

Board of Okanogan County Commissioners
Tuesday, August 24, 2021 AM

Present:

Chris Branch (CB) – BOCC Chairman, 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 are in italics. These notes are published at <https://countywatch.org> and are not the official 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://www.okanogancounty.org/departments/boards/live_streaming_of_meetings.php can assist in finding the correct spot on the video recording.

Summary of Significant Discussions or Actions: Superior Court's use of Agriplex and alternatives, Fairgrounds update. Discussion with OKPH and Emergency Services regarding Covid protocol at the upcoming County Fair/ need to include fairground staff/advisory board with recommendations, Discussion of moratorium on marijuana grows with Planning Director, Current Review of Appeals processes by Department of Revenue, Board of Equalization budget overage, HR/Risk Manager update – Open Enrollment for LTC for County Employees, Public Works Update/ Bridge project.

8:30 – Meeting began with Judge Culp and Administrator Dennis Rabidou. Discussion regarding use of Fairgrounds for upcoming trial, acquisition of the Forest Service Building in Okanogan, and use of the Commissioners' Hearing Room for upcoming trial.

(I came into this meeting at 8:45)

Judge Culp – We're lucky to have the AgriPlex for court use. Two other counties have shut down trials again.

8:54 Discussion of 'Essential Workers' in regards to utilizing ARPA funding. AH is considering adding \$100 per month of pay for these County Employees. All County Employees are essential.

CB – Let's put that to the Finance Committee *(for consideration)*

8:58 – Kyle Haugen (KH), Fairgrounds Maintenance reports that there is a tractor down, may need to talk with County about using a different tractor for the fair. Also, having problems with water truck. *(That was just bought?)* Also, discussion regarding an old garbage truck that needs to be surplussed, sitting at Ok Truck & Tractor.

Also, KH asks about Covid protocol at the Fairgrounds from the Health Department.

CB states that we have challenges, but we'll get the information from Lauri Jones, Health Dept.

9:10 – Pete Palmer (PP), Planning Director brings map to discuss current permitted marijuana grows. PP states that map is not all conclusive. CB states would be good to have parcel #'s
PP also has aerial photos- checking for compliance and unpermitted structures. Considering a moratorium. She has looked at Chelan Co codes – things like annual registration, minimum lot sizes, indoor & outdoor grow regulations, also requires conditional use permits.

AH would like PP to draw up a moratorium regarding expansion of existing grows. CB states let's be clear about the sub-leases.

9:22 – Discussion between AH & CB about e-mail regarding license renewals. There is a list of things that will be expired in 90 days. Also, discussion of processors vs growers.

AH would like PP to come back to discuss a project on Twisp/Carlton road – fish habitat stuff, Would like to discuss this.

9:30 PP – We did not put any “fire mitigation” condition for people using large equipment.

CB: Would likely be addressed by SEPA. SEPA would be a good tool. PP – This project needs to be compliant with DNR. PP will look more into this.

9:46 – LJ brings up last week's review with the Dept of Revenue, done every 3-5 year cycle, that reviews appeals processed. This is the first one since I've been here states LJ. I need to talk with David Gecas to clarify the WAC's & RCW's.

During review, LJ learned the DOR wants 3 hearings to happen within a 28 day period.

LJ also discussed the 2 Consent agenda items regarding the Board of Equalization: September 29th is the next convening date needing BOCC approval. Also, Resolution 105-2021 Budget Amendment to pay Board's fees. - over budget.

9:55 Maurice Goodall (MG) Where can firefighters go? Possibly the Stampede Grounds or Sports Plex. MG reports that fires are in mop up 75% contained in the Methow.

Finally got power back on in Bonaparte.

Vaccinations (Covid) this Friday at the Fairgrounds, Booster Shot is coming. Pfizer vaccine is now FDA approved. CB stated this needed to be advertised.

BOCC would like to talk with Lauri Jones, Public Health and MG together. Asks MG to arrange that @10:30.

10:00 – Tanya Everett (TE), HR and Risk Manager, reports upcoming testing for 911 dispatcher positions this weekend. There are 2 openings. TE states she is starting to see people from the medical field applying because of losing their jobs (*apparently, due to vaccine mandate*) Also, teachers and other mandated employees that do not want to be vaccinated.

TE also reports open enrollment period open from 9/1-9/15 to purchase LTC plan or use default plan.

TE also reported some employees could qualify for late decisions.

TE also preparing depositions for hearings in January 2022.

We have 3 Covid + employees *

JD states “What a joke.”

TE also reports of report from August 11th Site analysis and recommendations regarding security.

AH reminds TE that we need to send Douglas County updated fee letter for their jail/contracted days.

10:12 AH & CB discuss fairgrounds responsibilities; what they can do on their own vs coming to

BOCC.

10:25 – Lauri Jones, Public Health Director is asked by CB to give BOCC an update on current state of Covid. Lauri Jones is getting ready to do a media release regarding the 2 dozen Covid cases which are attributed to the Stampede.. There were 40 Covid cases yesterday, 24 today.

Hospitalizations: 5 at Mid Valley Hospital, 1 in North Valley, 3 in Brewster Hospital. & 2 deaths. CW Hospital/Wenatchee is at their maximum as of 7:30 this morning.

AH asks if these are all Covid @ CW Hospital. Lauri Jones states yes, and 3 patients are under 30 years old. AH asks if they are all respiratory. Yes.

Lauri Jones wants to talk about the fair. CB states maybe having someone/employee oversee Covid protections. Would Health Dept be willing to help?

MG states would be good to have hand-washing stations like the firefighters.

Lauri asks how do we make fair successful & safe? CB states that signage and such would bring consciousness of being safe and the risk. AH states, if you are worried, just don't go.

MG asks Lauri Jones if she is talking with Naomie Peasley, Fair Event Coordinator. This needs to happen.

MG states I protect myself – take precautions.

Lauri Jones gives example of 190 beds at CW Hospital, but they can only staff 140. This is an over-burdened medical system.

CB state we are working in a realm of uncertainty.

Lauri Jones – You have a responsibility to protect family and community.

CB ponders what would situation be if we did nothing.

JD – South Dakota is the lowest in the nation and they have done nothing.

Lauri Jones – FDA has approved Pfizer. We are having a lot of breakthrough cases. The vaccines have given people a false sense of security

MG points out that we have a fair coming up.

Lauri Jones: Food vendors need to wear masks. There is no beer garden this year, good. What about the entertainment area. Would love to see signage.

CB – Do we need to staff a position? Make sure there is signage, provide masks.

Lauri Jones worries about people shoulder to shoulder

AH – Can we give a list (of recommendations) to Naomie and the Fair Advisory Board?

10:59 – After fair, would like to resume vaccinations at the Agriplex until the weather gets bed.

Lauri Jones – One last thing, Naomie Peasley is a pleasure to work with.

BOCC thanks Lauri Jones for coming up.

11:01 – JD states “I'm not going to argue with her because she always has an excuse” (*I presume this was in regard to short time to develop vaccine. Lauri stated technology has advanced*)

AH heard that it is all about personal responsibility.

11:02 Josh Thomsen(JT), County Engineer reports most everything is about the fires.

Chip seal is completed, then we can do other projects.

11:19 Discussion of Omak Mountain Road, residences, shape of road, and Tribe project at top of the mountain. Whether this is primitive road

11:27 – JT forwarded E-mail from BPA regarding not paying for anything to protect fish. This is in regards to an upcoming Bridge project. Currently doing a temporary fix. Looking at LTAC monies. LJ states application for LTAC monies must be in by 5:00 today.

AH states \$130,000.00 for the bridge.

11:43

JT also discusses other road projects. Agreement with Granite Northwest.

BOCC Moved, Seconded, and carried to sign agreement to remove granite sand and waste material with Granite Northwest.

JT states that Public Works is still down 2 positions in the Methow Valley.

11:49 Meeting Adjourned.