the
4 existence of shared, informal economic and cultural activity, I conclude that the
5 16 households living in the Skyko 2 area do indeed constitute a community.

6

7 **Q. Does this conclude your testimony at this time?**

8 A. Yes.