

Board of Okanogan County Commissioners
Tuesday, October 17th, 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 HYPERLINK "<https://countywatch.org/>"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 HYPERLINK "<https://www.okanogancounty.org/>"https://www.okanogancounty.org ."

Present:

Chris Branch (CB), BOCC District 1
Andy Hover (AH), BOCC District 2
Jon Neil (JN), BOCC District 3
Laney Johns (LJ), Clerk of the Board
Shelley Keitzman (SK), Risk Pool Manager, Human Resources
Larry Hudson (LH), Noxious Weeds Board
Dan Higbee (DH), Building Official

An AV Capture archive of the meeting on this date is available at: HYPERLINK "https://okanogancounty.org/departments/boards/live_streaming_of_meetings.php" \t "_blank" https://okanogancounty.org/departments/boards/live_streaming_of_meetings.php

Time stamps refer to time on the Commissioners room wall clock.

Summary of Important Discussions:

- *Security firm to be hired and firearms to be banned when events at the Agriplex include alcohol; new rules discussed after someone shot hole in bathroom wall during weekend event where alcohol was served*
- *Building permits down, predictably, following a few "quite crazy" years; permitting software aimed at consolidating data and providing integrative maps still not up and running, training required; Commissioner Branch hints at inaction on the part of Planning*
- *Weeds eradicated at Walker Creek and Palmer Mt. fire control areas, the Carlton Complex, and Crawfish Lake; Weed Board collaborating with Colville Tribe; ballot to collect from Osoyoos Lake Management Group discussed; milfoil treated at Spectacle and Whitestone.*
- *Meeting adjourned at 2:48 until Wednesday morning.*

1:30 - SK: I come bringing some good news. I spoke with Carlton Financial. Our dental insurance rates are going down. I heard from (other companies) and the increases are significantly lower than they were last year. I had a meeting with Pacific Security about

the fairgrounds and what we can do over there. They had some great ideas. One thing I would like to suggest to the Board is that we end events at midnight, going forward if there is alcohol involved there will be a minimum of three security guards. Security will be present one hour before the event. Before it was one hour before alcohol was served. And no additional alcohol can be brought in once an event starts. I have vetted all this with the security company. Anyone caught consuming alcohol in the parking lot will be asked to leave the premises.

AH: I think we'd better talk to the Sheriff about that.

SK: I will be doing that. No one will be admitted after 11 p.m. Anyone who leaves the building will not be allowed to re-enter after 11. They can monitor how many people come in with a clicker, and give out wrist bands—a way to make sure that there won't be more people than what the event was planned for... Thoughts on that?

JN: It all makes sense. If it does go awry do they have back-ups?

SK: It's going to be a judgement call if it gets shut down, if they see a weapon. If people are starting to fight, they're over-serving. We'd call the Sheriff (*and let him know, in case we need back-up*).

CB: We could help by posting certain rules there. I've never seen (*a sign*) there but "Firearms not allowed" should be posted fairly clearly, in more than one language... Do you think that's reasonable? I mean you can't carry a gun in a bars.

1:36 - AH : By State law. I'm not opposed to saying can't have weapons at an event.

CB: Especially where alcohol is being served. Even if there's not. Nobody's going to check. But I think we should do that.

AH: What happens about other times?

CB: Just post it for the event.

1:38 - AH: The reason we're discussing this is not unwarranted. Someone shot a hole in the Agriplex bathroom. It could have killed someone.. That's why we're having this discussion.

SK: That's why we should have a sign, when Alcohol is served.

CB : I think the Elks have a policy. *SK agree there should be a sign about gun's when there's alcohol served. AH asks about events like the four wheeler clubs.*

CB: There's guns there but I'm talking about guns that are loaded. *He mentions the Elks' policy again; AH says it's because they're a bar...*

AH: people in general that are going to go to those events—

CB: ...Why do they have a rule that says you can't carry a gun when your'e drinking?

SK: It's not a good idea.

CB: ...People react a little differently when they're drinking and carrying a gun. Question is should we say this all the time or as an exception? *They talk about gun shows, events that are about guns.*

AH: It should say "no guns in the Agriplex". If you put it in the contract... I'm not sure. You're going to apply it to certain events...

SK: it's all or nothing.

CB : At the State Sportsman Show there's a sign that says "No Firearms" and then there's another sign in the parking lot that says "don't leave anything valuable in your vehicle". *Laughter.*

AH: I would say we try to implement all of the other things. That only catches honest

people.

SK: That's true. ...Somebody who's going to go in and shoot a hole in the bathroom probably is not the most scrupulous person. Nor the smartest.

SK: So three security guards minimum at any event where there's alcohol.

AH: We have a longstanding thing about they provide their own security. I don't think that its...

SK: No more. Because when things went so awry last weekend there wasn't Pacific Security.

AH: Our last resort was "we're not renting now." (*When you compare revenue vs cost for events*) you'd probably save money.

1:45 - SK: should raise \$27 per hour to \$35 for clean up. We have to get people with more skin in the game. I'm going to be making a few changes to the rental contract...

AH: Maybe we just go to "community based events"

SK: If this doesn't turn the corner for us, I'd say that's the way to go. I'll be going tomorrow noon to the Risk Pool conference so... *SK leaves.*

Building Department Quarterly Report

DH: A little slower than past couple years, not huge drop, but more in line with reality than the previous few years which were quite crazy. Pretty much expect it to slow down next year as well.

AH: Expenditure and cost recovery trend? Do your expenditures always go up in August?

1:50 - DH: No. That's our (*computer*) program. Our expenditures are just flat line. We may see another spike depending on the meeting on Monday. I believe Chris Branch will be with us to meet with the company Smart Gov, about data migration, which we originally believed was part of that contract, and it wasn't. Otherwise the budget's looking pretty good. *Plenty of cushion.* AH: *104% of revenues perceived.* DH: *Brought in more than expected, always kind of conservative.* AH: *only 68% of operating.* DH: *That's going to change because -current expense and liability insurance are two big ones that are just being billed. (They discuss the following day's budget meeting.)* DH *says has to go to Methow, can send someone.*

AH: You've been really good about your budgeting. (LJ could move the meeting until 4:00.) Your budget is not that difficult. DH: Larry talking about retiring. Jeff almost ready.

CB: That permitting software gonna work for you?

1:57 - DH: Nessie is ironing that out for us. They're talking about training first of November but I don't know if we'll be even ready. Not to mention data migration. That's another issue that could go sideways.

CB: Looked like everything you needed to get at for the program was available on Tax Sifter.

DH: There was supposed to be interactive map (making things easier for Planning) but our part is a separate part from that.

AH: I've seen one for the city. You have an icon that says that somethings going on with a parcel.

DH: Obviously none of our old data is in there. Without doing the data migration you're not going to get that interactive map that works.

AH: Well you are. And permits are only good for a couple of years.

DH: There are tons of them, I wouldn't say active but open still, basically expired. But we have a revenue line for extensions and renewals of permits. We have probably a thousand open permits right now. If you want to look at history, that's another thing because parcel numbers change...AH: The whole reason for this is so people could actively go in and see what was going on. You could see all the parcels with open permits and just start going.

DH: If Douglas Co. has this, why is it taking so long to come up with one for us? We're working through that but it's nowhere near an operating program for us. I don't know about the Planning side.

CB: It doesn't look that great. I don't see it happens much over there. That's what I'm a little concerned about... We're fortunate enough to convince them that they need data migration. ...

DH: For a couple of years we paid the subscription fee though we didn't have anything to subscribe to. They agreed to apply that to what we would subscribe to, but I haven't seen a breakdown yet. *CB says wait til they have their meeting to have more info.*

LJ: Did I miss scheduling something?

CB: No, it's just a phone meeting with Planning to see if pressure from one of the commissioners might get them to turn around on this. It's a different company than the one we started out with. They got bought out.

DH: That's another thing. We went through I don't know how many different people.

2:04 - CB: *(Inaudible)* The contract was drawn up with the migration question left undecided. They wonder how such an important component wasn't stressed adequately.

DH: Why would you set up a contract if it was undecided?

CB: It looks like so you would get so invested in the program that you wouldn't want to go back. 'Cause you know you have to migrate the data.

DH: For it to work right.

AH: Very non-specific.

CB: I have a question for you. What do you do if somebody applies for a permit and think they can't afford a house, ?

DH: If it's a completely different project they withdraw the original permit and apply that toward the payment. It costs a bit even though they're going smaller but it's not thousands. We recently had (one), they get back 80% of the \$1,400 building permit portion.

CB: That seems to make sense.

DH: Our policy information is in our building permit packet.

CB: I was talking to a gentleman who changed his project and he was afraid of paying more.

DH: It's not like they're going to get away with it.

CB: I told him he'd better come down and talk to you.

DH: We've had a garage permitted that turned into a full-blown house.

CB: I rented one of those. That's kind of a rip off. People don't have any assurance that they're living in a safe structure.

2:11 - *DH leaves.*

They talk about the zoning software.

Oroville EMS District wifi contract approved. Tonasket EMS September contract payment approved. AH asks when EMS budget hearings scheduled.

LJ: All three on November 6th. You'll be certifying the levy, the 1%.

2:17 - *Vouchers and payroll payments approved.*

LJ talks about an invoice, asks CB to verify the numbers. AH asks what the current mileage rate is. It's .655 says LJ.

LJ: For the hazard assessment, that was needed for the courthouse, (inaudible) so far we've received two bids. MJ Neal is recommending one of them. I was going to wait until next week to present an assessment or bid or quote. ... We hopefully have three. One struck me. *(Something about a price difference, inaudible.)*

LJ: MJ Neal provided the floor plan and elevation, the gray areas are ... *(inaudible)* of all three floors. He's going at a doable pace.

CB: like to look at these two quotes we have, for hazardous substances?

LJ: First one I received, from the company.... *CB asks Larry Hudson to come up.*

2:30 LH: As far as grants and contracts go we had about \$25,000 Title 2 funds. We were able to do weed control at the Walker Creek and Palmer Mt. fire control areas. Through that program we paid 75% of the cost for landowners to control their weeds, just finished a few weeks ago. Our BLM(*Bureau of Land Management*)/WSDA (*Washington State Department of Agriculture*) we had about \$8,300. With that we treated the "leaky spurs" coming up the Omak Flats and the Chiliwist area. Those funds can be used primarily on BLM but surrounding lands as well. Our DNR project this year - Usually we get about \$5,000f from them... This year they had quite a chunk to get rid of really quick so we ended up doing about \$45,000 of weed control, mostly on the DNR, the Carlton Complex... Still have \$4,500 in our Forest Service collaborative funding, did basically from Crawfish lake to Nicholas Creek and border.

Our Colville Confederated Tribes agreement: this year two different contracts, one with the Weed Board, another with a contractor to do the spraying. For our portion we had \$35,000 to do surveying, release bio controls, line up work for their contractor in the spring. Found some holes with doing it that way so we'll be working with tribes this winter to update the contract to state the contractor needs to be available when the weeds need to be treated. They're starting to make good progress on contract but a lot of stuff should have been on the (inaudible) this year. Still critical situation for staffing at the lead office but have one new person starting Monday and people picking up applications so hopefully this spring we'll be in good shape.

Osoyoos Lake management - There's funding left for several sites down on west side. The Eagle Bluff fire put breaks on east side treatment, fire caused issues with irrigation. Some got done but quite a bit more could have been done, Treated Veranda Beach.

AH: Was this the last year's collection from the Lake Management District? We haven't decided to go back out, not the ballot, but to renew, on a special ballot that goes out to

just the landowners.

2:37 - JN: That's what we were trying figure out, whether we have to go through the public hearings again or if we can piggy back onto the old stuff.

CB: And you didn't figure it out.

JN: It came to my attention a few weeks ago, while you were out hunting. *Laughter.*

AH: I think you just have to go back out with a vote.

LJ: It's a little different. There was a lot more involved in creating the district, boundaries, there's some legwork that has already been established... I haven't been able to dig into it... I'm going to try to get on it.

AH: ...If we miss next year's collection we have to see what the carry-over is. Then we get things set up for 2025 instead of trying to rush it.

JN: I don't know what kind of notices you have to put out.

LJ: Larry laid out...The resolution has some instructions to each of landowners he'll be collecting from. They probably still have list in planning office of everyone they've sent ballots to.

AH: We've taken a few people off the rolls for certain reasons—do they still get a ballot for the next time or are they permanently off the rolls. If it's just the rolls we have that right now

LJ: If they're looking to renew

LH: If it does help I've figured out that we probably have about \$25,000 left in the account, a small treatment but it would be something. Any other questions on the Osoyoos Lake Management District?

2:42 - Spectacle Lake just had shoreline treatment for milfoil. This Saturday they're doing their last in-water treatment. Whitestone Irrigation District has really stepped up. They're looking to get the lake in front of their property treated. Sandy Bilkie up there has been reaching out to every agent she can get additional funding. WDFW may throw some money in... DNR's been pretty good about providing herbicide.

AH: Proselicor works better than anything we have now? Should we switch over to it for the other lakes?

LH: It only treats milfoil, is more expensive but has less restrictions. Sending most of office to Weed Conference in Wenatchee is coming up 30th til November 3rd so we'll be closed that week.

AH: Weeds are kind of dwindling down?

LH: Getting fall re-growth, but with heavy frosts, that'll be it. *AH says he is glad the staff numbers are improving.* Word's getting out.

2:45 - LH leaves.

CB asks JN about the Osoyoos Lake Management District. LH: Levy expires this year. The inter-local (*agreement*) expires next year. AH:

2:48 - Meeting adjourned