

Board of Okanogan County Commissioners
Tuesday February 7, 2023 AM

Present:

Chris Branch (CB) – BOCC Chairman, District 1 (on Zoom off and on)

Andy Hover (AH) – BOCC Vice Chair, District 2 (actually chair of today's mtg)

Jon Neal (JN) – BOCC, District 3

Lanie Johns (LJ) – Clerk of the Board

These notes were taken by an Okanogan County Watch volunteer via Zoom. Every attempt is made to be accurate. Notes are verbatim when possible, and otherwise summarized or paraphrased. Note taker comments or clarifications are in italilcs. These notes are published at <http://countywatcg.org> and are not the official county record of the meeting. For officially approved minutes, which are normally published at a later time, see

https://okanogancounty.org/offices/commissioners/commissioners_proceedings.php.

Time stamps below are in real time. To locate specific topics, a clock on the AV Capture video screen at

<https://okanogancounty.org/avcapture.html> can assist in finding the correct spot on the video recording.

Summary of Significant Discussions or Actions: Public Comment: Emily Sisson had listened to yesterday's discussion regarding using an outside vendor – *Pacific Security with grant money. She cautioned about using an armed security guard unless he/she is well trained. RFQs received for Architect/Engineering services for the Justice Building. Will go over quotes next week. City of Twisp will be meeting with BOCC regarding their use of allocated ARPA funds for water system, Updates from Chief Communication Officer/Dispatch; 9 of 13 positions filled, Radio project in the works, he will come back to BOCC with estimate for getting all Fire Districts in county up to date with the radio system, also reported on the 911 dispatch center coordination with other counties; Skagit, Skamania, Lincoln, San Juan County. Update from Public Works.*

9:05

BOCC having technical difficulties.

9:15

Public Comment period: Emily Sisson (ES), County Resident had listened to Shelley Keitzman, HR's discussion with the BOCC yesterday regarding using a vendor (Pacific Security)for Courthouse Security. They could be able to utilize 1fulltime security guard with a gun, or without guns – 2 full time security guards. Emily is concerned about someone being a security guard with a gun, if not adequate training. That is the last thing the Courthouse needs is an armed security guard without much training, as the vendor indicated it would not be expensive, but would take some time to get an armed one. Emily's parting words; If you do hire a guy with a gun, be careful.

AH thanked ES for her words of caution

9:18

CB on Zoom for a short time. Long enough to ask AH if he would Chair the meeting.

9:30

Review RFQ's for Architect /Engineering Services. For the Justice Building - 2 Quotes

10:00

RFQ's for Engineering Services – Utilities for the Justice Building – 1 quote

Will review these a week from today and discussing whom to choose.

E-mail had been received from City of Twisp, recipient of \$75,000 for water project – what they need to report to BOCC.

(not much discussion happening – CB left Zoom – mostly reading of e-mails, apparently)

10:30

Update from Chief Communications/ Dispatch Deputy, Mike Worden (MW)

Staffing remains the main challenge. However, 9 of 13 positions are filled. 2 are nearly finishing training. MW is using hiring APP for help in this process of hiring.

MW reports on current projects; Radio Project - next step is to install the equipment. Upgrades at Pilchur Site which is utilized by State Patrol, Department of Transportation, and the County. He states this is a more efficient use of space. We also have requests into the legislature for funding.

AH asks MW if he could bring bad an approximate number of \$\$ it would take to equip all County Fire Districts. MW states that not all districts have radios. AH asks if they need new radios?

JN describes how everyone in the Loomis district has their radios in their vehicles.

10:34

MW states there have been a number of missed opportunities for getting new equipment. *(by the Districts)*

AH asks why. MW states they are probably unaware. JN explains that is the difficulty with the smaller fire districts – it is hard to be on top of the possibilities for funding.

MW states that yes, he will get the BOCC the approximate costs to equip all Fire Districts.

JN asks if Lifeline is switching also? JN acknowledges how crucial it is to have multi-level communication.

10:39

MW also reports on the Communications tower project on Tunk.

MW discusses, for JN's benefit, the partnership between Skagit, Skamania, Lincoln, San Juan, and Okanogan Counties for shared servers in case of 911 services going down in an area.

10:57

Josh Thomson (JT) County Engineer and new employee, Josh Umberger?

On the maintenance and road side; some weight restrictions have been imposed today for the thawing of different roads in the county.

JT brought up an issue with the Tonasket Bridge that spans the Columbia River. VFW in Tonasket have been having flage on the posts, but this has been causing some problems with the lighting. JT would like to offer to the VFW, for them to replace the bulbs. AH states that he would rather not have the bulbs breaking.

Some discussion of 4 parcels of County land,

JT reports that the insurance for the Trails position is \$3500. AH also brings up that Mazama would like the County to sponsor a grant for some work there. Would this position be able to do this?

JT states yes, he believes it could.

11:15

AH asks JT about the Road going to a big development (Sky Ranch) between Elbow Coulee and Thompson Ridge. The HOA chairman has sent letters and wondered if the County could maintain road to this development. It is approximately a mile, but there are very narrow areas on the road and there would also need to have a turnaround. Forest Service is unable to handle this issue. AH states that managing this portion of the road would benefit a large number of residents.

JT discusses the shops and windows project and where the funding is in the budget. There is \$4.55 million for construction, \$41,000 to replace windows.

JT also states that all the ER&R's need to be approved by BOCC. This is new requirement from CRAB.

11:27

JT reviewing paperwork on the Hunter Mountain Acquisition.

JT reports on all upcoming projects:

Salmon Creek structure nearly complete – no timeline for this.

Gravel crush starts in April

Guardrail project for the County – contract awarded next week

Twisp River Bridge Rehab

Cameron Lake Road – slow progress with the Right of way situation, maybe pushed to 2024

Old Hwy 97 Project

Twisp River 3-R in 2024 (should probably have public meeting in Twisp)

Loomis/Oroville, Whitestone Creek – 3 culverts

Foster Bridge repair – dependent on permitting.

Bridgeport Valley gutter project

JT reports new office manager started yesterday – she used to work in the Treasurers Office Nicole Moore. Working out nicely, per JT

11:44

Adjourn until 1:30