

**Board of Okanogan County Commissioners**  
**Tuesday August 22, 2023 AM**

No afternoon session

Present:

Christ 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](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:**

- Public Comment: Gil Barouk questioned the fees assessed by contractor on jail inmates' monies. Purchasing portable lighting from the PUD.
- HR/Risk Manager: Board passes resolution hiring Stella Columbia as interim fair facilities manager. County employees are helping out at the fair.
- Purchase of land from DOT, along with the Methow Conservancy.
- Monse Road Vacation Public Hearing continued for official agreement amongst all parties.
- Public Works: Approval of fair contracts, and general discussion of fairground needs before the upcoming fair.

*Mike Maltais and Andi Hochleitner, CWHBA on Zoom also. Neither of them made comments.*

9:15

Public Comment: Gil Barouk(GB) questioned the fees that are being assessed at the Jail. “When I give money to the jail for an inmate, they take a 10% fee of the money before it gets to the inmate.” CB explained that he had talked with the sheriff, and he stated that when money is given to a person in jail, if they have bills, that comes out of their money at that time, along with an administrative fee. The Sheriff states this has been going on forever and ever. They are looking for another vendor to perform this service – maybe they will not charge as much. AH also comments that remember an ATM has a fee too. This is a contracted company that does this for the County. GB acknowledges the explanation that it is a private company, but when I owe money to the prisoner, it takes money from that. He thanks the Board for their explanation.

*On Zoom, Isabelle Spohn reports that she can't hear people very well.*

9:20

CB spoke with Will from Oroville Remand & Reload, who asked about the 9<sup>th</sup> Street road vacation that went to their business. He wondered whether the land now belonged to them, since the right of way was vacated. Also, they brought their donation of chips to the fair. CB also reports they have never been formally thanked for this yearly donation. AH- they also donated to the rodeo. JN – pretty impressive how they help the fair.

AH has spoken with the PUD about some portable lighting, \$3800 a piece. Randy Byrd to send the invoice.

9:31

Shelley Keitzman (SK), HR and Risk Manager -

SK – I have brought the resolution & job description for the temporary appointment as Fair Facilities Manager of Stella Columbia. This will go into effect tomorrow, August 23. She has held this position before and will be at a Step 4 on an interim basis until another Fair Manager can be found.

SK – Also, as far as how things are going, I have people helping at the fair.

AH had told the Fair Advisory Committee (FAC) that I would do the purchases, but it appears that now, Stella can do that. We'll continue to use staff at the fair. Public Works will be bringing a forklift and guys to help with what might be needed. There will be a need to set up the entertainment stage.

9:37

I am hoping to have staff from the Sheriff's Office, Jail, and Prosecutors at the Risk convention this year. My goal is to get all to attend. There are also a lot of people signed up for the CPR and First Aid training. I will add an additional class. I am in touch with Lauri at the Health Department.

9:40

It was moved, seconded, and carried to approve Resolution 111-2023 to appoint Stella Columbia to the temporary position of Fair Facilities Manager.

LJ reports the City of Okanogan will be repairing a waterline and Rainier Waterproofing will be starting. Also, she received the reimbursement check from RCO for the Methow Conservancy. This is for the DOT property in Mazama. *There is considerable confusion about how this is being funded and how much the County will be paying for this.* LJ notes that some fees need to be paid back to the Methow Conservancy. AH asks if a parcel is up for sale, do we just update the Parks and Recreation Plan? Unsure of the budget lines that will be used and what our agreement actually was.

10:07

*Back to fair business; AH is planning on going to the WSDA grant presentation. He is considering a new beef barn.*

*Commissioners take a break and during and after there is more fair discussion.*

10:20

AH states that LJ should be getting the e-mail from the PUD for purchase of the lights.

*AV Capture went down at 10:17, but was back by 10:35*

10:37

LJ reports that she sent the Resolution appointing Stella.

10:52

It was moved, seconded, and carried to approve the consent agenda less item 5 as they already approved that resolution earlier.

Consent Agenda:

- 1: Otis Service & Repair Order -Virginia Grainer Building – Hydraulic plunger & stuffing box repairs
- 2, ARPA request #8 Tunk Mountain Fire Hardening Project \$5809
- 3, Appointment letter – Wolf Creek Reclamation District – Steve Oulman
- 4, Appointment letter – Board of Equalization at large #1 – Ruth Hall

11:00

Public Hearing for Monse Platted road vacation,

JoAnn Stansbury (JS), Public Works and Josh Thomson (JT) County Engineer gave the Staff Report explaining there were public comments from Paul Hammons, Emmanuel Hurtado, and the Douglas County PUD Land Specialist during the public comment period. Frederick and Donna Van Doren are the petitioners who wish to vacate 5 points of entry of the platted road Monse Avenue, Second Street and unnamed Alley, that were never actually made into roads. JT states that the County needs 20 feet of right of way on each side. They have agreed to that and also that the road to the boat launch is prescriptive use and they are unable to vacate that. JT states that if all parties agree, I will recommend that the road vacation be approved.

11:15

Public Comment; Paul Hammons (PH) – My property is south of Second Street and I need an easement to that property. I would buy ½ of the right of way/easement if not, it landlocks my property. It's public property and I don't think that just one person should benefit.

Chris Erlandsen (CE) states that he has been hired by the Van Dorens to survey their property as they are interested in selling. As far as he could tell, the dedicated roads/right of ways have never been open. He suggested the Van Dorens do the vacation. We also needed to resolve Hurtados house that has been built on a right of way. CE – I have looked at state statutes and county code, and it's a little convoluted.

11:21

Emmanuel Hurtado (EH) – I own the Monse General Store and the little house across. I am okay with the agreement with the VanDorens, but we would like to expand the south side. I am willing to negotiate and I'll pay with *(for)* what I'm going to get.

David from Overcast Law Offices (On Zoom) – I represent the VanDorens – I find the testimony consistent with the County Code. Anyone who petitions and benefits from a road vacation has to pay. We have no objection to Hammons getting ½ of right of way – 20 feet. We request that Mr Hammon share on the Boundary Line Adjustment (BLA)

JS states there is no new BLA.

CB closes testimony but reserves the Board's need to ask questions.

*At this point, there was much more discussion/questions from the BOCC regarding how the little house got in the right of way, the lack of good lot for Mr Hurtado – not able to drill a well due to size. JS states that he could drill a well on the other side of the road. Donna VanDoren explains how Monse was underwater when the Wells Dam was built and houses were moved, rather haphazardly. The VanDorens have also done a parcel consolidation with the County Assessor as they had numerous parcels to pay taxes on and finally got that fixed. Numerous times, both AH and CB wanted to know exactly what they were approving. They both want to continue the hearing because there is not*

*agreement between all parties.*

Chris Erlandsen states they can't do anything until the vacation goes through.  
EH would like to resolve the issue so we can move on.

CB would like to approve based on agreements. CB – from my perspective, let's put the agreement on a paper and then approve subject to agreements. AH – otherwise, we will continue the hearing. Not everybody has agreed with the 20 foot right of way. There is no agreement between Van Dorens and Hammons. (*Hammons land would be landlocked due to the Hurtado house being in the right of way to the Monse River Road*) Then, some discussion about whether this is a quasi-judicial decision or not.

11:56

AH moves that we continue the hearing until the day after Labor Day. I just want to be sure everyone is happy with this. Hearing is continued to September 12.

12:02

JT gives a (*seemingly*) quick update on the Solid Waste hole in the liner. They have received a quote from one company contingent on how many days it takes to replace. \$55,000 if one day, \$64,000 for 2 days – approximately \$9000 per day.

JT received a call from the Okanogan Wildlife Council (Buck Workman) about getting a legal right of way to the gun club. JT- we should be able to allow an easement and be gated as long as we both have access

JT – road and maintenance – finishing chip sealing and starting culvert cleaning.  
The Eagle Bluff Fire damage to the Guardrail Project is expected to go over budget. Also the Similkameen trail repair due to fire.

AH discusses with JT the RCO check is \$20,000 short of purchase price for DOT land purchase, which the County is doing with the Methow Conservancy. JT will work with LJ on purchase and budgeting.

12:27

Moved, seconded, and carried to allow the fair manager to do the purchasing.

12:32

It has been moved, seconded, and carried to approve fair contracts and fair contract with Lifeline.

JN asks about the planters in front of the Agriplex that need to be cleaned up.  
(*more discussion of the needs at the fair*)

12:45

A vehicle needs to be towed from the fairgrounds. LJ calls Randy's Towing to bring the vehicle to the Virginia Grainer Parking Lot.

12:50

AH has a call into O'Connell drilling to blow out the well at the fairgrounds.

1:01

Meeting adjourned.