

Board of Okanogan County Commissioners
Tuesday August 17, 2021 AM

Present:

Chris Branch (CB) – BOCC Chair, District 1

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

Jim DeTro (JD) – 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 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://www.okanogancounty.org/departments/boards/live_streaming_of_meetings.php

Time stamps below are in real time. To locate specific topics, a clock on the AV Capture video screen at https://okanogancounty.org/offices/commissioners/commissioners_proceedings.php can assist in finding the correct spot on the video recording.

Summary of Significant Discussions or Actions: Special meeting with Board of Health via Zoom – specifically to support a letter from Dr James Wallace and other health officers around the state in requesting Governor to impose a mask mandate; 2 voted in favor, 4 no votes. Dr Wallace is able to sign this letter without the support of the Board, Discussion/update of fire activity, Discussion among BOCC regarding masking, vaccinations being mandatory or personal choice, All 3 Commissioners have heard from constituents on these issues and share their opinions/insights/thoughts, update from Emergency Services Manager, Finance Committee Meeting – 1 in a series to determine how to utilize the \$8.1 million dollars allocated to Okanogan County under the American Rescue Plan Act, TV District questioning project on road to Omak Mountain – this needs to be addressed with the Colville Tribe, Updates from Solid Waste manager and County Engineer: Per WDFW – Miller Pit is funded.

8:50 – BOCC meeting with BOH at special meeting on Zoom. JD called meeting to order. Purpose of meeting is to gain support from the Board in signing letter requesting Governor Inslee to mandate use of masks right now while dealing with the new Delta variant.

Dr Wallace – Public Health's Medical officer will be signing this letter, along with other health officers around the state. Current CDC guidelines are to mask up indoors, and when unable to social distance outside. Dr Wallace states that we (Okanogan County) are currently above the 100 cases per 100,000 which is concerning and states that the disease transmission is high enough for this request. Dr Wallace can sign this letter with or without the Board's approval/support, but brought to the Board for their input and discussion.

CB made motion to support Dr Wallace's signing of this letter, along with others around the state. AH called for a roll call vote; CB – Yes, Marianne Williams, ARNP – yes, AH -no, JD -no, Chris Erlandsen -no, Jim Wright -no. Pat Stanton not in attendance.

Motion failed the roll call vote.

AH addresses Dr Wallace – I greatly appreciate your waiting for us to have discussion on this before signing on, JD agrees, CB appreciates that doctor is from Medical stand point - politics aside.

9:13 – Special meeting with Board of Health adjourned.

9:18 – Opened regular BOCC meeting.

Discussion of current fire conditions, people moving cattle from the fire areas. JD reports one person found his cattle, and all were in good shape – no problems.

An aside; JD mentions that fire burns to the plant – Fireweed and then goes out.

9:23 All BOCC members discuss mask mandates, hydrochloroquine use, vaccinations, personal experiences with COVID,

AH states he would never mandate county employees to mask or take the vaccine.

CB asks why. AH & JD believe it is a personal choice.

JD wonders why manufacturers, doctors, politicians are not responsible for any problems associated with this new vaccine...??

The conversation then, moved on to the Abortion issue regarding choice with own body.

JD states we have an open border, and it makes no sense for us to go through all this when people can just come in and out of here freely.

Discussion as to whether this is political or not. AH states it is not political and references an article from 2005 regarding effectiveness of hydrochloroquine. CB – did you (AH) use this when you had Covid? AH states not. (*It appears that JD did use this drug, however*)

Generalized discussion about what to & what not to believe and how to determine the best facts.

9:50- Maurice Goodall (MG), Emergency Services Manager, updates on fires. Having issue with archived stuff on the websites when updating people about fires. Emergency Services FB page references back to official website.

MG states there is another Zoom meeting this evening on the Muckamuck and Cedar Creek fires.

10:00 – Cari Hall (CH) – County Auditor, Leah McCormack (LM) County Treasurer, and Deputy Lisa Schreckengast (LS)

LM had already sent information to BOCC.

CB presented via power point a plan for helping the finance committee to determine appropriation of the funds from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) \$8.1 million.

LJ clarifies that these funds must be allocated by 12/21/2024 and spent by the end of calendar year 2026 (12/31/2026)

4 administrative goals: 1. funding comprehensive Covid response plan, 2. delivering relief to working families, 3. supporting communities that are struggling, 4. protecting against cyberattacks.

AH wants to know if there are some strict guidelines like the Covid funding?

CB states that it is going to be loose.

By October 31st, we must have a general allocation strategy.

JD asks what about mandates? CB & AH answer there is nothing mandated.

Example given from Clallam County.

11:05 AH asks what do we do with the interest that accrues since we have set up an account for this money? Interest goes back to the fund and/or resolution can be made to do something with the interest.

Victoria, from TV District called in as they are needing road access to replace a tower on Omak Mountain. There is a project happening on the road, impeding traffic. Will need to contact the Tribe about this.

11:13 – Ken Kovalchenko (KK), Solid Waste Manager reports there are no holes in the liner for pond, Draining the pond now.

Also, project on Spring Coulee regarding watering of trees. Having problems with the water regular well not recovery as fast. It was last blown out in 2013. Planning on blowing out and replacing pump. KK states there is money in the budget for this.

Josh Thomson (JT), Ok County Engineer stats that everyone is focused on the fires. They are currently just doing barricades and staying out of the way. Chip Seal ending in Nespelem, next chip seal in Brewster. Culvert replacement in Aeneas Valley.

Also, Tom Woodruff, WDFW contacted JT. The Miller Pit is funded.

Also, some discussion of a 3.4 acre parcel by the pit.

3 things on consent agenda regarding the contract with Degerstrom on the North Star Park City Bridge project.

11:33 – no further business, adjourned until public comment at 1:30