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Document Title(s):

**ORDINANCE NO. 434 - AN ORDINANCE APPROVING A REQUEST BY THE NEUTRAL  
GROUND DISPUTE RESOLUTION CENTER TO IMPOSE A SURCHARGE ON CIVIL  
FILING FEES IN DISTRICT COURT AND ON SMALL CLAIMS ACTIONS, CREATING A  
NEW CHAPTER 3.26 IN THE WALLA WALLA COUNTY CODE.**

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2.

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Grantee:

1. **The Public**

2.

Additional Names on page \_\_\_\_ of document.

Legal Description (i.e.: lot & block or section, township & range):

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Assessor's Property Tax Parcel Number: \_\_\_\_\_

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**BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
WALLA WALLA COUNTY, WASHINGTON**

**ORDINANCE NO. 434**

**AN ORDINANCE APPROVING A REQUEST BY THE NEUTRAL GROUND  
DISPUTE RESOLUTION CENTER TO IMPOSE A SURCHARGE ON CIVIL  
FILING FEES IN DISTRICT COURT AND ON SMALL CLAIMS ACTIONS,  
CREATING A NEW CHAPTER 3.26 IN THE WALLA WALLA COUNTY CODE.**

**WHEREAS**, the Washington State Legislature found resolution of many disputes can be costly and complex in a judicial setting where the parties involved are necessarily in an adversarial posture and subject to formalized procedures; and

**WHEREAS**, the Legislature found alternative dispute resolution centers can meet the needs of Washington's citizens by providing forums in which persons may voluntarily participate in the resolution of disputes in an informal and less adversarial atmosphere; and

**WHEREAS**, pursuant to RCW Chapter 7.75, the Board of County Commissioners established a Dispute Resolution Center with Resolution 88-111 on March 8, 1988; and

**WHEREAS**, Neutral Ground Mediation and Conciliation Service was established as a Dispute Resolution Center for Walla Walla County with Resolution 88-111, and since been named as the Neutral Ground Dispute Resolution Center (Neutral Ground); and

**WHEREAS**, RCW Chapter 7.75.035 empowers county commissioners, as the legislative authority of counties, to impose a surcharge of up to ten dollars on civil filing fees in District Court and fifteen dollars on small claims actions in District Court, to augment funding of a Dispute Resolution Center; and

**WHEREAS**, the Board of County Commissioners received a request from Neutral Ground to impose a fee in accordance with RCW 7.75.035.

**NOW THEREFORE,**

**BE IT ORDAINED**, by the Walla Walla County Board of Commissioners that:

**Section I. The Board of County Commissioners Makes the Following Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law:**

1. Notice of Public Hearing was published on May 28, 2015 in the Waitsburg Times.
2. A Public Hearing was held on June 8, 2015.
3. The Board of County Commissioners received comments from the Honorable District Court Judge Kristian Hedine, supporting the request for surcharges.
4. The Board of County Commissioners received comments from the Honorable Superior Court Judge John Lohrmann, with concerns about imposing the surcharges.
5. The cumulative costs to the court system to process legal disputes that could otherwise be resolved pursuant to an alternative dispute resolution process can be a burden on government.
6. It is the best interest of the citizens of Walla Walla County to impose a surcharge on civil filing fees in District Court and small claims actions to augment funding of a Dispute Resolution Center.
7. Walla Walla County, County government, the courts and the public will all benefit from funding for a local Dispute Resolution Center through the imposition of a surcharge on civil filings in District Court and on small claims actions.
8. The amendments to Walla Walla County Code are consistent with RCW 7.75.

**Section II. Amendments to Walla Walla County Code, Creating New Chapter 3.26.**  
The amendments to Walla Walla County Code, creating a new Chapter 3.26, are **adopted** as presented to the Board of County Commissioners as follows:

**Chapter 3.26 - Surcharges on District Court Filing Fees**

**3.26.010 Imposition of Surcharge on District Court Filing Fees for Dispute Resolution Centers.**

A surcharge of ten and No/100 Dollars (\$10.00) is imposed on each civil filing fee in District Court and fifteen and No/100 Dollars (\$15.00) on each small claims action, for the purpose of funding Dispute Resolution Centers established in Walla Walla County pursuant to RCW chapter 7.75. This surcharge shall be in addition to any existing surcharge(s) currently in place on civil filing fees in District Court and small claims actions.

**3.26.020 Use of Dispute Resolution Surcharges**

Proceeds from the Dispute Resolution Surcharge shall be collected by the District Court Clerk's Office and remitted to the Treasurer for deposit into a separate account to be used solely for Dispute Resolution Centers established pursuant to, and to carry out the

purposes of, RCW chapter 7.75. Such funds shall only be provided through grant agreements between the County and a Dispute Resolution Center. Such grants shall require the approval of the Board of County Commissioners or its designee.

**Section III. Index.** The index of the Walla Walla County Code in which titles, chapters or sections are added or removed or in which title, chapter or section titles are changed herein shall also be amended to reflect the amendments.

**Section IV. Effective Date.** This Ordinance is effective as of the date of signing.

**Section V. Severability.** If any section, subsection, paragraph, sentence, clause or phrase of this Ordinance is declared unconstitutional or invalid for any reason, such decision shall not affect the validity of the remaining parts of this Ordinance.

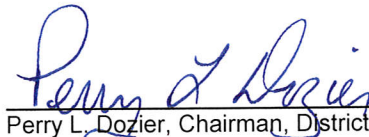
**Section VI. Publication.** This Ordinance will be published by an approved summary consisting of the title.

PASSED by the Walla Walla County Board of County Commissioners in regular session at Walla Walla, Washington, then signed by its membership and attested by its Clerk in authorization of such passage this 15th day of June, 2015.

Attest:



Connie R. Vinti, Clerk of the Board



Perry L. Dozier, Chairman, District 2



James K. Johnson, Commissioner, District 1



James L. Duncan, Commissioner, District 3

Constituting the Board of County Commissioners  
of Walla Walla County, Washington



Approved as to form



Jesse D. Nolte, Deputy Prosecuting Attorney

