

Board of Okanogan County Commissioners
Monday, May 22, 2023 AM

JN—Jon Neal, BOCC, District 3
AH—Andy Hover, BOCC, Vice-Chair, District 1
CB—Chris Branch, BOCC, Chair, District 2
LJ—Lanie Johns, Clerk of the Board
CHa—Crystal Hawley, Deputy Clerk of the Board
IS—Isabelle Spohn, commenter
PP—Pete Palmer, Director of Planning
MG—Maurice Goodall, Emergency Management
NP—Naomie Peasley, Fairgrounds Manager
CH—Cari Hall, County Auditor
PJ—Pam Johnson, County Treasurer
SK—Shelley Keitzman, Human Resources and Risk Management

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Summary of significant discussions:

- Commissioner Branch updates the other commissioners about his recent meeting with members of the Colville Tribal Council about two trailer parks. He'd like the other commissioners, Pete Palmer, Planning Director, Maurice Goodall, Emergency Management and maybe Sheriff Budrow to meet with the Tribal Council to continue the discussion.
- Isabelle Spohn comments on the lack of progress in ensuring egress from the Methow Valley in case of a fire.
- Pete Palmer adds to Commissioner Branch's update about the meeting with the Colville Tribal Council. She also updates the commissioners about Peter Goldmark's request to waive the fee for his address change, the gravel pit's Conditional Use Permit, and the Copperstone Planned Development application.
- Cari Hall, County Auditor and Pam Johnson, County Treasurer, update the commissioners about the annual audit report to the State Auditor that they've completed and hope to submit that day.
- Adjourn for lunch at 11:40.

01:40—Pledge of Allegiance

AH talks with Karen (Beatty, Director of Central Services) about his Adobe account, trying to get a document downloaded.

CH—The consent agenda is a lot different than the last one.

JN—It's shorter.

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CB—I have a couple of additions to the agenda. One fits under staff reports. Assuming Pete will be here today, I want to discuss our discussion with the Tribes about the trailer parks. She's got a lot of background. I didn't realize Mel Tonasket is back on the council. It's a good thing because he's got lots of history and he's in this district. Dustin is also in this district and he's a former police chief. And their police chief was there. They'd like to have a meeting with all of us. I think there's a positive group of council members there, even though two or three were out with Covid.

AH—Should we go over there?

CB—That's what I'd suggest because there are so many of them. They'd like to see the sheriff there. There are cross jurisdictional issues. They're cross-deputized. It'd be good for many areas. There's no blame. It's fee land, a mix of people there, some are not renters but squatters. *(Editor's note: "Fee land is under complete control of its owner, which can be an individual or an entity such as a tribe, who holds the title to it. Fee simple ownership is the highest form of property possession. The owner can use the land for any legal purpose." From this Bureau of Indian Affairs publication)*

AH—Do they have a health department?

CB—I asked Mel Tonasket about the Environmental Trust. It's like our Environmental Health, a part of their government. They deal with sewage lagoons, etc. I don't know how it's doing. They asked about the county code.

AH—Is it in the city limits? The city limits extend into the reservation, doesn't it?

CB—Yes. Both Omak and Okanogan. East Omak is largely residential with some industrial/commercial and Okanogan is more industrial/commercial. The towns are part of the land use agreement that we're part of. It's mostly about land use.

AH—So it's fee land, county and county jurisdiction on reservation.

CB—There's a short course of tribal history, so you understand jurisdictional and sovereignty issues out on the table. I think it'd be good for us. I've had a couple of questions asked of staff and I was pretty amazed that they didn't know the answer themselves. Questions like—does a tribal member have a right to vote?

AH—In our voting system? Absolutely they do.

CB—But I've been surprised to have an educated person ask me that.

AH—Well, I guess we can't vote for their council but they can vote for us.

CB—There's some complexity to it, and most of us haven't had the opportunity to learn it. If you go across the state, each tribe has differences. The Colvilles are a little exceptional in their own situation. They weren't a treaty tribe, so there's much more to it. People ask me why aren't they sovereign, I say, you want to think about it. There's a lot of fee land out there, and fee land owners who are non-Indian think we ought to be representing them in situations on the reservation. And we have county roads there, etc. that complicate the sovereign issue. I suggested that to them. I've had some government ask for that kind of education. The tribes know attorneys that can explain it. They did that at the health care thing in Wenatchee and it was helpful for people to understand.

17:40—JN—It's public comment time.

CB—Isabelle, do you want to comment?

IS—Yes. I'm sure you realize there's concern about wildfire. There's a short term for comment on the Midnight Sale, and the Forest Service has more money now. Has there been any progress in discussing alternate escape routes from the Methow Valley? It looks like there are issues with bridges going south on Hwy 153? How are you doing about getting compliance with the Multi Hazard Mitigation Plan? Any progress in communicating with other agencies about alternate escape routes?

CB—I'll take a stab at answering your questions. Each fire has a different scenario. Designating escape routes might be difficult because we don't know where the fire may be going.

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AH—And if you designate a route as an escape route, what if that's where the fire is?

JN—Or the wind shifts.

CB—These days we've got more expertise in fighting wildfires on the commission. That's JN because he does firefighting. We check with him. Fire escape routes are different from tsunami escape routes.

JN—There's no perfect answer. It depends on the fire.

CB—With new development, it's in concentrated areas. You can focus on what's the egress. We think about it in subdivisions and planned development.

JN—Some roads are OK for 4-wheel drive but not passenger cars.

CB—It's emergency management's role to monitor those fires. Fire agencies figure how to fight the fire and identify good and bad ways to get out.

IS—So we're talking alternate escape routes. Sounds like there's nothing that can be done to improve a few of those roads so they can be more passable. Nothing that can be done to talking to other agencies to see what they can do. Nothing can be done about signage for dead-end roads so people don't get stuck there.

CB—It's not that nothing can be done, it's just that this is a big county with a lot of roads. How do we focus the limited resources to maintain the roads we have to maintain anyway? I'm talking about primitive roads.

IS—I'm talking about the Methow Valley. There are three exit routes, one dependent on the bridges going south. Dependent on no automobile wrecks on them. I've discussed the route from Boulder Creek Rd to Conconully. It's fairly passable and maybe it could get a little more maintenance. I know you represent all of the county, but other parts of the county have more escape routes. I think about the Paradise Fire.

CB—I do, too. It was an exceptional situation. They'd done some pre-planning, but they were very limited in what they had for escape. Can you come up with some examples of what to do? Boulder Creek would be a lot of maintenance, plus the Forest Service would be involved. What if the fires are somewhere else and we don't focus on those areas?

IS—I heard AH bring up the Boulder Creek Rd one time. There's the south fork of Gold Creek, but that would require some work on switchbacks. And the summit, the danger of all those dead end roads driving toward the Chiliwist. A few signs might help. You mentioned coordinating with other agencies. That's what this is all about. The Forest Service has more money to spend on fire, so they could help with roads. The county has money for ATV signs. Maybe there's money for "Dead End" signs, too.

CB—OK. Comment taken.

IS—Thank you very much.

CB—Those are thoughts to have.

AH—Some people leave right away and some stay until the bitter end.

CB—I'd like to learn from what we've already experienced. What happened? Was there confusion?

JN—Are many of your subdivision up there gated? We had a fire in a gated subdivision and nobody had the combination to the gate. We sat there for ten minutes waiting. We could see the house burning.

CB—Like in the winter when people don't shovel around the fire hydrants.

30:15—CB—I'll ask you to be first, Pete.

CB—I shared with the BOCC our discussion with the Tribal Council. Thanks for being there. It made me think about a few things after I left. Re: points made about multi-jurisdictional and different departmental efforts to come together with the Council about this. The police chief made the point about being cross-deputized and actually making some progress on the mobile home park. And for some reason it didn't go anywhere. It sounds like there're some tools there already available. Not that we don't have an interest and responsibility about what's developed at the mobile home park. Also, what

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you shared about the efforts you put forth when working with the tribes. You said what you were doing with the tribe relative to contamination.

PP—Yes.

CB—Somewhere the progress stopped. That's what I'm wondering about. Because of a change in leadership?

PP—Dustin kind of hit on it when he said that the new staff isn't quite up on the codes and how to activate the resources like the old staff was. That was one of the problems.

CB—And you probably spoke with Health?

PP—I'll get in touch with Michael this morning to talk about it. I want to talk to Dan (Higbee) in Building and see what kind of regulations they have under the building codes. See about condemnation and unsafe living conditions.

CB—Also get Esther (Milner, Chief Civil Deputy Prosecutor). No matter what you're doing, you'll need to involve the prosecutor's office. I told the commissioners that the Council invited us to meet jointly with them. I'd like to get our ducks in a row before we do that. And the sheriff doesn't have experience with dealing with the reservation side of things.

PP—I'll get the info and make a one-sheeter for you. I heard some rumors about it—somebody purchasing both trailer parks. I was told Silver did. If that's the case, that's a good thing because he's got the means to clean that up. I'll keep checking to see if any purchases happen, but so far, it still shows George Dunkle as owner.

PP—I have a project coming up this week with Silver, so I can ask him. He's a property owner up there. He owns an approved salvage yard near a trailer park. 20 acres. Approved by the tribe.

CB—Trespass. Mention of needles and drugs. There's a bus stop and kids are there. Bad things for kids to be around. I was thinking over the weekend, if either or both jurisdictions move on these, and people have to be moved, I'm curious about rules relocation assistance for people moved from trailer parks. Sometimes it's the land owner and sometimes it's the jurisdiction. We may have to bring in the Community Action Council (CAC) and others to make sure there's a place for people to do. I'm pretty sure that's going to be an issue.

36:30—OK. The Planning Commission meets at 7:00 tonight. That's not what the agenda said. We started summer hours in April.

PP—Last Monday, I asked about Mr. Goldmark's address fee being waived. I brought a map today to show the area. 400 Timentwa Rd is where the house was. The new house will be up around the corner. Probably 405 Timentwa Rd. It's a different driveway.

PP—He understands he'll get a new address. He just wants his fee waived.

Discussion of history of site analysis fee being waived after a fire.

JN—Can we waive the fee legally?

AH—I think so.

JN—I have no issues doing this.

PP—I can call Cari (Hall, County Auditor) and find out.

CB—I don't have a problem, either.

AH—Can you write a resolution?

PP—Make it specific to Mr. Goldmark?

AH—Yes.

PP—Next thing—Update about Lloyd Logging. He met the deadline to respond. He's required to submit a compliance plan of how he's meeting the conditions of CUP (Conditional Use Permit) 80-90-2. Asked to schedule an annual inspection and that there may be new conditions because of changes in the law.

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Mandated that operations remain in the 10 acres in the SEPA (State Environmental Policy Act) document and the DNR (Department of Natural Resources) permit. Any disturbances outside the mine floor be reclaimed. DNR will regulate that portion. If he wants to expand the operation, he needed to submit a CUP prior to expanding. Deadline to comply with this letter is June 6. So we're just waiting now.

CB—Can you send us the stipulation letter?

PP—Yep. The last thing I have is the receipt of the Copperstone Planned Development application. Even with me and two lead planners working on determining completeness of the application, we missed the 28 day deadline to deem it complete. The applicant was quick to point that out and insisted we vest the application. So we've done that. We're going to put out a notice of completeness. That triggers a 30 day comment period and gives us more time to get documents and needed corrections prior to SEPA.

There's 90 days to make the threshold determination on SEPA, but we're hoping to have that done in 60 days. That would trigger a 14 day comment period on the SEPA application.

PP—Moving forward, I asked five different consultants about working on planned developments when they're submitted. This is a lot for us to do, and it's the first one the staff has processed. Without dropping everything else we were doing, there was no way we'd have met the 28 day deadline.

CB—Did you discover any glaring shortfalls?

PP—One of the things they need to correct is the acreage. Doesn't match with what the Assessor says. But the biggest thing is the Department of Ecology (DOE) says there's not enough water to serve the project. They converted irrigation water to domestic but still are short eight connections and not enough water for irrigation. So they'll have to adjust the proposal.

CB—What about missing items? You can have a complete application but doesn't mean it's accurate. Did they pay the fee?

PP—They did.

CB—Is there a SEPA checklist? Are there the required documents?

PP—So far they've given us all the documents we need. There's just some discrepancy in the application that need to be corrected or addressed.

PP—We're hoping that at least two of the consultants will respond so that this thing keeps moving forward.

PP—That's all I have. Have a good day.

50:20—MG—Good morning. I'm Maurice Goodall, Okanogan County Emergency Management.

MG—We had some rain this weekend, but only a little more water over Bonaparte Lake Road.

MG—Cecil Creek Rd is still closed. Everything else is open.

MG—I went to the Fire Advisory Committee with the fire chiefs. JN came, too. Another phone meeting tomorrow.

Discusses fire restrictions time and fire bans. Fire size—4'X4' area to burn rubbish but it adds to confusion. Campfires are limited to 3'X3'. The public understands the dates better if it's not changing every year. Hopes to make an ordinance in the next few years if they all get settled on dates. Douglas and Chelan Counties begin restrictions on June 1.

JN—If we didn't have the highlands...

MG—There's still wet up there.

MG—I'll go to Wenatchee on Wednesday to a fire recovery meeting—post fire recovery. Both fire and flooding. Preparation for the future. I need to know what to tell people what's available—funding, etc.

CB—Who's in charge?

MG—Corps of Engineers and DNR. Those are the two sponsors of the meeting.

CB—Corps is connected with FEMA.

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MG—That’s about all I have. I got a call from someone who didn’t want to call 911 so he called me. Wind blew up lots of dust in Okanogan.

CB—There was a meeting in Omak for planners and elected officials. DOE and EPA had it.

Discussion about decisions about burn bans made by EPA are sometimes unpopular because they don’t take local opinion into consideration.

MG—Also attended a meeting with Sheriff’s Department and both Ranger Districts.

1:18:30—AH—Naomie, do you want to give a report?

NP—Naomie Peasley, Fairgrounds Manager. Good morning! We’re very busy. We have an event every day at the Agriplex so we’re busy prepping the building.

NP—I’ve been getting quotes for the grandstands and Quonset huts electrical equipment. And getting WiFi to cover the RV Park.

NP—We had hot water and boiler room inspections and the reports came back good.

NP—We have whole weeks in June booked at the RV park. The reservation system really works.

NP—I’ve got an agreement with the tribes on getting race horse barns up. They’ll pay \$50,000 for excavating, electrical and water work and putting the stall up.

NP—I received the arena lighting quote—about \$93,000 so I guess it won’t be done soon. We were planning to use a grant, but we’ve only got \$53,000 left in it.

NP—Any questions?

CB—How many people at the Conservation District event?

NP—Don’t know.

CB—It seems like the rest rooms worked well and they were clean. So I wondered how many people it takes to ruin the bathrooms.

AH—They replaced the broken and crushed pipes in the septic system, right? So we shouldn’t have problems with backups in the bathrooms now.

NP—We had three Quinceaneras with 700+ people and had no issues with the bathrooms.

CB—That’s why I asked. Thanks.

NP—I haven’t heard of any problems since we fixed the pipes.

NP—One final thing—my new assistant is amazing. She’s learned a lot.

1:31:45—CH—I’m Cari Hall, County Auditor

PJ—And I’m Pam Johnson, County Treasurer.

CB—We’re doing our review of the report that my office generates every year. I sent a scanned version to you. I’ve got seven binders full of information. It takes 3 ½ months to prepare—a huge undertaking. It took a little longer this year because of new personnel, but the deadline isn’t until next week.

CH—Once we’re done here, I’ll request permission to submit. I don’t have to have permission but I like to. The state auditor loves the fact that we review these numbers as a committee.

CH—This first part is the most important part. It’s the narrative. It’s a prescribed format.

CH—Here are the notes that begin the report.

1. A description of Okanogan County history, the different funds we use, various policies, a list of funds with restrictions, current expenses. Also an annual report. We roll up some of the funds into current expenses. An example is Solid Waste is rolled up with solid waste reserve. Then I add the RCW or grant number so they’ll know why the fund is restricted.
2. Budget compliance. Here’s the final budget. It’s broken out by individual budget. I don’t do rollups.
3. Joint ventures, related party listing. Voting members and lists of board members.
4. Required element. We have no concerns about how to meet our legal obligations due to the pandemic.

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5. Deposits and investments. (PJ speaking)—Basically, it's where the county has its money and the junior districts. What banks and long term investments, revolving funds, trust accounts, etc.
6. Narrative of how we do investments.
7. This one's only been here since 2017. We never had to report on the junior districts before. But if we add junior districts to the report, it changes the numbers. So this tells how much impact it's made to the reporting. It includes hospitals, schools, fire districts, cities, towns, everything.
8. Interfund loans. PJ—We had one interfund loan with Solid Waste Reserve to the Sheriff's Department. We made the final payment this year, so the fund is now closed out. We do an amortization schedule. This one was for 3.25% for three years.
9. Long term Debt—PJ—What the county owes (no junior districts) in long term debt. Each year of principal and interest for five years, and then it goes in five year blocks. The bond we sold this year is included.
10. This one is OPEB (Other Post-Employment Benefits—other than pension distributions) Also a section for current employees and the value of benefits we offer. There's LEOFF 1—shown in a spread sheet. I get the numbers from HR each year. What we contribute and what we estimate the liability to be. The state actuary estimates that.
11. Pensions. We use the numbers from the PEFI (Participating Employer Financial Report) Report put out annually by the DRS (Department of Retirement Services).
12. A brand new report about leases and rental agreements. It's different if you're cash based instead of GAAP (Generally Accepted Accounting Principles). The listing requirements are different. We need a schedule of liabilities for all our leases—copy machines, land, buildings, vehicles, etc. We'd never reported on all the leases before. Total amount we paid in 2022 was \$80,401. It took a lot of work to get that number.

CB—What about revenue we get from leases?

CH—I forgot all about those! I'll have to still do that. That's why we do these meetings.

13. Property tax. I get the data from the Assessor's Office. Our assessed values, rates, etc.
14. It's about Risk Pool and how it works. It's the same every year so it's copied and pasted.
15. Other disclosures. Where I can include other notes. I list the rollup funds, transfers between two funds, the 201 fund, that is, the debt payment fund. For the Blake decision, I asked Susan Speiker, the Clerk of the Court, for that amount. She hadn't heard anything new so we used the old number.
16. The BOCC agreed to allow us to buy a new accounting system. Originally had Jan. 1, 2024, but I've changed it to Jan. 1, 2025 for the start of go-live. So anything that can be significant to your financial statement, you want to note it here.

CH—Any questions about all the narrative notes?

2:01:10—CH—The rest is numbers and I won't go into detail.

Describes many different reports and schedules.

2:30:25—CH—I just want to make sure that it's OK for me to fix the two problems we found—change the entity's name and include the revenue from the leases. Then I'll submit the report. (No objections.) Thanks for your time. I know it's a marathon meeting every year.

They leave.

2:33:10—CB—The several counties that assembled in Wenatchee to discuss the Diversion Facility Program potential had a mapping exercise. It maps the system we use to address people who are potentially entering the criminal justice system. We decided to try to get the dollars to map our procedures and processes we use to get people in the system. Okanogan County hasn't been greatly involved, but when you get done with all that stuff and the potential for having such a facility is the

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question—how much does one suicide cost us in the jail. That's only one consideration, but that's what it's about. It's mostly four counties but potentially five: Chelan, Douglas, Okanogan and Grant.

LJ—Shelley would like to discuss a Department of Retirement Systems issue with you guys. Is this a good time?

CB—Yes.

SK—I'm Shelley Keitzman, Risk Management. I spoke with the BOCC several months ago about several temporary Public Works employees who didn't get the DRS sign up when they should have. There's one more person in Solid Waste that we didn't catch. So I'm here to ask the board that we be able to get the person signed up. It's from 2022 and the amount is \$11,473 for three years.

AH—Did we have a resolution last time?

SK—We just did it in the minutes.

AH—I move to allow the payment of retro-DRS funds in the amount of \$1,147 for Larry Fingar in Solid Waste. Motion passes.

SK—Thank you very much!

CB—I'll work with Pete and Nica from the tribes and other departments. I don't know if we'll all be there. But the three of and possibly the Sheriff and Maurice. It'll be a little while until we get moving along.

CB—Any other business? Nope.

Adjourn at 11:40 until 1:30