

Board of Okanogan County Commissioners
Tuesday January 24, 2023 AM

Present:

Chris Branch (CB) – BOCC Chair, District 1 (By Zoom)

Andy Hover (AH) – BOCC Vice Chair, District 2

Jon Neal (JN) – BOCC, District 3

Lanie Johns (LJ) – Clerk of the Board

Esther Milner (EM) – Civil Deputy for County

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 italics. These notes are published at <https://countywatch.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 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:

- No Public Comment.
- Discussion with Lifeline staff regarding Emergency (Ambulance) Management Services (EMS) Districts challenges in Tonasket/Oroville and how to remedy,
- Possibility of contracting Public Records Request due to volume of workload – HR to schedule presentation with a vendor, also approval to sexual harrasment training scheduled, and talking about Court Security with emphasis on immediate situation and overview also – will meet with department heads,
- Public Works update with County Engineer: SnowParks Trail Grooming Staff Payment and Training, Proposed Hunter Mountain WDFW purchase, proposed discussion Omak School District, Sand Flats, intersection; meeting in Mazama regarding parking and snowstorm maintenance.

Meeting began with audio difficulties. Eventually they got ironed out. Finally able to hear BOCC at 9:21. CB on Zoom

No Public Comment

9:30

Wayne Walter (WW) from EMS Districts and Bob (?) CEO of Lifeline to discuss issues in the north county: Tonasket and Oroville EMS Districts. Tonasket EMS has 24/7 Ambulance service, while Oroville EMS does not have the staff, and they are 4 shifts of 8:00 to 18:00 & 3 shifts of 8:00 to 20:00 O'Clock.

AH asks to identify the problem & wonders if Oroville, being at 24/7, would solve the problem. WW states just not having enough Oroville coverage and funding. CB appreciates them coming in and asks if there is something besides coverage going on? WW states that the problem is during the off hours. The Oroville calls do get handled but it takes longer to come from Tonasket. What the State wants to

strive toward is 45-minute response 85% of the time. Looking at last year's numbers, Oroville had 662 calls, 391 transports while Tonasket had 705 calls with 441 patient transports with 117 refusals. January, February, and March show a drop in calls. WW cautions that they need to create a schedule where people will work – getting workers is difficult. AH notes that in the Methow, their EMS Districts get 100% of tax but the County does not own their building. AH wonders if Oroville and Tonasket having complete ownership of the buildings would be helpful. Probably not. CB states that we can create a couple of scenarios; possibly combining the districts, or something else. Point of information - School Districts are the boundaries for the Districts. JN suggests talking with the City of Oroville AH asks if the Cities of Oroville and Tonasket put money in their EMS Districts. In the Methow, Twisp and Winthrop put money in their EMS districts. JN suggest possible separate contracts between the City and the County. AH has talked with the mayors of Tonasket and Oroville and their argument for not combining districts is wanting control over it.

JN states one of the problems is they had a year where the levy didn't pass.

WW would like to see a forward-looking approach in case the levy doesn't pass.

AH asks what happens to folks that need ambulance and they are outside of the service district or are visitors. Do they have to pay more for ambulance service? WW – no, they get charged the same.

One other big problem is the reimbursement under Medicaid. That amount hasn't changed since 2004 – it is still \$168 for ambulance services. There has been an increase of 60% in Medicaid patients in the area.

CB suggests that JN be a committee of one to work with the districts to come up with a workable plan. JN agrees to do this. CB would like to revisit this again soon.

10:04

Moved, Seconded, and Carried to go into Executive Session under 42.30.110 (l)(i) for possible litigation.

10:18

EM discusses the Pest Board Case where the work was done but the property owner never paid and then sold the property before the County was able to put a lien on it. Then, that person is now a debtor in California Bankruptcy Court. EM and staff have determined that you are going to spend more just trying to collect the \$2900. She would like a decision from the BOCC.

It was Moved, Seconded, and Carried to release, in whole, the debt to Okanogan County for work done by the Pest Board #1116 due to costliness to collect this debt.

10:30

Update from Shelly Keitzman (SK), HR and Risk Manager, along with EM. They have been looking into the workload from Public Record Requests and have found 2 different companies that specialize in doing these for government entities. It would cost about \$1599 per month to have this service. The Sheriffs' Office, alone, gets 900 requests per year. EM has concerns about how these are being handled now with every office doing their individual thing – some have more requests than others. Right now, there is not 'one' entity that takes care of the requests. It costs the County when these are not done timely. SK would like permission to get the presentation on this and then make a decision. LJ states that it would be ideal to have a PRR person design. SK ated for this task. EM states that we (The County) have some big potential deficiencies. CB states go forward with this if there is no objection by the Board. Everyone seemed onboard with this idea.

10:45

SK had been asked to facilitate Sexual Harassment training, and she found a good 90 minute session

that would cost \$900 to train all staff. She would like to move forward and get it scheduled. Risk Pool to pay for this.

10:50

SK has been talking about the Courthouse Security issues and has contacted Department heads. We need to move forward on this. CB states there are some immediate issues and then we need to look at an overview of all. We need to discuss with principal players. CB thanks SK.

10:55

JN and AH talk about current fair project and keeping the funding for the different grants being utilized at the fairgrounds. The Washington Fair Association has some requirements that need to be completed and the Capital projects need to be sent on to the Legislature.

11:00

Josh Thomson (JT), County Engineer states Solid Waste Manager not available today. He is trying to understand the newest proposed bills in the Legislature regarding recycling.

JT states on the Maintenance and Roads. They are just dealing with ice. The Peter Dan Road slide is stable right now. AH asks if this was where the repair area had been. Yes, it is where the repair had taken place before.

JT discussed some of the problems he is having with the snowparks trail grooming. They are done differently in the Methow Valley, than in the Okanogan Valley. In the Okanogan Valley, we utilize temporary employees to do this. There is different funding in the Methow Valley. We need to have the Groomers training paid for. Having some difficulty with this.

Hunter Mountain WDFW purchase – JT still working on this. WDFW is not willing to go more than \$1000 per acre which is \$401,000 for the piece. However, the County paid around \$650, for that piece after taking the Pit out of that. There is no negotiating with WDFW so other options are being looked at.

JT will be meeting with the Omak School District on property on the Sand Flats, regarding developing an intersection.

JT also meeting in Mazama regarding parking and snowstorm maintenance. AH reminded JT that BOCC co-sponsored a \$3,000 grant to work on their trails/paths around the businesses. CB asked if there is a defined project needed in Mazama? AH states yes, they are looking for widening the road for a walking path. JT will look into the cost of this, if it is in the County right of way.

11:30

Moved, Seconded, and Carried to approve 1/17/2023 proceedings.

Moved, Seconded, and Carried to approve Consent Agenda as presented:

1. CDBG – Public Services 22-62210-11 Request #6 – Dept of Commerce
2. CDBG – PS CV-1 Grant 20-6221C #119 Request #24 Dept of Commerce
3. Agreement – Supplement #1 Twisp River Road Bridge Deck Repair – Public Works
4. Interlocal agreement – Fire Hall Cost Overruns – ARPA – Fire District #6
5. Interlocal agreement – Countywide Firewise Program – Okanogan Conservation Dist
6. Memorandum of Agreement – Modify AFSCME Pay Classification plan – Albert Lin
7. Approve – Purchase Weed Spraying Materials – Public Works
8. Cattleguard Renewals – Hashknife Ranch Inc, CGF #4-98

9. Authorization – Call for Bids for 2023 – Soil Stabilizer Bid – Public Works
10. Authorization – Call for Bids for 2023 Liquid Stabilizer Bid - Public Works
11. Contract – Central Landfill Phase 4 Development – Western Refinery Services, Public Works
12. Contract – Update signature authorization form – Sheriff/Dispatch

11:36

Some discussion regarding upcoming RFQ's Michael Beaman wants to be finished with his Consulting Services. Will be retiring.

Moved, Seconded, and Carried to approve Vouchers for \$562,474

Moved, Seconded, and Carried to approve Public Health Vouchers for \$10,851

11:48

Meeting adjourned until 1:30