

**Board of Okanogan County Commissioners**  
**Tuesday May 30, 2023 AM**

Present:

Chris Branch (CB) – BOCC Chair, District 1

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

Jon Neal (JN) – BOCC, District 3

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 clarification 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](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:

- BOCC approves generic 911 fee waiver for individuals who have lost their residence in a fire or other emergency and need to get a new 911 address, Resolution #63-2023.
- Discussion of costs for repair & maintenance of Tonasket/Oroville EMS buildings and some specifics regarding whether consolidation of these EMS districts makes sense from a dollars and cents point of view and better service. There are 5 ambulances together between Tonasket and Oroville – with some in need of repair, May need feasibility study.
- County Assessor: housing market is still doing well – values remain high, sales have slowed down. 20%-30% increase of sale price in most areas of the County. Assessor’s office is on time with workload and notices to the taxpayer this year.
- Code amendment hearing for setting of minimum office hours for most offices of the courthouse. Approval of Ordinance and Resolution governing procedure for emergency closures and business needs.
- Auditor in to make recommendation for vendor for weapons detection system and BOCC accepts this quote from CEIA.
- Solid Waste Manager: Implementation of an Apple Maggot Quarantine in the North County – Manager suggests different boundaries so as to minimize the impact on residents.
- Public Works update from County Engineer
- Meeting adjourned at 11:31

9:00

Moved, Seconded, and Carried to authorize payment of vouchers in the amount of \$2,000,411.00

9:08

Pete Palmer (PP), Planning Director in the discuss the waiver of the 911 address fee for people who have lost their residences in fire or other emergency and need a new 911 address. PP has written this up in coordination with the Civil Deputy. This will be in effect from 6/2023 until 12/31/2023.

9:13

It was Moved, Seconded, and Carried to approve Resolution 63-2023 general waiver of 911 address fee when a person has experienced fire or other emergency and needs a new 911 address. *This was the result of Peter Goldmark's request, but they waived the fee for anyone in this same situation.*

It was Moved, Seconded, and Carried to extend the Profession Services agreement between vendor (Menezu?) and the Planning Department with a \$70,000 limit.

9:15

No Public Comment

BOCC goes over minutes/proceedings from previous meetings.

9:33

Wayne Walker (WW) Lifeline Emergency Services in with another (unidentified) person to discuss repairs and maintenance to the Tonasket Emergency Services building. The sewer line to the building in Tonasket is in great need of repair. We have to start planning process for this as will probably take 3-5 years to fix. WW is also looking at the Oroville Station as areas are continuing to grow and in the future will need 24/7 ambulance service. Oroville needs updates too but will need to go down a different path.

AH notes the small fire stations, like the one just north of the Beebe Bridge, (out in the middle of nowhere) and wonders if that might be feasible for us.

WW thinks maybe somewhere in the middle there. He thinks these smaller stations house equipment and are close to volunteers.

9:40

JN thinks consolidation of districts/stations (*Tonasket/Oroville*) needs to happen.

CB has been thinking of what to do with the building in Tonasket once we get the sewer line repaired – will we sell the building in the future? If we consolidate, maybe Ellesford would be a good place – just thinking...

AH states this should be a (Fire) District discussion.

WW reports that if you go inside the Tonasket building, you will notice this is a completely flat roof and there is a linear tear in the roof. My biggest concerns are in the middle of winter. The crack is generally getting bigger. That building was built in the 1940's as a fall-out shelter.

There are water pools on top of the concrete (roof). If we don't manage the water coming off the roof, it is going to come through the walls.

AH suggests getting trusses and changing the roof to a gabled roof going the other direction and he has other ideas on how to shore up the building. Now, that we know what it is, we can find some material.

WW – The only plumber we found to give a quote was in Wenatchee.

He goes on to say that flushing the toilet brings the water through the floor drains. JN has talked with JR Construction who will be calling WW.

AH states that we, the District, need to take care of this. We can send out for bids. What is cost of repair?

WW-one piece of good news, it appears the asbestos pipe starts outside and should be easy to get to the inside pipe which is cast iron.

CB states that is the same in his house that was built in the 1940's.

9:56

CB- the other thing to bring to our attention is the need to talk about ambulances.

WW states there is a limited amount of resources when it comes to ambulances. He has been waiting for a chassis that he ordered in 12/2020 that has not arrived yet. Resources are problematic. There is the non-reliability factor & difficult to get new ambulances.

CB asks how many ambulances are there between Tonasket and Oroville together?

WW states there are 5 ambulances all together. In Tonasket, there are 3 ambulances but we can only use 2 due to not being able to find the oil leak.

WW just had to order emergency lights which was difficult because the model is becoming obsolete.

AH states that Oroville EMS has ½ Million in reserve and Tonasket has \$100,000.

AH wonders if we need to run a special levy or how do we do that?

CB asks WW how many ambulances would be needed if the Districts were consolidated? WW states 3 ambulances probably. CB feels that a feasibility study is needed, especially if we are to be able to apply for Grants to fund this.

AH compares AeroMethow that requires a \$800,000 payment for their operation. I'm guessing it might be \$500,000 for the North County District if consolidated.

LJ states the Department of Commerce has grants available for ambulances, for instance.

10:00

WW addresses the different response times with the Emergency Services building in between Oroville and Tonasket. Plus or Minus 5 minutes in different areas. Oroville would gain 4- 5 minutes, Swanson Mill/Loomis will gain 5 minutes. Aeneas Valley would lose time. WW also suggests re-doing the District boundaries. Move the Tonasket line closer to the Janis Bridge.

AH brings up that we need prices for getting work done on the building.

WW states that the Oroville contract ends in June and also, the City of Tonasket.

CB states that maybe we can get a better contract regarding who is responsible for the repair and maintenance.

10:11

Larry Gilman (LG), County Assessor states the volume of sales has dropped off, but not the price. There is no continued escalation. There are no extreme increases \$321,923 appears to be the average price or 50%. Last year, this month, was the highest prices on record.

LG – this is my quarterly update. We are continuing now with our staffing, getting this done. We have 2 20-year appraisers and 1 newly certified appraiser, and 1 in training. We mailed our first change notice so the Board Of Equalization (BOE) will be on time for a July 1<sup>st</sup> meeting. There will be a value change in late August, and they need 30 days to appeal. The physical inspection area is south of Carlton, Pateros, Brewster, Coulee Dam – roughly 9,000 parcels. Change in values for different areas; Winthrop – 20%, Twisp – 30%, Okanogan – 30%, and Oroville – 30%, especially if around the lake. There are 600+ lots in Edelweiss toward Mazama – we do them by Square foot.

10:23

As far as new construction, we have 1371 open building permits. These will be assessed by August 15<sup>th</sup>, in order for change notices to go out by August 31<sup>st</sup>.

LG states apparently Spokane is seeing an equalization of values, but they are alone in the state. Most of the state is not seeing an equalization.

LG reminds everyone that we are still just funding budgets – all budget based with other like & similar property. The budgets are divided by the total assessed value. We are on time – doing well. The market is settling, not dropping.

10:30

Public Hearing Code Amendment Okanogan County Courthouse Office Hours Chapter 2.20 with Esther Milner (EM), Civil Deputy. EM reports she has written up both an ordinance #2023-15 and Resolution #62-2023. The ordinance states that the BOCC will set hours by resolution. This Ordinance is to replace the previous one from 1958. This establishes the minimum hours that offices need to be open to the public by Policy.

10:44

Moved, Seconded, and Carried to approve Ordinance 2023-15.

More discussion between BOCC, EM, and Shelley Keitzman (SK) – HR/Risk Manager regarding numbering of policies and procedures.

AH suggests striking #D for the fairground office hours – closing at 2:00.

11:00

Moved, Seconded, and Carried to approve Resolution #62-2023 with all recommended changes.

11:02

Cari Hall (CH), County Auditor and Tim (?), Maintenance to talk about the Weapons Detection System . CH has a grant that will pay for most of this, but the quote went \$5000 over the grant amount and there is no expectation that the grant can be increased. CH asks if we can take this out of the Capital Improvement fund? Tim talked with the other vendor – CEIA and recommends them. Their quote is for \$34,903.85. CH also recommends this vendor. CH has attempted to get a 3<sup>rd</sup> company to compare quotes but the company never responded.

11:09

Moved, Seconded, and Carried to accept the recommendation of CEIA for the Weapons Detection System. CH will work with Tim on this.

11:12

Ken Kovalchenko (KK), Solid Waste Manager reports there was a motion last Tuesday to adopt a new quarantine (Apple Maggot) in the North County. KK is concerned about the boundary going through the town of Oroville and being a hardship on many people. He would like to change the boundaries so as not to affect 1/3 of the residents. AH asks KK to make a letter for BOCC to sign. KK states that it is just a hardship, and we also need to address road. Maybe JN could help KK to be able to talk to right people.

LJ states that Will from the Weed District did reach out to communicate with the BOCC.

JN questions whether this will affect the transportation of fruit. KK states they can probably get an exemption status.

JT asks, what does that mean for the County? KK states that we would probably have to get a solid waste/apple maggot transportation permit.

JT states that we will likely need a permit anyways. KK states there are exceptions.

11:24

Josh Thomson (JT), County Engineer reports on road conditions, maintenance. The water flows are dropping. We're checking small bridges for damage. Currently, doing the culvert at the Seal Creek Road.

We're still researching the Barnholt Loop Road speed limit reduction. We would need to do an

ordinance to reduce the speed. Will keep up on that one. JT will be in union negotiations next Tuesday. JT – By the way, the ecology blocks on Elbow Coulee Road are tied to the irrigation system. Projects: Old 97 project moving along, Spokane Grade Overlay to start next week. Work is happening on the shops, the asphalt pad up at the landfill. We are also checking on the Foster Creek Bridge or culvert. We'll see if we can clean it out.

JT reports the Tribe is not doing construction this year. The Methow and Okanogan Rivers down below average now.

11:31

There will be no Wednesday session.

Adjourn for lunch until 1:30