

Board of Okanogan County Commissioners

Tuesday, April 4th, 2023, 1:30 p.m.

"These notes were taken by a County Watch volunteer. Every attempt is made to be accurate.

Notes are verbatim when possible, and otherwise summarized. 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 the Okanogan County Commissioners' website at <https://www.okanogancounty.org> ."

Present:

Andy Hover (AH), BOCC District 2
Chris Branch (CB), BOCC District 1 (via Zoom)
Jon Neil (JN), BOCC District 3
Laney Johns (LJ), Clerk of the Board
Esther Milner (EM), Chief Civil Deputy Prosecutor
Shelley Keitzman (SK), Human Resources

Time stamps refer to the time on the wall clock. An AV Capture archive of the meeting on this date is available at:

https://okanogancounty.org/departments/boards/live_streaming_of_meetings.php

Summary of Important Discussions:

- - Deputy Prosecutor's review of on-call engineering firm contract centers on liability clauses; clarification needed - anticipated projects: cutting jail door, barn design, safety issues
- Liability insurance up, new deductible: \$3M, talk of re-insurers; new Records Coordinator learning the ropes
- HR/Risk Pool Director presents \$10,000 estimate to train most county workers in CPR and defibrillator use; Public Health would subsidize
- Executive session with Planning Director and Deputy Prosecutor: large lot segregation and possibility of litigation
- Commissioner Branch reports on zoom meeting with lobbyist to explain newly-announced public lands rule; Okanogan likely to join Chelan and Douglas counties in opposing it, questions where money would go
- New Fairgrounds Assistant should be all-year and not just seasonal, says Commissioner Hover, Commissioner Branch has "high expectations" management will be up to par
- 10% reduction in Tyler's Fit Factory membership accorded to county employees opting for automatic payroll deductions

1:30 - LJ says they've been invited to join Chelan and Douglas counties in a Zoom meeting with Robert Wiegner, a lobbyist for a proposed national rule for public lands. Commissioner Branch, attending the BOCC meeting virtually, leaves the BOCC meeting to attend the other meeting.

1:45 - EM goes through the contract proposed to them by the newly designated on-call engineering firm T,D&H. AH has questions about several clauses on liability, and the 10-day limit on any inquiries following termination of a service. EM wants to clarify what they mean. EM: I don't like "We accept no personal responsibility; the company assumes

responsibility (*in the event of any claim*).” I haven’t seen this before. I’ll be running this by the Risk Pool. *She doesn’t agree that there is no recourse if a third party sues for work done. The corresponding RCW gives no limit on indemnisation for damage done. They have a limitation to the amount paid. The company also asks for a personal guarantee.* AH: That would be the three commissioners, or the Chair on their behalf. EM says they will give no guarantee or warrantee on their work.

CB: The risk pool says don’t put anything in the contract you can’t answer. AH: We did that awhile ago with the geo-thermal contract and now we have to do this contract because of that contract... That jail project, cutting the door to have access—It may be the biggest project, or (*deciding*) which siding for the horse barn, or if something is safe. If it gets to be a bigger thing we’d go out for an engineering bid. CB: If you have outside funding it’s what you’ll have to do. LJ will schedule a meeting between the BOCC, EM and the engineering company.

2:12 - SK: I went to the Risk Pool Conference with Esther Milner. We’re looking at increases of 20% in liability insurance and 15% to 20% in property insurance. The Risk Pool is going to start appraising structures annually... Reconstruction costs are driving these rates. The county is meeting insurance minimums that are required for cyber. No worries for premiums next year. They talked about courthouse funding for our size counties, for security, asking to keep an eye on that. (*They should see some funds come through.*) It’s good to hear what’s going on in the counties. There are some jury verdicts coming now that are impacting our rates. Since 2018 (*we’ve had*) \$100,000 SIR retention. (*This is “Amount an insured party must pay before insurance policy will respond to a loss”.*) Last year we had to go to \$3M and it’ll probably be \$5M within five years. (*People are*) struggling to find re-insurers. The players we’ve been using will still be available. *She has been introducing the new Public Records Coordinator, who started that morning, to some employees she’ll be working with.* SK: She’s got a lot of government experience...

CPR/AED Training - SK: Lauri Jones reached out about CPR and AED (*defibrillator*) training for employees (*who don’t already get it through Public Works or the Sheriff’s Office*). Lifeline would charge \$10,000 and Public Health will put in \$5,000. We need 30 people per class to get that rate. CB: The Board of Health would have to approve. There may be an account that lends itself to that training. AH says Douglas County Fire District, Douglas Emergency Medical Services and Air Methow also provide this service. She should get quotes from other providers. LJ says a department head can authorize up to \$10,000 and only contracts exceeding \$25,000 require three quotes. AH asks her to put this on a “cheat sheet” for him.

2:25 - Planning Director Pete Palmer arrives. She, Esther Milner and the Commissioners go into executive session to discuss a “large lot segregation and possibility of litigation”.

3:32 - AH asks to postpone their discussion on Zone Code, planned for Wednesday, to Monday morning, as he has a Public Health obligation. CB: We need to do it any time we can.

Public Lands Rule - Commissioner Branch had joined Chelan/Douglas County personnel’s discussion with lobbyist Robert Wiegner on a rule, proposed March 30th, which “lays groundwork for conserving wildlife habitat, restoring places impacted by wildfire and drought, expanding outdoor recreation, and thoughtful development”. CB: I got in late. The first words I heard him say were “like a pig in mud”. He thought it was a move to raise funding. (*It would cost 1% of payments the county receives to compensate for income withheld by Congress*

*which is now in an operational reserve.) He's the guy lobbying for that stuff. He commented about Eric (Johnson, director of WSAC/Washington State Association of Counties) and his respect for WSAC. As far as Wiegner is concerned they got the message. For the time being I don't know what to do. Like Chelan we could send a letter saying we don't want to participate. You don't know what you're going to get. *He mentions a collection for funds in the Methow.* You didn't know what it was for. It's too far away from home. **JN:** Sounds like most of it is going to be back east.*

3:38 - *Approval of Tax and License Secrecy Clause for WA State Department of Revenue Confidentiality Agreement; reappointment of George Thornton to the Planning Commission until 2027. He has plans to move but as no one is there to take his place, he is being reappointed; proposal of Resolution 46-2023 moving the Fairgrounds Assistant to a full-time position. **AH:** It needs to be full-time full-time, (not seasonal). It's \$50,000 a year. **CB:** I have high expectations of quality work as a result of this additional help. I'm not saying it's not needed. But I want to make sure we have management that meets the challenge of what we've put into the Fairgrounds. **AH:** Agreed.*

3:41 - **AH:** I move to sign the motion of understanding between Tyler's Fit Factory for a 10% discount for gym membership for employees who sign up for automatic payroll deductions *motion carried.*

3:43 - **LJ:** I received an email from the architect for the on-site utilities (*for the Law and Justice Center*). He would like CNI Locates (*a firm?*) on site to identify and mark utilities next Tuesday, finishing Wednesday. *AH asks her to coordinate that with the courts. LJ says something about keeping contract negotiations moving.* **LJ:** Tim (Meadows, Maintenance) just got an estimate for the licensing door. It's pretty thick. It's going to be \$6,500 to cut that entry. *AH wants an engineer's report.* **LJ:** Prior to choosing a contractor? **AH:** Yes. Do we need a header with 14" of concrete? Is there a point load above it? *LJ will inform Maintenance. She announces that the new groundskeeper started on Monday. AH mentions the Public Health charter discussion the following Monday. He says they'll know more about the grizzly bear situation, and wishes he hadn't missed a meeting they had; he didn't receive the calendar invitation.*

3:49 - *Meeting adjourned until Monday morning.*