

Board of Okanogan County Commissioners
Tuesday March 5, 2024 AM

Present:

Jon Neal (JN) – BOCC Chair, District 3

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

Chris Branch (CB) – BOCC, District 1

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://okanogancounty.org/offices/commissioners/commissioners_proceedings.php

Time stamps below are in real time. To locate specific topics, a click on the AV Capture video screen at <https://okanogancounty.org/avcapture.html> can assist in finding the correct spot on the video recording.

Summary of Significant Discussions or Actions:

- Board considers using ARPA funds for some Oroville Fire Department equipment.
- No public comments.
- The Sheriff's Dept Communications Director requests permission to look for new Ford transit van for the new technician position.
- HR/Risk Manager asks for authorization to purchase two gun lockers for weapons storage in the Court House due to security concerns. Purchase is approved. Discussion of preference of keeping Opioid Settlement monies for County in County Fund, but willing to pay administrative fee to the Opioid Settlement Council – “we know best use of funds in our county”.
- Public Hearing on closeout of Covid 1 & 2 funds through Community Action- \$400,000.
- Solid Waste Manager: Receives approval to get on Open Line (on radio station) to explain the new organics program grant and also the grant to improve air quality – accepting 'green' waste with no charge.
- Public Works: The new Trails/Planning position person, Amy Staggs. Gives update to Board on Whistler Canyon and other possible projects.
- 11:37 meeting adjourned.

9:00

Meeting opens with flag salute.

JN has sent e-mails regarding equipment needed by the Oroville Fire Department. JN was wondering about using ARPA funds for this. They need extrication equipment. AH and CB agree this is a good use of ARPA funds. AH – we'll need a budget supplemental & asks if LJ could write that it. LJ explains that she handles the resolution and contract, then the Auditor does the (budget) bars code line.

Board is reviewing minutes from February 12, 20, 26, & 27

9:15

No Public Comment

CB responded to Mrs Jackson (on Zoom) previous request for name and number of person to talk to regarding her water system issues.

9:32

Executive Session under RCW 42.30.110(1)(i) with Esther

Milner, Chief Civil Deputy regarding potential litigation for 15 minutes*****

9:39

LJ brings up some budget requirement regarding setting aside monies for mental health services, which has been designated for drug and alcohol abuse services. Also, HR is asking for a couple more executive sessions today.

9:46

Executive session with Civil Deputy and HR for possible litigation. RCW 42.30.110(1)(i)

Until 10:02

10:05

Mike Worden, Ok Co Sheriff Dispatch (on Zoom) reports that they did get the second Radio Technician position filled. He would like to request permission to purchase a new vehicle for this person. A service van is needed – looking for a Ford Transit van. I have been looking locally but also may need to use the state motor pool. (Verbal permission given)

Mike Worden – By the way, I have been in Olympia and had the opportunity to talk with legislators about 911 funding. I invited them to come and see our new set up.

10:10 Shelley Keitzman (SK), HR/Risk Manager – I spoke with the Judges and Sheriff last week about security concerns. We do not have lockers for weapons that people bring into the courthouse. We would like to get two gun lockers, one for the 1st floor and another for the 2nd floor, and we have decided that digital would work the best versus a key lock. The two I would like to purchase are \$2500 for both and it would take 6-8 weeks before we can get them.

Right now, the security guards have no place to put the weapons when they take them.

10:15

The Board authorizes the purchase of gun lockers for the courthouse.

CB reports that he got an e-mail from Kevin Overby, Douglas Co Commissioners regarding distribution of the Opioid Settlement funds.

AH – Remember we want total control over these funds. I am fine with paying an administrative fee to the Opioid Settlement Council for management but would prefer to keep our funds ‘in house’ Also, I would like a report from Dennis Rabidou as he is our representative on this Council.

CB – I will talk with them about it.

AH – the jail is considering getting a drug dog. It’s interesting that the reason we got this money is due to opioid abuse. I don’t think it’s strictly Fentanyl.

JN- Asks if it has to go through the Council?

CB – I don’t think so.

AH – We should submit some project that we feel might fall into this.

10:23

AH – We're concerned with where the money goes because we know what is best for our county. I know there are some administrative costs with the Council. We just want to be sure the money stays in our account.

10:30

Public Hearing – Closeout of CDBG CV1 Grant with Okanogan Community Action Council. Rena Shawver, Executive Director presents breakdown of the \$400,000 allocated to the County for Covid 1 & 2 funding. 157 people were served during the pandemic with housing costs, subsistence. Also, what was left of funding went to the food bank. The Board approves the closeout of this account.

LJ – Rena Shawver would like to talk with the BOCC about changing how the CDBG funds are distributed in the future. She will meet with LJ first, then come to the Board.

10:50

Ken Kovalchenko (KK), Solid Waste Manager to update Board on the latest. I am creating an interlocal agreement for the County and Riverside to sign next week.

Also, I want to know your opinion about me going on Open Line – KOMW radio station to discuss the new organics program at the landfill to help people understand. We will be accepting 'green waste' with no charge. Also, will talk some about the new grant for air quality.

I would also like to give a 'heads up' about the upcoming apple maggot quarantine up north.

AH thinks it will be good for KK to do this.

KK thinks it will be good public service.

CB – I trust you will do a fine job.

KK – I spoke with the Auditor about how we'll run the grant.

11:00

Josh Thomson (JT), County Engineer reports on Public Works. Road conditions; it snowed 4 inches in Chesaw and things are getting better – drying out. We will be replacing the decking on a bridge in Oroville.

We have had zero communication with the Tribe regarding the Cameron Lake Project. I will give a deadline before we end this.

11:02

JT has also brought an agreement with the Forest Service and the County for road maintenance – extends another year. The Board approves the extension and the Chair will sign.

Amy Staggs (AS), Trails/Planning Manager reports the Board on considering the Whistler Canyon Project. AS is unsure of the parcel size where this parking lot is located, but is considering a vault toilet for the trailhead. AH is curious about what that might cost. AS have not gotten those figures yet. JT explains that there is no one to maintain the toilet, which is why the porta potty works well. JT states that it is a lot of work keeping the weeds down there. AH notes that this should be a County responsibility. CB noted that to the south of the parking lot, it used to swamp up and there had been, previously, a boundary line adjustment. AS noted that she was told there used to be a waterfall on the other side of the parking lot. JT states that it used to be part of an orchard.

AH asks JT about the Bridge Project in the Methow. JT states that it is still being planned for.

11:14

JT reports there is a resolution for an increase in sewage rates at Edelweiss which equals \$198. For a

vacant lot, \$239.40 for a lot with house, and \$332.60 for lot with house and shop. These are yearly charges.

JT reports that there will be a countywide guardrail project in 2025.

AH questions overtime for Solid Waste and Road Maintenance. Sometime there is a 2 hour – consistent overtime on different routes for snowplowing. Also, travel time for landfill truck drivers.

11:21

AS reports that they are doing some trail clean up on Similkameen trail.

AH brings up Methow Trails taking care of trails and grooming. Maybe the County could put in a yearly bid on this work, to generate revenue. This could be paid by LTAC funds.

CB to AS- sent her some links for some possible grants for trail work, some are matched. LJ will send AS the Parks & Recreation Plan that was previously established.

11:29

AH discusses some possibilities with county owned property – to make some trades and or develop use of. JT notes that County owns some land where there used to be a landfill. KK states that would be a lot of work to determine what material is there.

11:34

AH – We need to come up with a plan for new trail heads, and we need to take care of the weeds.

11:37

Meeting adjourned until 2:30