

Board of Okanogan County Commissioners
Tuesday September 12, 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 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:

https://okanogancounty.org/offices/commissioners/commissioners_proceedings.php.

Time stamps below are in real time. To locate specific topics, a clock 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:

- Budget discussions.
- Public Comment: JoAnn Dagnon thanks the BOCC for the expanded Veteran/Senior parking at the fair & expressed concern over the safety of the bleachers, especially for Senior Citizens. Ruth Hall also commented about the safety of the bleachers and need for a cover.
- Discussion of disbursement of Title III funds with the Conservation District staff and Sheriff's Office Staff (Search & Rescue)- Community Wildfire Protection Plan needs to be approved before ability to apply for other firefighting project funds.
- BOCC votes to help City of Nespelam with their Slope Stabilization Project funding gap of \$270,000 – Contractor is ready to move on this project – hope to get it done before a major flood happens. Discussion of how to fund Goat Creek Bridge Project and the Mazama Bridge land purchase with DOT.
- Continued Public Hearing on the Road Vacation within the Plat of Monse – parties agreed, approved. Public Works update: request by ATV Club for some other road openings for ATV's
- Adjourned for Lunch at 11:47.

9:00

AH explains how the \$250,000 Department of Agriculture grant for the Fair has been received and spent. LJ notes there is \$750,000 allocated for the Courthouse Improvement Project.

CB asks, How is the Fair Budget looking? Not considering county wages of employees in fair preparation.

AH states that we are 85% spent. LJ notes that there are some more bills from Maintenance.

9:15

JoAnn Dagon, Community Member, has 2 comments – one good, one bad. She first thanks the Board for expanding the Senior/Veterans parking this year at that fair AH gives credit to the Fair Advisory Board for this decision. Secondly, she is very concerned about the bleachers for the horse races – states they are “junk”. Handrails are needed. She does not want to see anyone get hurt, nor the County get sued. *She was there in the dark and was unable to see to get up or down.* She states there is too much gap/opening between the seats. Kids could easily fall through. Older people needed others to help them. They were unable to get up the bleachers. Ruth Hall agreed and also commented on the lack of roof over the bleachers.

9:20

Craig Nelson (CN), Eli Loftus, and 1 other staff member from the Conservation District in to discuss with the BOCC and also the Search & Rescue part of the Sheriff’s Office about the 2024 Title III funding they have been splitting. There is \$127,000 in these funds.

CB asks if the Conservation District will be applying for the Wildfire Grant?

9:37

The Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) needs to be completed and approved. AH states that we (BOCC) haven’t gotten that completed yet.

LJ states the plan needs to be approved by state foresters. The different projects that could be funded with the Wildfire grant (federal) monies are Firewise, Forest Mitigation work, and Search and Rescue.

JN notes that the evacuation routes need to be addressed on the CWPP.

CB – Title III could be used for fire projects.

LJ will publish notice of disbursement of the Title III funds and there will be a 45-day comment period.

Cari Hall, Auditor, cancelled her update

9:58

It was moved, seconded, and carried to approve the September 5 minutes with minor corrections.

10:00 '

Kelli Ross (KR), City of Nesperlem's Certified Water Operator and Morgan Allen (MA) Clerk for the City of Nesperlem are here to discuss/request help with a City of Nesperlem Slope Stabilization Project funding gap. KR explains when the fire went through the Nesperlem area, all the vegetation on the hillside was burned off and it has been sloughing ever since. Last winter really brought the hillside down. The City's Engineer has it all planned and they have sent out to bids, but the cost has increased so much since the initial ask. It is now over a million \$\$\$. Costs have gone up so much. They are short \$270,000 and wondered whether there were any ARPA funds that could be used for this. If we could secure enough funding, the contractor is ready to go and we are trying to avert a disaster. We haven't heard back from the Tribe and are not 'holding our breath' for that possibility.

10:00

It was moved, seconded, and carried to have LJ prepare the paperwork to funding the remaining needed for the Nesperlem Stabilization project \$276,000.

KR states this will relieve a lot of stress for Nesperlem.

AH brings up the need to discuss the mazama Bridge Project for \$65,000 and how it is funded. Also,

the Goat Creek Bridge project might be creating a hardship for James due to Prevailing wages when using federal funds. AH discusses that it might be better to use current expense \$\$ and use the ARPA for some other County Projects.

CB wants to revisit the 20-year plan.

AH also thinks that LTAC funding reserve may be another way to pay for these projects. JN wonders about the LTCF funding and wants to be sure the Auditor is aware and okay with all these changes.

LJ suggests that maybe an MOU (Memo of Understanding) might help clarify the situation regarding the funding.

The Mazama land purchase has to do with Mazama wanting to use this small piece to help beautify Mazama. This is a purchase from DOT.

10:41

It was moved, seconded, and carried to go into an Executive Session under 42.30 110 1 G, evaluation of a Public Employee until 10:55. *****;

10:00

Continued Public Hearing for the Road Vacation request within the Plat of Monse. Staff report by JoAnn Stansbury and Josh Thomson. The new map of the boundary line changes for the Van Doren and Hurtado properties is put on the overhead. David ____, Attorney for the Van Doren's explains that there are 2 boundary line adjustments that need to be completed and they are agreed upon. Hurtado will get 7,084 ft, Hammon – 11,399 feet. David notes that at the previous hearing, it was noted that Paul Hammons could be landlocked, but this has been determined not to be the case. Therefore, there are no damages to Paul Hammons. David also feels that all steps have been taken pursuant to county laws – all requirements have been met. There will just need to be a boundary line adjustment.

AH moved to approve the vacation of Second Street, Monse Ave, and un-named alley. It was seconded and carried to approve this vacation. CB notes the results are that the road is to be split, and a boundary line adjustment will need to be completed after this.

11:09

Josh Thomson (JT), County Engineer states that Public Works is waiting for the rain, but they are doing crack sealing and culvert cleaning in the meantime.

JT – Regarding the Mazama Bridge property purchase, the money for the purchase will not go through the County. I still need to run this by the Civil Deputy.

11:12

AH would like to have some explanation on the paperwork to explain the purchase.

JT is working on budget supplemental for the Similkameen Trail project and the lower Goat Creek repair.

JT – The North Central ATC Club is requesting more roads to be open to ATV. *He puts a list of the roads requested for ATV use and a map showing the areas and how they are connected for a total of 51 miles.*

11:21

AH has been talking with community members about this and is concerned about the Rendezvous and the Gunn Club Roads. JT has been reviewing the road and found that some are 50 MPH roads, while others are 35 MPH roads.

AH would like to send out invitations to FS, DNR, WDFW to get their comments on these. He would like to get input on opening these roads to ATV & he would not like Rendezvous and Gunn Ranch roads on the list. CB feels they should remain on the list in order to get the comments on them, especially from WDFW.

11:34

CB asks JT whether he has been following the Stabilization Project in Nespelem.

JT says that he hasn't.

CB states this might be helpful for stabilizing Peter Dan Road.

JT will look into this.

Regarding the opening of roads to ATV, will there be a public hearing? JT states that yes, a hearing will need to be held. JT has gone over the list of roads and notes that some of them are already designated Primitive, and he believes that is enough to show they are open to ATV's.

AH also notes that speed limits will need to be changed.

11:47

Meeting is adjourned for lunch. Will come back after the Board of Health meeting as there is still some business to complete.