

Board of Okanogan County Commissioners  
Monday, Dec. 4, 2023 AM & PM

JN—Jon Neal, BOCC, District 3  
AH—Andy Hover, BOCC, Vice-Chair, District 1  
CB—Chris Branch, BOCC, Chair, District 2  
LJ—Lanie Johns, Clerk of the Board  
LG—Larry Gilman, County Assessor  
PP—Pete Palmer, Director of Planning  
MG—Maurice Goodall, Emergency Management  
BT—Brent Timm, Market Stock Fund

These notes were taken by an Okanogan County Watch volunteer. Every attempt is made to be accurate. Notes are verbatim when possible, and otherwise summarized or paraphrased. Note takers comments or clarifications are in italics. These notes are published at <https://www.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](https://okanogancounty.org/offices/commissioners/commissioners_proceedings.php)

The time stamps refer to the times on the AV Capture archive of the meeting on this date at [https://www.okanogancounty.org/departments/boards/live\\_streaming\\_of\\_meetings.php](https://www.okanogancounty.org/departments/boards/live_streaming_of_meetings.php). To locate items in real time, the clock on the wall in the AV Capture screen can be helpful.

Summary of significant discussions:

- During the Planning Department update, the Commissioners review the schedule for the zone code revision, hear about two non-conforming lots, the Methow Watershed Foundation’s proposal to hire a consultant and attend a conference. Also, they make plans for the public hearing this evening in Oroville for Lake Osoyoos’ Lake Management District.
- Brent Trimm updates the Commissioners about the sale of livestock at the Fair. The total amount of payout to the kids was \$651,520.12.
- Commissioners are finalizing the 2024 county budget. The draft budget is now available to view on their website. The public hearing about the budget will continue on Monday, Dec. 11 in the afternoon.
- Commissioners adjourn at 3:35

**02:55**—Pledge of Allegiance.

**04:00**—Commissioners adjourn as the BOCC and convene as the Board for three different EMS districts—Oroville, Tonasket and Methow Valley and pass 2024 Budget Resolutions for each. Then they reconvene as the BOCC.

**1:05:40**—AH—I believe there’s a levy certification we have to do today.

LJ—Yes.

AH—I move to approve Resolution 183-2023, certifying the 2024 Taxing District Levy Certification for Junior Taxing Districts. Motion passes 3-0.

LG—Sorry. That was on the Consent Agenda for tomorrow, but if it didn’t pass today, I’d have to use last year’s numbers.

Board of Okanogan County Commissioners  
Monday, Dec. 4, 2023 AM & PM

**1:06:20**—AH—I move to go into Executive Session for 20 minutes inviting Albert Lin, County Prosecutor, Shelley Keitzman, Human Resources and Risk Management and Esther Milner, Chief Civil Deputy Prosecutor. (*Agenda says the reason for the session is RCW 42.30.110(1)(i)(iii) Litigation or legal risks of a proposed action or current practice that the agency has identified when public discussion of the litigation or legal risks is likely to result in an adverse legal or financial consequence to the agency.*) Off they all go.

**1:33:10**—CB—It's 10:30 and time for a public hearing about the 2024 budget. We have a draft budget. Is it posted?

AH—We don't have anything after 11:30. Can we recess and continue after lunch?

Discussion about RCW rules about continuing a public hearing.

CB—We'll recess this hearing and take it up again at 1:30.

**1:43:35**—PP—I'm Pete Palmer, Director of Planning. I wanted you to see the new Zone C code update. Wednesday, Dec. 6, I'm on your agenda to discuss the revisions.

Dec. 7 and 8, we'll make the corrections.

Dec. 11 at 6:30, we'll share the document in a work session in a special meeting of the Planning Commission.

Dec. 14 will begin the public comment period and release it to the public.

PP—You remember Cheryl Curtis on Burton Ave? The assessor did a Senior Tax exemption for her mother by splitting the property in two, but he didn't follow the Planning Department rules for a subdivision. There can be issues with 911 addressing and some lots aren't in the addressing system. Moving forward, we need a way for the assessor to follow regulations so there aren't non-conforming lots.

AH—Talk to Larry Gilman (the Assessor).

CB—I talked to him. The way I got it, he said you have to go back to the Planning Department and have them decide if it's a legal conforming lot or not. That puts the heirs in a situation. There are now houses on both lots. Ms. Curtis wants to sell hers but she can't because it's a non-conforming lot. It's a boondoggle. Figuring out a way to make sure this doesn't happen would be helpful. You see these lots all the time, where there's a reduced size and it's done for tax purposes. Maybe keep the lots as they are but just not for tax purposes. It gets complicated if somebody builds on the lot not respecting the property line. If one person does something maybe not totally legal, the other person is being held hostage. Maybe find out what other counties are doing.

PP—I'll do that. I've talked to Larry, too. I just want to make sure people knew about this issue.

AH—Where is the property?

CB—It's in the small section between Okanogan and Omak but not inside either city.

PP—Zoned R-1. One acre minimum.

AH—Why one acre?

PP—Because they're all on their own septic systems so the Health Department required one acre minimum.

CB—That zoning district needs another look.

PP—Now it's a two acre minimum, but it was one acre back then.

CB—Can you have vested rights in pre-existing non-conforming lots?

**1:52:20**—CB—Looking at the weather, will we be able to zoom in Oroville?

Discussion of the public hearing this evening at 5:30 in Oroville.

Board of Okanogan County Commissioners  
Monday, Dec. 4, 2023 AM & PM

**1:53:50**—PP—One more quick thing. It's about the Methow Watershed Foundation contract. They have two requests. One is to contract with a qualified person to produce an opinion to see if Twisp can discharge water to be used in an ASR (Aquafer Storage and Recovery)

AH—Twisp isn't getting any credit for their discharged water. Their water right is for x amount of water, but they don't get credit for water they turn back into the river. I don't know if they want to put the water actually into an aquafer or just into the river.

CB—The city is requesting that?

PP—The Methow Watershed Foundation is requesting to use fund under their contract with us to hire a qualified person to produce this opinion. They're asking if that use falls into the scope of their budget.

AH—I think so.

CB—Water law is always evolving, but if the water has been put to beneficial use and when it's returned, it was part of that use. It's been an argument that's been made for a long time. Has anybody ever done that?

PP—Their request has a "not to exceed" amount.

PP--The second request is to pay for the council to attend a "Powerhouse for Boards" seminar for non-profits at the cost of \$90 per person.

CB—Well, the first request wasn't in the scope of the contract either, so as long as you agree, I say—give them the money.

AH—I disagree. Sending the board to a board retreat isn't in the scope, but finding more water for Twisp is well within the scope.

CB—OK. I agree.

PP leaves. AH and CB continue to discuss expenses of the Foundation.

**2:02:20**—MG—I'm Maurice Goodall, Emergency Management. I'd like you to approve this resolution for the restructure of the Emergency Management personnel for a wage increase. It was requested I do that. The resolution was drafted by HR.

MG—Also, I've been in touch with the Conservation District about the Community Wildfire Protection Plan. We've had our first meeting in that role. Getting the planning starting. They're going to put everything together.

MG—Another topic: FEMA Region 10 asked about the levee in Omak. The Corps of Engineers are no longer going to certify dykes and levees. That's left up to the communities to prove it to FEMA. I told Planning.

CB—I wonder what Risk Pool thinks about that.

MG—I don't know if it falls on the county or the city.

Discussion of the wording of the personnel resolution. MG will talk to Shelley Keitzman of Human Resources. Commissioners pass Resolution 186-2023.

MG—We had a motel fire. We had a couple of house fires. We've been in touch with the Red Cross, but other than that, it's been calm.

**2:12:10**—Discussion of the Market Stock Fund with Brent Timm.

BT—Distributes a data sheet to the commissioners.

AH—What's a carcass adjustment?

BT—I'll tell you.

BT—I'm Brent Timm, representing the Market Stock Fund (MSF). We appreciate the opportunity to do the sales at the Fair. It's a lot of work.

Board of Okanogan County Commissioners  
Monday, Dec. 4, 2023 AM & PM

BT—These are the final numbers. When the steers go to the packer, Agribeef in Toppenish, they grade them. When we do the floor price, they pay three or four different ways. We average it out. We try to make it so there's no negative adjustment. We set a floor price of 192 and Agribeef paid 215. The steers did well. No primes. I send all the carcass data to the kids. The carcasses just weren't finished out enough.

AH—On the 2% on your sheet, the MSF kept \$13,451?

BT—Yes. Out of our fee we pay for the brand inspections, we paid for the ring and panels this year.

AH—They bought the sheep show ring and part of a scale last year. Scales for beef, sheep and hogs.

BT—The total pay-out for the kids was \$651,520.12. That's phenomenal. I send a huge thank-you to the buyers. Those are the businesses we should be supporting.

AH—What about the on-line auction? Was it necessary?

BT—There were glitches and we didn't get much information. We had only seven buyers register for on-line, and of them, four were in the stands. It cost \$3,500. Talking with a Fair Advisory Committee (FAC) member about ShoWorks. They have a module you can buy. That might be better for an on-line auction. We have to enter all the data by hand after the sale—300 hours—so having a module could work better.

BT—We've had problems with the Post Office delivering the checks to the kids. 90 checks haven't cleared yet and some haven't even been received. It'd be great if there was some other way to deliver the checks.

BT—We're trying to digitize registration for the buyers.

BT—Any ideas for improvements for next year?

AH—I haven't heard one single complaint.

BT—We sent you a contract but never got a copy back for us to sign. Can you check with Esther Milner? We'll still do it anyway.

BT—To switch gears—With Trango, we sent a contract to Emergency Management and I know Esther wanted to make some changes. We'd like to get that formalized.

JN—I'll check on that.

BT—Thanks for everything!

CB and JN trade stories about fistfights at school and on the job.

**2:34:40**—Public Hearing—Lake Management District #1 Roles.

PP—I'm Pete Palmer, Planning Director. Here's the staff report—We're certifying the roles for the special levy for the Lake Management District #1 on Lake Osoyoos. This will be the last role for this district. Tonight is the public hearing to recreate the district. I didn't receive any objections to or comments on the recreation. I have three changes that were made to some parcels—one owner split a parcel in half, creating two new parcels.

CB—So each parcel pays the assessment?

PP—Yes. The total assessment is \$48,800 and it affects 307 parcels.

CB—There's no public testimony.

JN—I move to approve Resolution 185-2023 certifying the special assessment roles for Lake Management District #1. Motion passes 2-0. (AH is out of the room talking on the phone with Shelley Keitzman.)

PP—I'll zoom in to the meeting.

PP—Hoping it will go smoothly tonight.

JN—I was talking to one of the effected landowners and he claimed that for the last one, everyone was against it. Well, according to the balloting, it was 90% in favor. Some of the ones against it lived right on

Board of Okanogan County Commissioners  
Monday, Dec. 4, 2023 AM & PM

the border, so they paid the assessment, but didn't get the treatment. I think it'll change with the herbicide now being accepted in Canada.

**3:00:10**—CB—We'll adjourn for lunch and be back at 1:30 for budget discussion and talk more about our *(inaudible)*. Discuss travel to Oroville.

**3:10:30**—CB—We're resuming our budget hearing. Starting with current expense. Commissioners go through the entire budget. A few budgets, including those in the Prosecutor's Office and Juvenile, haven't been discussed yet, but almost all the other budgets are marked green. A few other budgets need further discussion.

**4:25:35**—AH—All the rest are done. We're down to the point where the yellow and red ones—we need to fill in some blanks and then we'll get down to the nuts and bolts of Current Expense and figure out the SAR (Search and Rescue) operator, etc.

AH—So I move to have the Clerk of the Board post this version as a draft working budget for the continued public hearing. Motion passes 3-0.

LJ—I'll post the summary. That's what we've done in years past.

CB—I think it's ample. It shows the expenditures. If someone wants to get down into the nitty-gritty, they can ask.

AH ties to make a pie chart showing the draft budget.

CB—Pretty thin slices.

AH—ARGH! *(AH has inadvertently closed the spread sheet and lost the pie chart.)*

**4:40:50**—AH—When is the next day we have time to continue this public hearing?

LJ—There's Dec. 11 afternoon, or Dec. 18.

AH—I move we continue this budget hearing until Monday, December 11 at 1:30 PM. Motion passes 3-0.

AH—Will we be done after we're done with the Executive Session, and then recess until 5:30 in Oroville? So I'll just 20 minutes on the docket.

AH—I move to go into Executive Session for 20 minutes (until 3:27) inviting Albert Lin, Shelley Keitzman and Esther Milner under RCW 42.30.110(1)(i). Motion passes 3-0.

Adjourn at 3:27.