

Board of Okanogan County Commissioners
Monday, Dec 5, 2022 AM & PM

JD—Jim DeTro, BOCC, District 3
AH—Andy Hover, BOCC, Chair, District 1
CB—Chris Branch, BOCC, Vice Chair, District 2
LJ—Lanie Johns, Clerk of the Board
ES—Emily Sisson, citizen
MM—Miles Milliken, Commissioner, Fire District 6
PS—Paul Sisson, citizen
PP—Pete Palmer, Director of Planning
MG—Maurice Goodall, Emergency Management
NP—Naomie Peasley, Fairgrounds Manager
CH—Cari Hall, County Auditor

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Summary of significant discussions:

- *Commissioners read several emails they received this morning and over the weekend concerning the proposed ARPA funds to cover cost overruns in construction of the new Fire Station in FD6. Emily Sisson, Fire District 6 Commissioner Miles Milliken and Paul Sisson make comments during the public comment period. Commissioner Hover says he's waiting for the State Auditor's approval of the expenditure.*
- *Pete Palmer, Director of Planning, updates the Commissioners a meeting with a consultant and the Yakama Nation about the zone code update.*
- *Cari Hall, County Auditor, and Commissioners hold a public hearing about the proposed 2023 budget. After correcting several items, they continue the hearing until next Monday, when they'll hear public comments. They hope to pass the budget either Monday or Tuesday of next week.*
- *Meeting adjourns at 2:55.*

03:50—LJ—There's an email I received that I forwarded to the Board. I don't think you've had a chance to read it.

AH—I spoke with one of the Fire District commissioners on Saturday.

LJ—It looks like they've joined the meeting.

Commissioners read the letters they've received over the weekend and Monday morning.

AH—Can we have a discussion about the FD6 building and the request for \$2... Cody Acord is the Fire Chief and he sent me...

CB—He sent it to us, too.

AH—I asked him to send it. It's the invoices.

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LJ—Right now we have the agreement for the \$75,000. Consent agenda item #2.

AH—Alan Fahnastock sent a thank-you for the hydrant. I have probably gotten more emails just to myself about FD6 than to the commissioners as a whole. I received a couple this morning just addressed to me. They're interested in approving that allocation. If I could share my screen, we could look at where we're at with ARPA allocations.

18:35—AH—It's 9:19 so it's public comment period. Does anybody have a public comment?

ES—I do. I listened to the Commissioner's meeting on Tuesday. Commission Hover said that a lot of people had told him that they wanted the ARPA funds to go to the Fire Hall, and some people told him they didn't. You sounded like you were wavering back and forth about providing some of the funds or all of the funds or whatever. You were undecided. A lot of people in the fire community found that distressing. A lot of people have made the point how necessary the fire district is. I wanted to say we don't know what the argument is for the people who are against it. We don't know why they are against it, so we can't respond to their argument because we don't know what it is. We can only say the fire district is necessary. The fire district is *very* popular. They've acted in a responsible way. The cost overruns were all created by Covid. (*Editor's note: ES misspoke when she said the fire district is necessary and popular. She meant to say the Fire Station is necessary and popular.*)

ES—I also want to say that the monthly Fire District Commissioners' meeting is a week from tonight at 7:00 at the new Fire Hall. If you'd like to come, the three commissioners will be there. Cody will be there. If you have questions, you could ask them. I'm pretty sure you could get a tour of the facility if you like. I think it'd be a good meeting for you to attend. That's my comment.

AH—Thank you very much. Anybody else.

MM— Good Morning Commissioners,

My name is Miles Milliken. I am a volunteer firefighter, and commissioner for Okanogan County Fire District 6. I wanted to talk with you today about our new fire station. We recently completed our new station in Winthrop. And when I say "our" fire station, I truly mean ours. This station has almost everything it needs to serve as a training center for every firefighter in Okanogan County. Not just those of us that live in the Methow.

Before we broke ground on our station, before Covid, 69% of our District voted to approve a levy lift to fund this new fire station. We diligently managed the costs of this project. But the cost overruns related directly to Covid are causing significant adverse impacts to our fire department.

This project falls fully within the bounds of the ARPA funding.

We have answered your questions and responded to your requests for information promptly and fully.

What information of stimulation are you lacking to approve this request?

And what influence is being applied that a fire station, one that will benefit the entire county has taken so long to be funded?

I appreciate your time and consideration of our request and urge you to approve our request for these funds.

Thank you.

AH—Thanks, Miles.

23:45—PS—Hello, commissioners. This is actually Paul Sisson. I sent you guys an email regarding the ARPA fund request by Fire District 6. I recommend you read my letter, but the thrust of it is—I strongly support the Fire District 6 request for the funds to restore features of the building, services that were temporarily eliminated to offset cost overruns due to supply chain issues in the new building. What you're really being asked to do to restore services and facilities that had to be foregone due to Fire District 6's attempts to stay in the black. I'll sum up by saying I strongly recommend you approve those

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funds and I also strongly recommend you take action to read my letter. I also thank the commissioners for approving the funds for the Mazama hydrant project. I hope you view favorably the request for \$258,000 that Fire District 6 currently has before you. Thank you very much.

AH—Thank you.

JD—I’ve got a question. In all those emails, I don’t know why they thought you were negative on that. All you were doing is making sure we’d covered all the bases.

AH—I’ve had a lot of questions. I want to make sure it’s legal. That’s #1. #2—I represent that district over there and that fire hall is important. The other fire hall was dangerous, etc. They protect a lot of assets over there. They needed a new building. But we’re commissioners for the whole county. It’s hard when there are other small fire districts that don’t even have a building.

JD—We’ve been supportive in working on all the fire districts.

CB—It’s relative to what they’ve asked of us. It’s not like we’re running around looking for fire districts to fund. With the ARPA funds, the asks came through. This is one of them. I really don’t have a problem with it, myself.

AH—The only thing is to get an answer from the State Auditor—Could a county take its general fund and spend it on a capital expenditure that’s not owned by the county. That’s the litmus test. We said we’d use the money to use under \$10,000,000 rule for general government services.

CB—We’ve been doing it, correct?

AH—We’ve been doing it under the exact things but doing it for things they’re said were allowable under the original ARPA rule. Outside of the exceptions there are categories. This one is a capital facility we don’t own that’d we’d be providing funding for. It said if you take the standard exception, you can fund things like roads, fire services, stuff related to government services.

CB—How is the hydrant project different?

AH—We own the property.

CB—How is Okanogan different?

AH—It’s a water project.

AH—I think we have the money for this. I’ve look at some of the (*Fire District cost overrun*) receipts. Some of them—they had to bring in propane. That’s not for the building but for the heating of the building. Is that construction cost? Another one, I just emailed Cody. There’s \$126,000 bill with a generalized description.

CB—Which one? CB reads—“changes from original bid to civil permit.” I don’t get that one.

AH—OK. We’ll get some questions answered on that subject and hopefully later on today, we’ll have a decision.

36:35—AH—We’ve got staff meetings.

PP—I’m Pete Palmer, Director of Planning. Just a couple of quick things.

PP—First is an update with Yakama Nation and Oneza Associates (consultant hired to help with updating the zoning codes). Just an introductory zoom meeting. With your permission I’d like to share what comes out of the new stipulation order once it’s approved as far as the Yakamas are proposing as the zone code changes.

AH—Just the ones we’ve been discussing?

PP—Yes. But in addition to that,

AH—Have they been sent our revision?

PP—It was sent but there’s no reply yet.

PP—I’ll also send some comments Yakama Nation has sent in the past. But moving forward, they’ve agreed to supply Oneza a document that would outline their proposed changes to the code about water uses. They agreed to have that to us by February 1.

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AH—Not to be directly incorporated, but as part of the public process.

PP—I made sure to stipulate that. I suggested bringing them and a couple of the interested groups to the table.

AH—And we're following the process.

PP—Yes. And the County Commissioners have the final say of what goes forward. It was pretty productive.

PP—The next thing...are we still on for tomorrow to discuss the Tunk?

CB—Still on.

PP—Good. There are some things I want to move forward on that.

PP—Final thing. I received an email from Sarah Lane, administrator for the Methow Watershed Foundation. She would like to purchase a new computer. The old one isn't working well. What they'd like to have is a 90% reimbursement, in their contract. I told them I'd bring it to the board. There was about \$1280 unspent in 2021, and this year up through October, they still have \$8814. I've been keeping an eye on her receipts. Contract basically supplies the materials associated with meetings and the functions they do for the county.

AH—Can you send us the exact verbiage?

PP—Yes.

CB—The request is within the budget?

PP—Yes. That's all I have until tomorrow when we'll discuss the Tunk.

42:00—AH—Naomie, you're up.

NP—via zoom. Naomie Peasley from the Fairgrounds. We're dealing with leakage at the Agriplex this morning and frozen doors at the annex. Insulation and drywall is damaged from years of water leakage.

NP—Also the heaters in the Annex went out. Cascade Mechanical came in fixed both heaters. Both units are now running as they should be.

AH—Could your budget handle those fixes?

NP—Yes.

NP—We have three more Christmas parties booked for the annex in December. No bookings in January because we'll be closed to replace the floor. And that's it. Any questions?

AH—Just one. You will get the quarterly report done for Theresa?

NP—Yes. It's all done and ready to go.

AH—Excellent.

45:00—AH—I've got a call in to Cari (Hall, County Auditor). She'll try to get ahold of the State Auditor about how does a county fund a capital facility not owned by the county.

AH—Miles, are you still on? I sent Cody an email and haven't got a reply. He's probably busy. There's an invoice here for \$126,700 and it's just got a general description. Can you find out what that was?

MM—Yes. Right now, Cody's in a meeting with the Captains. I went and looked at the invoice and I don't know the answer. Cody will know and I don't want to guess.

AH—Everybody is welcome to stay on. I think we're going to postpone the Fire District decision until after we've got the information about that invoice and hear back from the State Auditor about funding a capital facility that's not their own.

54:21—AH—Maurice?

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MG—Maurice Goodall, Okanogan County Emergency Management. I talked to Cari Hall and I probably need to discuss something in our budget. There's a budget issue. There was \$20,000 to be put in a line item, and I don't know where it went.

AH and MG discuss revenue and expense amounts.

MG—That all makes sense.

MG—One more thing. I've mentioned before about overtime for the assistant. I'd like for her to get OT on a daily basis after 8 hours or 12 hours for the shift.

AH—That's like the police?

MG—Yes. I think I need to write a resolution.

AH—Yes. Talk to Shelley in HR about your assistant going to daily OT.

MG—And one other thing. AV Capture. MG discusses the need for people to be aware they're being recorded if they're sitting in the audience during a meeting. AH agrees to post a sign on the door to alert them. CB wonders if there could be a red light when the system is recording.

MG leaves.

1:10:30—AH—Looking at the contract with the Watershed Council, I think we should do an addendum. Do a one-time allowable expense for a computer so it's not all the time.

1:15:45—CB—(Returning to the topic of the ARPA money for FD6.) The expenditure for that type of infrastructure is clearly allowed. But nobody ever speaks to another local government, especially a fire district that's not part of our government. You'd think they'd think of that. I'll ask the guy at WSAC (Washington State Assoc. of Counties). There's NACo (National Association of Counties) to ask the question to.

AH—Need to ask (*inaudible*). In our staff meeting on Monday, with Pete discussing the Tunk Basin, and the increase from R-5 to R-20. Nowhere does it talk about our objections to R-20s, or that's not what we asked for. I'd like to put something in there about how we questioned why 20s when we talked about 100s.

CB—Yeah.

AH—I'd just say the Commissioners questioned about why 100 acre parcels weren't discussed.

CB—The one thing I remember about that was Jim calling out the number. Is this the email saying that Pete was responsible for making all these statements?

AH—Yeah. That's not the case.

CB—And it's offensive.

AH—I wasn't there, but the Commissioners asked for 100 acre parcels.

CB—I'd wait for them to make their recommendation.

AH—LJ has told us to be sure to follow the right procedure. When you go to tell her something, you make a motion. That's probably what we should have done. Make a motion or create a memo to the Planning Commission saying this is what we've seen with water availability and this is what we're looking at for possible solutions. Can you look at it?

1:29:15—AH—It's 10:30 and time for the public hearing for the 2023 Okanogan County budget. It's a little different than most public hearings because our staff time will be going over what we have done and what we've got left to do.

AH—We've completed these—reads a list of budgets that are completed and the tab shows in green on the spread sheet. Only seven of the non-current expense budgets are not completed.

AH—MG is here. His fund is 121.

MG and CH discuss the issue. Budget is now complete and turns green

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1:47:55—Discussion of Budgets 13 and 14. Both get green tabbed.

1:51:50—Discussion of Budget 028—Fairgrounds. It now lists \$5,000 expenditures. So now it can be green tabbed.

1:53:15—Discussion of Budget 112. Green tabbed as is.

1:55:00—Discussion of Budget 134—Capital improvements. Green tabbed.

2:22:20—Discussion of Budget 141—Affordable Housing. Green tabbed.

2:25:45—Discussion of Budget 170—ARPA. CB mentions the ARPA report is due in April. ARPA budget get a yellow tab until CH can do the BARS codes.

2:41:30—Discussion of Budget 197—Vehicle Reserve. Green tabbed.

2:53:20—Discussion of Budget 198—Current Expense Reserve. Green tabbed.

2:57:15—Recess for lunch. Resume at 1:30.

CB to AH—NACo has a place to ask questions and I asked about investment in government’s infrastructure.

3:00:30—AH asks LJ to ask Karen Beatty, Director of Central Services to attend the meeting.

CH—I rearranged lines in Budget 170 and created BARS codes. Those are the changes you requested. I recommend we green tab.

AH—LJ will pay the \$249,000 for the chip seal.

CB—If you look at Budget 197, that reflects the coroners. Describes how she’s moved money for vehicles around in budgets.

CB—With Budget 195 and 005...

AH—Talks on the phone with JT about 50% FTE with Paths and Trails.

3:08:40—CB—There are counties across the country that are funding fire halls through fire districts. Article after article. It’s all ARPA. Not fully funded, but part of them are.

CH—That makes sense.

CB—I’ve also got a question into NACo. They’ve got a pretty good question and answer portal. And one to Curtis at WSAC who’s the guy who...That’s really a weird deal that reporting is once every year in April. We hadn’t done anything by last April so it was simple. The part that makes you wonder is the “lost revenue” part, but they opened it so wide open, it’s amazing to think they even did that and it makes us all suspicious.

AH finishes phone call with JT.

CH—That was the last one we were waiting for so we can green tab it.

3:11:30—CH—So we’re down to 015 (Non-Departmental) and 196 (Equipment Reserve).

Discussion of these budgets with KB and CH.

AH and CH discuss revenue estimates.

3:30:00—AH has to leave for union negotiations. Recess until CB returns and there will be a quorum. CH will drive AH’s computer while he’s gone.

AH—Get it all set up and green tabbed. Then I’ll continue the public hearing until another time if it’s all ready to go, maybe until next Monday. Then we’ll open for public comments and pass it.

CH—Great. In the meantime, we might find some errors.

JD—Asks LJ if there’s an executive session next Tuesday for Health.

LJ—No executive sessions next week.

JD—Can you put an executive session on next week for Public Health? For performance of a public employee.

CB returns. I was talking to Rep. Maycumber to talk about a couple of our projects, one being the communications system. So that was good.

LJ gives CB a rundown.

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LJ suggests several changes in the 015 budget.

3:53:35—CH—I'll green tab 015 if that's OK with you.

CH—Only other thing to review is Current Expense Revenue.

AH returns for a short time and makes some suggestions.

CH—We can call it the Final Draft of the Budget. Put it on the Commissioners' web page and Auditor's page will have a link to it.

CB—Continue the hearing to Monday and if there are changes to be made, we can do them on Tuesday.

4:09:40—CB to AH—I'll forward Curtis' (at WSAC) comments about the Fire Hall to you. Sounded positive.

JD—Move to continue the Hearing until Monday at 10:30. Passes 2-0.

Adjourn at 2:45