

+Board of Okanogan County Commissioners
Tuesday, June 20th, 2023, 1:30 p.m.

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Present:

Chris Branch (CB), BOCC District 1 (*via Zoom*)
Jon Neil (JN), BOCC District 3
Laney Johns (LJ), Clerk of the Board
Miles Milliken (MM), Twisp City Council
Shelley Keitzman (SK)
Pamela Johnson (PJ), Treasurer
Cari Hall (CH), Auditor
Nicole Orr, Support Services
David Rodriguez, Coroner
Lauri Jones (LJ), Public Health
Paul Budrow (PB), Sheriff
Mike Worden (MW), Dispatch Center
Pete Palmer, Planning Director
Kathleen Descoteaux, Juvenile and Family Services
Karen Beatty (KB), Central Services
Lisa Schreckengost (LS), Financial Manager

An AV Capture archive of the meeting on this date is available at: HYPERLINK "https://okanogancounty.org/departments/boards/live_streaming_of_meetings.php" \t "_blank" https://okanogancounty.org/departments/boards/live_streaming_of_meetings.php

Summary of Important Discussions:

- *Petition signatures may let Twisp voters decide on construction of year-round, two-pool swimming complex*
- *Department Heads Update: Commissioner Branch urges departments to submit infrastructure project ideas such as the planned sewer-water connection to Rodeo Trail between Okanogan and Omak, paid for by .09 sales tax dollars; Wenatchee's "Methow Fire" not in the Methow; air filters to be distributed to senior centers, libraries, public buildings; Computer back-up system overloaded, departments must sort out old documents; Public records website now "live", small information request fees to be waived; budget request letters going out.*
- *Finance Committee sets new interest rates, following rise in prime rate, differentiating*

between registered warrants and inter fund loans; junior districts to be reminded to submit budget figures in time to set levy amounts

1:34 - *Twisp residents are asking for the construction of an indoor swimming pool complex which would be administrated by a metropolitan park district.*

MM: ... We're going with a board of five appointed commissioners. We need the County's support. Voters are out with a petition. We only need 1,500 signatures to get this on the ballot. We have one more month and we already have 900 signatures, plus local business sponsors.

CB: If the community wants to vote a tax, I'm for it. In Omak, the RV park pays for most of the pool. I believe in Twisp you can keep a pool going.

AH: They would be using a levy.

MM: ... A levy amount of \$.75/\$1,000 of assessed value would generate \$1.7M.

AH: The verbiage on the ballot doesn't give a rate.

MM: The Board of Commissioners will decide the percentage. People will vote to be levied up to \$.75/\$1,000. That's the biggest question in determining how people will vote. The tax implications. So many moving parts. ... I'm here to get a sense of your thoughts on the inter-local agreement as drafted for the ballot in November.

CB: What you'd like to see from us now is support for the endeavor.

MM: Plus feedback, and eventually a resolution to adopt that agreement. I'm working through questions on this with Twisp and Winthrop Winthrop will decide on this after we receive the signatures.

AH: A recreation district was put on the ballot years ago and it failed. I think that (*now*) they've done a good job on outlining, having safeguards.

CB: I saw "ex-officio members".

MM: That's the formation process for this board, using an appointment process.

AH (*reading*): Two city council members, one from Twisp and one from Winthrop, the District 2 County Commissioner and two at large positions chosen by the Twisp and Winthrop city council members.

MM: It will be a year-round indoor complex with two pools, one full size for competition, the other warmer and shallower for younger and older users. There's talk of having doors that open up to the outside. We're looking at a broader base than just the Methow.

AH: I don't know about a motion to support it. I will sign the inter-local agreement if taxpayers give enough signatures to go ahead with it.

MM: I'll follow up when we get the signatures and get back with whatever changes have been made. *MM leaves.*

2:00 - Department Heads Quarterly Update

CB: This time we have a skeleton of an agenda of things to talk about. The .09 Infrastructure Fund (*derived from State sales tax*) has paid for some things. It will open up soon... Projects will be prioritized by the Economic Alliance. Our county in the past has bonded that income for a 28-year bond—that helped keep legislators from taking that away. I think they extended it for a 30-year period. The County paid for it—an extension of infrastructure on the east side of Lake Osoyoos. ... We suggest that if you have interests, if they serve economic development, like workforce housing,...

AH: Rodeo Trails is a good project. It extends water and sewer to the Fairgrounds. Making that

road go all the way through the underpass and go to Tribal Trails will be good for businesses on Rodeo Trail.

CB: It would make an all-weather road. It would benefit the rail and business that have rail. We wouldn't be able to fund the entire thing but there would be matching funds... *Someone mentions a project in Brewster they had been trying to get on this list but were dissuaded.* It could qualify for the 3-county list. It's important for legislators. *(The grant)* is easy to administer but it's rare to fund a project alone with those dollars. The Stampede arena *(started this way)* and is being paid off. Bring your requests here. The Economic Alliance sometimes has a workshop. There's an infrastructure conference in Wenatchee every year. If you have a burning project, it's coming up soon.

SK *(Human Resources/Risk Pool)*: The Safety Committee is having its first meeting July 5th. We'll identify safety issues. There are 11 people, elected or appointed by their department, representing most of the departments. *CB asks about the public records fee schedule.* It's just been posted. We're working on waiving fees for under \$2,50 or \$5. We're discussing it with *(attorney)* Esther Milner.

AH: is there a new policy on how that gets funneled to the Public Records Officer?

SK: The website. There has been a training. We just got the site live last week

AH: It doesn't have to be a formal request. Forward it and they will determine if it can be found on the web.

SK: It's work in progress.

CH *(Auditor)* : July 11th we're sending out budget requests. The budgets are due back 30 days from that date. I'm pleading: get them in before the last minute!

AH: With only revenues until May, make an educated guess. It's okay to use last year's numbers.

2:26 - CH: Another audit process is taking inventory of capital assets and small and attractive items. By "small and attractive" we mean things easily sold or pawned like calculators, tablets, smart phones, tools, things that fit into a purse or a pocket. They can be extremely expensive.

KB *(Central Services)*: Unis *(a web-based integrated access control management software)* has postponed its "go light" until January 1 2025 through circumstances beyond our control. Now the county must accommodate us. We are starting the payroll side after two years on the finance side. The silver lining is, we'll have more time to prepare, and still have support from *(the old system)* Eden.

MW *(Dispatch)* : Wenatchee now has a "Methow Fire". I don't know why, it's not n the Methow. But your phone will ring for sure.

CB: Pam *(Johnson, Treasurer)*, do you have the opioid payments from the national program?

PJ: One of them, \$93,000. There's one coming through in August.

CB: The other one is through the State.

LJ *(Public Health)*: We'll be receiving 66 Hepa air filter units. We planned on one for each Senior Center, or people home-bound. I was thinking libraries, city buildings or departments.

Speaking of opioids, with Dave Rodriguez (*Coroner*) we're in a deep training on the machine to detect drug quantities without having to send out for lab results. 17 minutes for urine, one hour for blood samples. ...I just received a whole bunch of (*Fentanyl overdose treatment*) Narcanes. We've been working with Shelley (*Keitzman, Human Resources*) on CPR and AED training. The AED machines are on back order. We'll keep you posted on the cost and list of people for classes.

MW: We have a holiday with two weekends. Anyone who wants to light fireworks, set them off in East Omak.

KB: We've had a problem for a week now with Laser Fiche (*"enterprise content management and business process automation software"*). We had our first failure, tried to restore from the back-up, then the virtual engines on the server, had a problem, then on the physical server the drives have corrupt, bad sectors. We've changed the whole server. Because there's so much data it takes 15 hours to see if something works. We have so much past-retention, obsolete data on Laser Fiche. Just to back it up is 11 terabytes and takes multiple days. We need to archive what's over ten years old. Since the 2021 incident we've tried to do better with back-ups, first off-line, then on-line. Since they take so long we're still vulnerable 10 to 12 hours a day. The systems I've looked at are prohibitive—a quarter of a million dollars—so each department should see what they need and don't need. There are home folders of people who have been gone for years. *She warns that there will be a lapse in the network as they finish something they've been working on for a year, but it's on a Sunday; she asks if they are happy with "Adobe Pro" and says there are some licenses left.*

CB: We're updating County Code. Esther Milner has her hands full. She may be contacting your department. Don't know how many of you use County Code. The public looks things up, things like Public Health.

2:59 - Finance Committee Meeting - *CH points to two departments whose revenues to-date are particularly low compared to projections. Fairgrounds had budgeted for \$30,000 in contributions and donations and had only received \$120, but she says they should be receiving a donation from Boots and Saddles. Superior Court is also well below projections, and LS says it's the UGA grant they haven't received. CH: I'm pretty sure it used to be the U of W stipend, (probably) for Juvenile Court. PJ says because of the 2022 bond an arbitrage specialist will look over revenues and expenditures every year.*

AH: That's the thing with companies doing workshops. It's going to be a \$5M bill. *He asks about the architectural firm MJ Neil, LJ says they'll be meeting Friday with the Sheriff. He asks about on-call engineering firm Courtner. LJ says nothing submitted recently but they had subcontractors they'd been working with on a survey that had been delayed. AH says their bond money will be spent pretty quick; those expenses taking \$6.5M or \$7M out of the \$9M or \$10M for the year.*

3:13 - PJ: Last meeting it was questioned what county assistance is for.

AH: It's a funny formula from the Dept. of Revenue on Sales and Use Tax and values. We may not get much money seeing how much we got last year.

PJ: I'm not sure. It's not a steady rate. Also, in April I'd spoken with Mike Worden about the 911 project, and I talked with (*State employee*) Jim Nelson on bonding for equipment with a 5-7 year lifespan. He said (*it's feasible*). ...He said do it as an obligation bond. It's easier to get

it through, and you get a better rating. He was thinking the end of the year and into 2024 we might see interest go down and it would be more possible. He's willing to meet with us. I didn't think equipment was eligible but we just have to break it out and it can all be on one bond. He also asked if the 911 project got any of the sales tax money.

AH: Lifeline is doing (*inaudible*) testing on that. Thinking of giving fire districts some of that stuff too? JN: Lifeline is buying their own radios, then it's going to be a central core test to see how it functions. They actually piggy-back on some Department of Transportation stuff.

There is a very long discussion on the calculation of interest rates. The County invests in registered warrants, and also grants inter fund loans. PJ asks about calculating their registered warrant interest.

PJ: It was suggested to me that we have something in our debt policy that says how we're going to do it. With interest rates going up, do we want to raise our rates? ...Registered warrants are at 3.5%. We stayed at that rate when rates were going down. CB asks about defaults, PJ says the only one is the Aeneas Irrigation District.

AH: 12% to 18% a year is typical. That keeps us well above prime rate. It's on a monthly basis. That should motivate them to pay it off quicker. *He asks if interest goes down as loan is paid off.*

PJ: It depends on our debt policy. Now it's a flat 3.5%. This formula also applies to inter fund loans. *Since one loan is to an outside entity and the other is covering a department's negative balance AH proposes to split the policy. They agree to align with the State Pool rates, which PM says are close to bank rates, for inter fund loans, and add 2% to this rate for registered warrants. This should go into writing. CH points out that they have to take the cost to process RCWs (Revised Code of Washington) but also have to be fair... PJ says she will keep the flat rate of 3.5% until July and notify Aeneas Irrigation District that after that the new rate will be applied..*

3:41 - CB: We could look at what other counties have done. ...Adding 2% makes it quite a jump. We shouldn't make this decision by ourselves.

CH: It's a huge jump. Usually registered warranties are when you're in financial trouble. You can't invest the money.

CB: Some of the districts can't afford reasonable accounting (*services*).

15:45 - CH: The 2024 budget call letter will be going out to all county departments but we also have a junior districts call letter to go out. Last year the commissioners made the decision the budget submitting deadline would be November 1st but I'm getting a lot of pushback from districts. These districts quote code which puts the deadline at the end of November, but CH says this is for assessed levies which are different. The auditor needs the budgets in before the levies get voted. This is stated further in the RCW. Because most of the counties are moving to a different accounting system, we found out that we didn't need the budget book.... Is it required that we track their budget in the system? If they don't have their budget in time I still pay salaries but the budget is not our responsibility. *She will get legal advise from EM before accepting AH's offer to sign a letter to the junior taxing districts.* A lot of the districts are volunteers and don't have financial systems. We need to communicate in a way that they understand what this means... but a budget copy must be submitted.

CB: There are requirements that haven't been complied with but it's been so long—we need to do it in a constructive way. With irrigation districts it's been an option if they want to submit budgets to us. And school districts... I say they might want to be their own treasurer if they're

big enough. *End of Finance Committee meeting.*

4:04 - *Commissioners approve a six-month extension of the CBDG (Community Development Block Grant) CBI grant for Community Action so they can submit a bigger food order in July.*

4:05 - *Meeting adjourned.*