

Board of Okanogan County Commissioners
Monday, September 18, 2023 AM

JN—Jon Neal, BOCC, District 3
AH—Andy Hover, BOCC, Vice-Chair, District 1--Absent
CB—Chris Branch, BOCC, Chair, District 2
LJ—Lanie Johns, Clerk of the Board
C—Cameron, Assistant Clerk
MG—Maurice Goodall, Emergency Management
PP—Pete Palmer, Director of Planning
RR—Rocky Robins, Planner 3, Okanogan Planning Department
ME—Melissa Eylar, Building Department
SK—Shelley Keitzman, Human Resources and Risk Management

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Summary of significant discussions:

- Pete Palmer, Planning Director updates the commissioners on problems with their new software system to track building permits. Brightly, the software company says that migrating the data from the old system isn't included in the contract and the cost to include it will be \$13,656. They decide that Commissioner Branch, Pete Palmer, Rocky Robins of the Planning Department, Melissa Eylar from the Building Department and Esther Milner, Chief Civil Deputy Prosecutor will discuss the situation with Brightly during a phone call.
- Maurice Goodall, Emergency Management and Shelley Keitzman, Human Resources and Risk Management discuss with the commissioners drawing up a plan for prioritizing maintenance and repairs at the fairgrounds.
- Meeting adjourns at 12:24.

00:15—Pledge of Allegiance

CB—What's the Commissioner Hover story?

JN—Personal day. He sent an email this morning.

CB discusses his trip to Pacific and Wahkiakum Counties for the regional meeting that was set up there, but only two commissioners from outside those two counties showed up. Paul (?) said he put a lot of effort into the meeting and there were a lot of last minute bailouts. But it was good because we had a lot of room. Commissioner Janicki from Skagit County was there and Pam Olsen from Pacific County. A guy from Wahkiakum County, too. We looked at a lot of what they have to deal with. Wahkiakum County owns a ferry. There's a bridge that goes to an island in the Columbia River and the ferry runs over there. There's a mill on the other side. \$6.00 each way. They have an interesting shoreline issue.

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The shoreline is washing away. The Corps of Engineers dredges the river to keep the ships going through, but it hasn't added much to the owners of the property. The county has less than 5,000 people. Pacific county has 20,000 people. Its Superior Court has all the original furniture, etc.

CB—They call the DNR land “encumbered land”. We benefit more in PILT (Payment in Lieu of Taxes). They have three or four different kinds of encumbered lands. Their income from it is about \$400,000, but they haven't gotten this year's money yet.

CB—I met one of their legislators who knows all about the budget. His big thing is bridges. I talked to him about the Methow bridges. He said we want to make sure all the well-to-do people can make it in and out of the Methow. He was joking.

JN—It applies to the rest of us too.

CB—And there are also people who drive to the Methow to clean people's houses because they can't afford to live there. It was a good conversation. I didn't talk much about the Omak bridge. The issue is that it's a fairly solid bridge, but it's operationally obsolete.

CB and JN trade stories about driving on narrow bridges and meeting large vehicles coming the other way.

12:40—Cameron—Do you know where the smoke was coming from this weekend?

JN—I think it was from some controlled burns up the east valley.

CB and JN look at photos of the grandstands at the fairgrounds MG has sent them.

15:00—No public comments.

CB—I talked to Stella (Columbia, Acting Fairgrounds Manager) and learned she's not going to continue.

JN—We had the fire meeting last Wednesday, voted to extend the burn ban, so the BOCC doesn't have to do anything.

CB—What about the merged fires up there?

JN—They're basically contained and they're just watching them. On our side, Crater Creek fire has burned into an old burn scar so there's little fuel.

CB and JN trade stories about collisions with deer.

CB—Today I've got a meeting with the Conservation District about water banking. Wednesday, it's the Columbia River Caucus in Ellensburg and then the timber caucus. Tuesday is the Legislative Steering Committee. I told them I'd be there.

CB—We toured an oyster farm. It's a big part of Pacific County's economy. We've got aquaculture on the Columbia River. Do we get anything out of that? People have to buy things for their farms, but is there any taxation or anything?

29:55—MG—I'm Maurice Goodall, Emergency Management. The smoke yesterday was from the Dome Fire—in the NW corner of Chelan County. It's burning pretty good and won't go out until the snow comes.

MG—I sent some pictures. I watched the video of the meeting. My recommendation is that there needs to be a device in this room that tells you recording is happening. Recording went on way too long. It can still be recording when the board isn't in the room.

CB—We assume it's turned off when we leave.

MG—Well, I believe it needs to happen.

CB—Thanks for pointing it out.

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MG—Re: bleachers. Two bleachers have a gap between them where someone could fall.

MG—Both Lauri and I will be out of town for the rest of the week. We're going to a meeting in Spokane about networking. The feds and state people will be over there.

MG—We need to get an FMAG (Fire Management Assistance Grant from FEMA) grant signed. We'll get reimbursed for expenses on the Cedar Creek Fire.

MG—Any questions?

CB—I'll share the pictures you sent about the bleachers.

They discuss the old and new bleachers and the safety concerns—no handrail, gap between two bleachers, inadequate lighting,

MG—If you want me to be here at 10:30 for the fairgrounds update, I'll be here.

CB—Yes, please.

40:30—PP—I'm Pete Palmer, Planning Director. I'll give a quick update and then I'll turn the rest of my time over to Rocky and Missy to talk about the permit software we're having problems with.

PP—I got a new version of the zone code. I'll zoom with the consultant tomorrow. I know we talked about to only what the stipulation order entails. But I think there are some corrections to be made in the document and some importing things that would help the staff work better that should be left in. One of the things really holding us up is the Methow Review District (MRD). He was going to meet with them and go over the section and some of Isabelle's comments. He was going to meet with the MVCC (Methow Valley Citizens' Council). I hope we'll agree what will and won't be included. Now we're at a standstill because of the stipulation order and what that will entail. With the end of December as our due date, we need to make some hard decisions.

PP—Last week I attended the Economic Alliance Infrastructure Committee. meeting We're getting ready to accept letters of intent. I know that before the Mazama Subarea A applied for funds to update their plan and do some other work. Do you think it'd be viable for them to submit another letter of interest and get for a small amount of money to do some of the more technical stuff on their subarea plan? We've worked on the low hanging fruit in the update, but I don't know if they still want a consultant to work on the plan or for just us to continue? The letters of intent are due on September 29.

CB—On that particular planning endeavor, how closely does it align with the Economic Development Plan.

PP—There's a planning-only aspect to the goals of the Alliance. They talk about feasibility plans. They've applied before, but they're more prepared now. Roni said we'd need a letter of support saying the BOCC sponsored the project and we'd submit it with our letter of intent.

JN—Even if it doesn't go through the process, it gets ranked.

CB—Is the intent to get funds from the .09 funds, or just get ranked?

PP—I haven't talked to the committee about this. I just became aware of it last week.

CB—If they want our support, they should come and talk to us. We haven't had the conversation about do we want to become sponsored.

PP—There are some pretty detrimental projects the county has right now pertaining to health and safety. I don't know where this would rate in this process.

CB—That's a health and safety issue. The towns were going to do projects not eligible for .09 money. On the Mazama project, we haven't been asked to be the sponsor.

PP—I wasn't part of the process last year when they submitted for this money. But just out of the blue they said they'd applied for \$25,000 to write the plan. But it's an Economic Alliance project and they'd need the letter of support from the BOCC. I've been talked mostly to Katie and Jim, but been meeting

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with the whole group. This will be a quick turnaround to do the letter of intent and your letter including a resolution.

JN—Even if we wrote the letter, that doesn't mean there would be the money.

CB—My thoughts are—if they want to do that, they should come to us.

PP—Lastly, there's no Planning Commission meeting this month. It should be removed from the agenda. There's a lack of agenda items. The zone code is in a lull waiting on the stipulation order. We completed the Shoreline Master Plan. It's with Ecology now, waiting for the final adoption. We want to get through the zone code before any other code changes. But next week, I'll be back with changes for the festival code that we talked about last week

CB—What are the next steps for the stipulation order.

PP—We're waiting for the Yakama Nation to agree on the verbiage. That's it. It's been very slow and digging their heels in.

CB—Do we need an executive session to talk about the issues that are causing the stall?

PP—If the BOCC wants an update, that would be a good idea. We're aware of what's going on. The BOCC and the Planning Department need to agree what's going to be in the update so we can get it in front of the public.

CB—I think we need an executive session. Tomorrow?

PP—I have one with Jenna R. Mandell-Rice of Van Ness Feldman tomorrow at 3:00. We could do it afterwards.

CB—Let's plan on doing it at 3:30.

PP—That's good for me. I'll tell Esther (Milner, Chief Civil Deputy Prosecutor).

57:50—PP—So I'll turn the floor over to these girls to talk about the permitting software.

RR—I'm Rocky Robins, Planner 3 in the Planning Department. (She passes out copies of the Brightly contract and the quote.)

RR—We were getting ready to be trained to go live and discovered some of the things that were talked about and agreed upon aren't include in the contract—like date migration.

PP—For JN, who wasn't on the BOCC when this began—we initially contracted with Dude Solutions, then midstream they sold to Brightly. That's when we found a lot of problems and this is the biggest one—Brightly isn't honoring what we talked about and what I thought was the agreement we had with Dude Solutions.

RR—Their stance is it was talked about but nobody ever pulled the trigger on it, so it fell by the wayside.

ME—And it wasn't included in the contract.

CB—The migration?

RR—Yes. I also sent an email to see if the interactive map is included, but I haven't received a reply yet. So they gave us two options. The first gave us no real information that was required for the past data. Option two gave us all the data fields we needed for \$13,656.25. One time fee.

RR—We have to have this and the Building Department has to have data migration for at least three years. Missy can speak to that.

ME—I'm Melissa Eylar of the Building Department. If we start over from scratch, which is what they're saying, we'd be operating with two different databases. We'd have everything going forward in one system, but we'd have all the data from permits for the last three years in the old system. Anyone who had a permit in 2021, 2022 or 2023 could still be adding inspections, extensions, changes. So some would be easily accessible in the new system, some not so easily accessible in the old system. It's not going to be a cohesive, everything-in-one-place system. If we really want to have it so we can look things up and see where they are, we need the data migration. It's a show stopper if you have to go dig up the

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info in the old database. And when we upgrade to Microsoft 11 or whatever it is, this database become unusable.

PP—And the reason we went with a permitting software is because it's part of the stipulation order. And the importance of the data ME is talking about and why it needs to be easily accessible—right now we have to run reports specifically for the Yakama Nation on building permits we issue. It's added a lot of workload for them. With this software, it much easier to produce the permits as they're being issued. That will take in the LUP-A (Land Use Permit—Application) process for appeals. Now we're receiving requests from the Colvilles for permits issued in the Methow. (I bet there are some conversations going on.)

CB—When I think of all the extra work, you can gobble up \$13,000 pretty fast.

PP—Yeah. It was so disappointing that this was all worked out and then now they're nickel and diming us for every little thing that we were told was included upfront.

CB—Data migration is a big thing, too. Everything we've done with shifting over with the auditor, etc. that's what takes the longest time. So, Dude Solutions hosted SmartGov and then they sold to Brightly? Was Dude Solutions the same group that did FacilityDude?

ME—Yes.

CB—We've been working with them for a long time.

RR—And we can point to things in the contract and say—"See. It's right here." And they say—"No. That's not what we meant by that."

PP—We've got the funding to pay our half of it.

CB—We have to do it.

PP—We agree, but we wanted you to know that there's this big bill coming.

Discussion of CB and EM being involved with Planning and Building in a phone call to Brightly. CB ends up with—"Let's give it a shot."

PP, RR and ME leave.

1:18:40—CB discussion hiring procedures for a new fairgrounds employees. SK would do the initial cut.

JN—Narrowed it down.

CB—But now there's a pool that's promising.

1:31:15—MG and CB discusses the snow plow situation at the fairgrounds.

Commissioners, MG and SK have a long, wide-ranging discussion about the situation at the fairgrounds. Topics involve maintenance and necessary repairs.

They decide to form a committee with MG, JN, SK someone for Public Works and possibly someone else. The top priorities would be the water supply, electrical work and sewer. They would rank projects in those categories and then there'd be a plan. CB suggests a RFP (Request for Proposal) for the pump, and later suggests an RFP for moving the surplus building on the courthouse property to the fairgrounds.

Adjourn at 12:24