

Board of Okanogan County Commissioners
Tuesday May 7, 2024, Tues 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

Rena Shawver (RS)

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 clock 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:

- Public Comment: Ruth Hall thanks BOCC for their service.
- Fairground Update: Contacting Engineering firm (TD&H) about needed improvements at the fairgrounds. Discussion of rental amounts at AgriPlex for Fair Queen activities, and other youth related activities.
- Discussion of review of the ARPA fund allocation.
- Community Action Council (CAC) – Rena Sawver, Executive Director, discusses current housing coalition and March services rendered to County resident for housing, food, and financial services, 85% of funding comes from Department of Commerce grants, and future projects.
- Public Works: no progress on new shops, waste oil pump system, discussion of the electric car pollution in the manufacturing, open positions.
- Meeting adjourned at 11:28

9:00

Pledge of Allegiance

9:07

AH spoke with Ken Bevis, who was playing music at the Sun Mountain Lodge. He has a song called Okanogan. AH would like others to listen to this and see if it could be used in the CBI video. AH has a CD of the song.

9:08

LJ brings forward a special run of vouchers for Noxious Weed Control. It was moved, seconded, and carried to approve vouchers in the amount of \$18,287.00 and moved, seconded, and carried to approve

payroll vouchers in the amount of \$1,778,569.00.

JN asks LJ about the engineering consultant (TD&H). LJ states TD&H did a walk-through of the courthouse, and they are aware of the need at the fairgrounds. LJ gave all the well certificates to them and will follow up with TD&H in regard to a timeline. LJ will try to nail down a date.

JN brings up the Fair Queen is having a fundraising dinner at the fairgrounds on 6/21 and wondered if they will need to pay rent. AH remembers this at \$75 when it is a youth benefit and also, the Fair Queen is like a County Department.

9:30

LJ asks the Board if we need to make changes to the CGI Scripts? AH states no unless it has me sounding stupid.

9:37

(There is a pretty lengthy discussion about ARPA funds accounting. CB has been doing a review, and they are attempting to reconcile the amounts allocated and spent as it appears they have overallocated. They discussed the Mazama fire hydrant and other ARPA projects.)

AH would like to meet with all the Judges, prosecuting attorneys to bring everyone along in the process of moving courthouse staff around. AH met with Judge Grim and Karen (information services) about the court needs. They have a new video. AH-Right now, the Judges use Zoom.

AH also discusses LATCF monies which are federal dollars.

10:16

AH discusses the last Watershed Council Mtg. He doesn't know about the other commissioners, but he feels in order to keep funding this, it has to show relevance.

(There is also quite a bit of discussion regarding the salmon recovery Board, when it was established and AH's involvement and established goals).

10:30

Rena Shawver (RS), Executive Director of the Okanogan County Community Action Council (OCCAC) in to give an update on the Housing Coalition and also what OCCAC has completed in the month of March, and future projects.

RS – Monday May 13th from 10-3:30, Wes East (newly hired coordinator/Consultant for the Housing Council) will meet with staff regarding direction of housing coalition; what's working, what is not working, and future planning. Then, he will spend the rest of the week meeting with Planning Commissions for the different municipalities in Okanogan County. RS – The entire housing coalition would like to be part of future updates with the BOCC.

RS reports there are new compliance standards with the Department of Commerce. There are different deadline dates, and it has been extended to December 2025. RS- 85% of OCCAC funding comes from the Dept of Commerce.

LJ – We also learned that Commerce still has some CHG funds for OCCAC and it still goes through the County. RS – heard that from the Dept of Commerce and we know what we'll be using it for. LJ – I have the draft and what is changing beginning July 1st this year.

RS – Update on Community Action services; Financial Counseling this year, classes and one on one. We offer this to all recipients of our programs. We want to help them be self-sufficient. RS- We have added 4 new members to our Board: Simon Windell-of the Methow Valley, David McClay – OBHC,

Dale Schrock, and Samantha Colpincher – specializing in disability access.

RS – In the month of March, we gave out 4,356 boxes of food, 123,000 pounds of food, 46 Veterans support services, and 56 members of different household for eviction prevention.

RS-We receive 100 calls per month for eviction services. Putting clients up in motels is the most expensive. We sheltered 10 individuals. We have no year-round shelter. We also work with special needs clients for their essential needs. We helped 16 households pay their rent while they are waiting for Section 8 vouchers.

RS – CAC has an \$11 million budget.

RS- WSDA will be doing their summer food program. I so want to report that our warehouse is full of food, and we are just in our 2nd year.

RS – Also, we are asking for proposals on our needed roofing project. I met with the WVC College President regarding using some of our building for potential space. RS – I've also been in touch with Senators Murray and Cantwell to help with our Capital Projects. The House of Representatives will not be doing any Capital Projects this year, but we still might meet with Rep. Newhouse.

RS – At our last Board meeting, we have a wish list for building 72 units of low income/subsidized housing. RS feels she has a lot of support from State and Federal Agencies.

10:53

Josh Thomson (JT), County Engineer reports that maintenance and road conditions are on par for this time of year. They are doing chip seal projects and grading dirt roads. The shops continue to have their problems with the waste oil pump – no progress on that. JT wants to talk directly with the contractors and go through the Civil Deputy Attorney if needed.

JT Thinks that Contractor wants to modify what has been put in already, rather than getting us the correct one.

11:01

JT – I went to a County Engineers Meeting last week. The State Transportation budget passed. There is a \$5 billion hole. We are expecting impacts.

AH – I watched an electric car go through a guardrail. There is more pollution on EV's because of using more tires.

11:08

JT – I am meeting with the DOT tomorrow. Is there anything you would like to me ask?

AH – Ask about the bridges on Hwy #153.

AH also reports to JT that there is a 40 MPH sign going up to Sun Mountain Lodge.

JT reports that the Walla Walla County Public Works positions are close to our pay scale.

AH asks if the Public Works budget could handle some increase in pay to help retain staff. AH notes that JT knows the most about what the positions do and whether a raise is in the budget. I'd like to see the costs associated with that.

AH also notes that pay rates went up more than the revenue increases.

11:28

Meeting adjourned until the afternoon session.