

Board of Okanogan County Commissioners
Monday, October 4, 2021 PM

JD—Jim DeTro, BOCC, District 3
AH—Andy Hover, BOCC, vice-chair, District 1—absent
CB—Chris Branch, BOCC, chair, District 2—absent
LJ—Lalena Johns-clerk to the Commissioners
DMcC—David McClay, CEO, Okanogan Behavioral Healthcare

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Summary of significant discussions:

David McClay presents Okanogan Behavioral Healthcare's (OBHC) quarterly update to JD, the only commissioner present. OBHC's biggest issue is retaining staff, especially in light of Gov. Inslee's vaccine mandate. However, there's money available to replace funds that were lost because of Covid, and OBHC got \$100,000 grant Beacon (?) to help Designated Crisis Responder (DCR) staffing be available 24/7. He's also met with Sheriff Hawley to discuss the new use of force laws.

31:35—DMcC—Here's my quarterly update for OBHC. Our biggest issue right now in the county is dealing with the vaccine mandate from Gov. Inslee and still being able services to the community. We'll probably have some employees will be out on either paid or unpaid administrative leave. Reduces capacity and decreases the number of people we can serve. We need crisis response provided by our Designated Crisis Responders (DCRs), but people have applied for exemptions. Trying to see if our outpatient therapists may be able to be retrained to provide DCR services. Because it takes a few months to train new people, we're looking at different ways to retain people, such as retention bonuses. We've lost two child therapists and are about to lose a third. That person has accepted a job with the VA. We're not the only ones providing this service who are looking for ways to stay staffed.

JD—It's industry wide. And across all employment sectors.

DMcC— We're looking at using retention bonuses to keep people.

DMcC—There's money available in the healthcare field to replace loss of revenue due to Covid and we're looking to apply for some. Some available from the state and we can apply for it. Phase 4 funding can be used to supplement bonuses to keep employees.

DMcC—There's also a \$100,000 from Beacon (?). It's a 24/7 program and we're required to be open 365 days/year. We'll try to use the money to recruit and retain DCRs, and look at things regionally. We may have to be creative at least until we weather the storm.

DMcC—Some programs are interesting for our county. Example: Intensive Mobile Crisis Teams. The state set aside money to roll those out. Trying to get our case managers out in the community. There are about 50 people who drive 50% of the crisis calls, so we're trying to be proactive with them, to engage with them before the crisis.

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DMcC—We met with Sherriff Hawley last week, concerning the new use of force laws. It's nice to get ahead of those things and work together.

DMcC—And that's all I have.

JD—OK. My seatmates (AH & CB) are away on family matters but you're recorded on AV Capture, so they'll be able to see your presentation. I'm sure Dennis Rabidou (Chair, OBHC Board of Directors was listed on the agenda as one of the presenters but was absent) has got a full plate.

JD—That's the last agenda item we're addressing today.

JD & LJ discuss the BOCC's schedule for tomorrow.