

Board of Okanogan County Commissioners
Monday, April 22, 2024 AM

JN—Jon Neal, BOCC, Chair, District 3
AH—Andy Hover, BOCC, District 1
CB—Chris Branch, BOCC, District 2
LJ—Lanie Johns, Clerk of the Board
PP—Pete Palmer, Director of Planning
NB—Nick Bates, Fairgrounds Manager
MG—Maurice Goodall, Emergency Management
Tim—Tim Meadows, Maintenance Supervisor
KM—Kate Miller, Executive Director, Okanogan Land Trust
MM—Michelle Martin, Conservation Coordinator, Okanogan Land Trust

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Summary of significant discussions:

- During public comments, Sheilah and Jeff Delfeld tell the commissioners about their problems getting a mailbox on their property on Rodeo Trail Rd. If it's simply a matter of locating the mailbox, there's no permitting necessary, but if they want a new address on Rodeo Trail Rd. instead of Hwy 97, they need to get it from the Colville Tribe.
- Pete Palmer, Planning Director, has made a new red-line document for the Planning Commission to consider at their meeting this evening. It incorporates all the comments received about the draft zoning code, and Palmer hopes that the Planning Commission will recommend that it be sent to the County Commissioners and be put out for a new 30-day comment period.
- The commissioners hear a presentation about a proposed conservation easement for a 2,312 acre cattle ranch near Carter Mountain.
- The commissioners hold a 30 minute executive session under RCW 42.30.110(1)(g)—to consider the performance of a public employee, inviting Vicky Poole, HR Analyst/Civil Service Examiner.
- Meeting adjourns for the day at 11:45.

04:25—Pledge of Allegiance

LJ—Darla Frazier is the new person working in my office.

Discussion about moving tomorrow's Public Works update from 11:00 to 9:30.

07:30—AH to JN—What is the Fair Advisory Committee (FAC) having a special meeting?

JN—It's over Ticket Tomato (an online ticket sales company). We finally have numbers of what that want to charge.

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AH—It's a company that does gates and stuff. The church group that's been doing it has been doing a pretty good job.

JN—They don't seem like they want to continue.

AH—Be sure to double check with them. Pam (Johnson, County Treasurer) had no issue with them.

JN—That was the other thing. Pam got spanked by the state auditor. There wasn't enough separation between them. Ticket Tomato would completely do the money and turn it over to Pam, so there's separation.

More discussion of rearranging Tuesday's agenda.

Sheilah and Jeff Delfeld are going to make a comment, but also ask if the Planning Commission meeting tonight is at 6:00 or 7:00 PM. JN confirms the meeting is at 7:00.

19:20—JN—It's 9:15. Time for public comments.

SS—Good morning. We're Sheilah and Jeff Delfeld. We need a clear policy from the Planning Department dealing with non-tribal members owning property within the reservation. We were in last week to get a mailbox on Rodeo Trail Road, but we were denied because it's classified now as tribal grounds. They directed us to go through the Tribe. We've been developing the property for 23 years and we could either go through the tribe or the county. We were sent an application for the mailbox but it says it doesn't apply in Ferry County. We'd like you to set a clear policy so we have flexibility to either go through the tribe or county for something as simple as putting a mailbox up on a county road—Rodeo Trail Road. Will you grant us the flexibility to put a mailbox up?

AH—Asks Pete Palmer, Planning Director, to help answer the question.

PP—We have an Interlocal agreement with the tribe, addressing land use planning. Since we started issuing 911 addresses, the tribe has been issuing them in the reservation. If they're going to name a new road, the road name comes through the county, so that the road's name will be consistent.

PP—We don't issue permits about where you can put your mailbox. According to 911 standards, there are places where you should have your address posted so the emergency responders can find you.

AH—You guys have an address?

Sheila—Yes. We have two mailboxes on Rodeo Trail Rd, but we're trying to add a third one because they don't deliver along the highway where the physical address is.

PP—You already have an address, so you don't need to apply for anything.

PP—My staff thought you were asking for a new address. That's what I was told.

AH—If they needed a 911 address, would the tribe issue that?

PP—Yes.

AH—If they've got a physical address where they get mail now, but just want to put up another mailbox, you don't need a permit.

AH—You could go to us or the tribe to get a building permit, depending.

PP—If you're subdividing, that has to come through the county.

Sheilah—Thanks. That takes care of that confusion.

Ms. Jackson also wants to confirm the time of the Planning Commission meeting because it was posted differently in two different places.

JN—It's a 7:00.

AH—And we fixed the incorrect posting. AH also confirms the zoom meeting ID number.

34:55—JN—Nick?

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NB—Nick Bates, Fairground Manager. I've got a letter from the High School Rodeo people and their request for a fee waiver.

NB—None of them have a commercial (pesticide?) application license, just a regular license.

JN—I asked Larry Hudson (Noxious Weed Board) and he says there's no way around that for public lands.

AH—What's the rental fee?

JN--\$800 I think.

AH—They say 1000 people are going to attend. It's not necessarily a school sponsored event.

NB—The High School Rodeo Association is probably the best of the bunch.

AH—But no. It's a huge lot of work for us to prepare for it. I like rodeos, but if they can't afford \$800...

JN—She says this is the most expensive rodeo grounds they use. Don't know if that's true.

NB—Past High School rodeos have a lot of expense.

AH—They went somewhere else and didn't like it. Can you look and see what they paid last year.

NB—I dug up along the fence line and looked at the pipe line. Discussion of how to fix or replace the pipe. We've got some water leaks here and there.

Discussion of a hot walker (or trotter) and whether it works or not.

Discussion of people using the race track without paying.

NB—It's a challenge. People say that's the way it's always been. But it's coming around.

46:10—MG—I'm Maurice Goodall, Okanogan County Emergency Management. I don't have anything today. Do you have any questions?

CB—Do you know anything about the history of the walker?

MG—Last year it was over by the horse barn. The walker itself belongs to someone else and it was stored across the tracks. The fencing and panels belong to the county. Now it's by the new horse stalls. There was a ditch being dug 6" deep, but I don't know where the power's coming from. That's all I know about it.

MG leaves.

47: 35—JN—Pete?

PP—I just have easy stuff today.

PP—We're set for the Mazama subunit plan. We've got an intern from Western Washington University. She'll be here by June 20 and work through August 29. She'll live in Mazama during that time and work on updates to the Plan. I'm excited it's coming together.

PP—The community found her a place to live.

PP—The agenda is now corrected on the website. 7:00.

PP—Last Friday, we got the Board of Equalization and Planning Commission members their own email accounts. We have to pay for the licensing. Salley is still having issues trying to contact the members individually.

PP—Any questions?

JN—I've got a question about Sheilah's ordeal. Her address is on Highway 97, but she wants to switch to Rodeo Trail?

AH—No. They're addressed on Rodeo Trail.

JN—I should have asked them but I think the property is addressed on Hwy 97, but they won't deliver mail there.

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PP—If that’s the case—that the main driveway is off of 97, she would have to apply for a new address to change the point of access to Rodeo Trail. It’s not a legal driveway. She told staff she’d file a complaint. She came in to apply to a new address. There was no talk of just a mailbox.

AH—If you’ve got a physical address, that’s your address. Your mailbox isn’t the actual addresser of the building.

PP—Your mailbox should have the same address as your building at your point of access. If you look at 911 regulations, they tell you where to put your mailbox, etc. so the emergency responders are trained to look at those places.

CB—So they still have to go to the tribes for an address? So they’ll be back.

AH—I’m looking at the packet for the Planning Commission for tonight. You’ve got a new red-line document.

PP—Yes. We compiled all the comments—written and verbal—in the new red-line document. Tonight my recommendation to the Planning Commission will be to approve the document and sent it to the BOCC. You can put it out for comment for a new 30 day period and start that process again.

55:05—JN—Tim?

Tim distributes a document to the commissioners.

Tim—I’m Tim. Okanogan County Maintenance. I’ve got three quotes for three different projects in the front of the courthouse. One is the pavement, the driveway coming up the front, the retaining wall in front parking lot to get rid of wheel stops which are tripping hazards. The third is the hump on the front lawn so it’s not such a hump. I wanted to do the two terraces, but the price was too much. I want to do a block wall and it’ll lower the lawn.

Tim—The big one is the paving out front. Incorporate a handicapped spot right in front of the jail. Take out the junipers and maybe next year put in a sidewalk. We’ll do a lot of prep work ourselves.

CB—(Looking at the bids.)—there’s a lot of difference in the bid amounts.

CB—One the paving you recommend...

Tim—I recommend Proline.

AH discusses bonding for this bid. Not required for projects less than \$150,000, but we’d have to keep back 10% for 30 days.

JN—What’s the time line?

Tim—He was going to find out.

BOCC passes a motion to accept the Proline quote for paving of the front driveway.

Tim—Next week I’ll bring quotes for outdoor rec at the jail and to surface that. One guy is from the Methow. He’ll do the wall in the kitchen with epoxy that’s not stinky.

Tim—The first counter in the Auditor’s Office will be next weekend. The first one will be hardest and the others are easier.

Tim—We put the griddle into the jail kitchen last Tuesday. All day process, but it works well. The old griddle has no value because it’s cracked.

AH—Be sure to surplus as having no value.

Tim—That’s all I’ve got. Tim leaves.

1:16:35—CB—You know all that land use stuff, including the mail boxes, is always the rest of the story. There’s always one little piece of the story. It’s true for the 1 to 2 acre. You can get a presentation but then it’s—Oh, but the type of soil...

CB—Or the example of the subdivision. They assume it’s flat ground. But septic systems are affected by the elevation.

JN—A lot of places they’re doing clusters of homes—5 or 6 houses close together and have...

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CB—everything else outside of it. It's like planned development. Make the site flexible. And you can get away from setbacks. I'd like to explore it a little more. Planned Developments can be more expensive. If there were another layer of PDs you could create. Then you have to ask—how many conditional use permits are out there. Having to monitor those is how they got sideways on Veranda Beach.

JN—In Veranda Beach, the Fire Department can't access half the places

AH—Maybe we don't put enough information on titles.

CB—With Veranda Beach, I think the fire departments made those comments, but nothing was done.

1:24:20—AH—I have an interesting thing and I wonder if I can go get MG back? In the Watershed Council meeting last Thursday, we discussed the Community Wildfire Protection Plan. Some of the ditches have take-outs for fire hydrants. When the ditches are piped, there are connections for high volume takeout. One is finished in Twisp. Balky Hill is five feet underground. There might be money available to get take-outs where the FD wants them.

JN—OTID (Oroville Tonasket Irrigation Ditch) has four different places we can hook up.

AH—We can make it a GIS layer, so the DNR and Forest Service would know. Do you have to pay for the water?

JN—It's only for emergencies.

AH—Our fire fighters were pulling water with helicopters.

AH—I'm vice-chair of the Watershed Council, because the chair had to leave. Nobody else wants to be chair. They were wondered what happened if the county stops funding the Watershed Foundation which funds the secretarial work for the Council. I said we have to prove our relevancy. Drought outreach, etc. We invited the ditch companies to come. Could we help them if they're having issues. The Fulton Ditch, the one that goes underneath the Duck Brand, they were talking about piping it into Winthrop.

Discuss fires in Winthrop.

1:35:20—JN—It's 10:30. Welcome.

Discussion of Okanogan Land Trust application for RCO (Recreation and Conservation Office easement request.

KM—I'm Kate Miller, Executive Director of the Okanogan Land Trust. My colleague is Michelle Martin, is the Conservation Coordinator.

KM—We're bringing a project to you today. A new conservation easement on agricultural land. It's on Pine Creek Road near Carter Mountain. Planning to submit an application to the RCO to consult and advise what we're going to do.

MM—Can I share my power point presentation?

LJ—Yes.

MM—Grant is under the farmland preservation program

MM—Carter Mt Livestock off south Pine Creek Rd. 2,312 acres.

MM—It's useful for farmland preservation as well as habitat preservation because it's steppe/shrub habitat supporting a multi-generational ranch with a cow/calf operation. Near Hwy 97 so supports scenic value and access to markets.

MM—Ayres family are 5th generation with clear plan for the younger generation. Grow their own hay, have deeded water rights, grazing and rotating through six pastures and leased ground. Good infrastructure. They're thoughtful stewards of steppe/shrub habitat. Trying to improve land.

AH—Are landowners able to designate house sites?

MM—Yes. With easement they're allocated sites and negotiate with owner to everyone's needs are met.

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MM—It's meant to sustain the operation and modeled around their needs.

MM—Habitat aspects—supports multiple animals—mule deer and golden eagle for example—and preserves bio-diversity corridor with other lands—WDFW, BLM and adjacent conservation easements.

MM—Also supports Columbia sharp tailed grouse.

AH—The grouse do well with cattle.

MM—The next steps. The RCO-WWRP (Washington Wildlife Recreation Program) grant application. 50% of the project development and acquisition costs. Also look to secure other funding.

AH—WWRP will only fund 50% of the assessed easement value?

MM—Yes, plus our work time costs.

KM—Yes. They provide the 50%.

MM—Once we get the funding, we'll begin the easement process and hope that in a few years we'll have the easement.

CB—I worked on a wildlife movement project in that area.

KM—Thanks for your time today.

CB—Thanks for keeping us up to speed.

2:03:34—AH—I move to go into executive session under RCW 42.30.110(1)(g)—performance of a public employee, inviting Vicky Poole, Human Resources Analyst/Civil Service Examiner for 15 minutes. Later extended another 10 minutes.

2:32:25—They return.

JN to AH—Can you write a note about attaching to irrigation, I've got a CWPP (County Wildfire Protection Plan) on Thursday?

AH—I'll do that. All the irrigation districts should say where they're willing to have take-out places. But first we'd need a map of all the piped ditches. Needs to be coordinated with the Forest Service.

AH—You can also get water out of a pivot.

AH—Trying to get the Watershed Foundation funding because of the good things the Watershed Council is doing.

CB—We also need to come up with a Watershed Planning unit.

AH—I know.

CB—Possible scenarios how it would work out?

AH—We need to evaluate on a five year basis. Not month to month.

CB—Maybe quarterly. Depends on the group.

AH—And the goals of the plan.

CB—Let me look at the plan. I think we can just come up with some general goals. I want to avoid a planning unit that goes off on its own. Economic development needs to be represented. OTID needs to be involved. There are several people I'd like to bring back. People thinking their way through it. Drought issues, for example.

AH—When we talk about water over here (Okanogan basin?).

CB—It was to satisfy the Stream Flow Restoration Act.

AH—About 1994. Now we've done it, and a couple of the projects went through, they offset everything.

CB—It failed to address some issues. Stream flow is one thing, but tributaries were ignored. Those are the ones that put the cool water in the streams for refugia. Our plan doesn't do that.

AH—It can. We'd have to do what Chelan County does. They take the \$26,500 money from the Salmon Recovery Board. If we wanted to get together with everyone in the Tunk Valley and say 160 acres maybe aren't the answer but that's what our Planning Commission told us. We'll do things to save things for now, but you guys should do a water study.

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CB—Our action for the Tunk Valley isn't just water. They need a transportation plan, too. There are issues we failed to address in the findings of fact.

AH—Maybe we could go to 40 acres. We addressed the problem of the wells going down. There were no findings of fact about roads, etc. Nothing to do with changing zoning because of infrastructure. It was just water.

CB—You've got 160 acre minimum, but there are 20 acre lots all over the place. Will they ever get developed? Only bought because they wanted to subdivide.

CB—Right after the rezone, there was a proposal for an exempt subdivision in the (*inaudible*), the next valley up. Did you see Josh's (Josh Thomson, Public Works Director) comments? The roads can't deal with that. It's not well-planned growth. If someone is doing the development to make money, shouldn't they pay part of the infrastructure?

CB—I lived on 9 Mile Creek and got ½ gallon/minute.

AH—Those lots up on the ridge between Pearrygin Lake and Winthrop. Some get only 1 ½ gallons/minute.

CB—I'll try to work on something. You just need something to start with.

CB—Somebody who was an actual planner type person could represent the towns. Somebody who knows the water issues into the future.

JN—Speaking of water issues—all of the dykes in Okanogan valley aren't going to be FEMA-approved.

Adjourn at 11:45 until tomorrow.