

Board of Okanogan County Commissioners
Monday, October 24, 2022 AM

JD—Jim DeTro, BOCC, District 3
AH—Andy Hover, BOCC, Chair, District 1
CB—Chris Branch, BOCC, Vice Chair, District 2
LJ—Lanie Johns, Clerk of the Board
NP—Naomie Peasley, Fairgrounds Manager
MG—Maurice Goodall, Emergency Management
PP—Pete Palmer, Director of Planning
AB—Angela Brown, member of the public
CH—Cari Hall, Okanogan County Auditor
Lisa—Financial Management
LM—Leah McCormick—County Treasurer
AL—Albert Lin, County Prosecutor
Tina—Prosecutor’s Office
DR—Dave Rodriguez, County Coroner

These notes were taken by an Okanogan County Watch volunteer. Every attempt is made to be accurate. Notes are verbatim when possible, and otherwise summarized or paraphrased. Note takers comments or clarifications are in italics. These notes are published at <https://www.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

The time stamps refer to the times on the AV Capture archive of the meeting on this date at https://www.okanogancounty.org/departments/boards/live_streaming_of_meetings.php. To locate items in real time, the clock on the wall in the AV Capture screen can be helpful.

Summary of significant discussions:

- *Plumbing issues continue at the Fairgrounds. Commissioner Branch makes suggestions he thinks are needed to fix the on-going water infrastructure problems.*
- *Pete Palmer, Planning Director, tell the commissioners that the Hearing Examiner has requested a raise in salary. Usually his contract auto-renews. She will survey Chelan, Douglas and Grant counties to learn the credentials and salaries of their Hearing Examiner.*
- *Angela Brown makes a public comment, expressing her concerns about some of the candidates running in the upcoming election. The commissioners suggest she talk to the Public Disclosure Commission.*
- *The Commissioners work on the 2023 budgets for the Prosecutor’s Office and the Coroner’s Office. Dave Rodriguez, the Coroner, hopes to add a second employee to the office in 2023 so that he will have back-up.*
- *Recess for lunch at 12:30. Reconvene at 1:30.*

5:30—Pledge of Allegiance

LJ—Proposes a change for the Agenda. Move the two Budget Work Sessions (Maintenance and Commissioners) from Wednesday afternoon to 9:00 and 10:00 that morning.

AH—I can’t be there, but that doesn’t mean you can’t move them.

JD—I’ve got a meeting, too.

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LJ—I'll reschedule them for some other time. Joe (Poulin, Maintenance Supervisor) can't be there Wednesday afternoon.

CB—Lake Osoyoos Water Science Forum. Conference of people from the US and Canada about water quality issues at Lake Osoyoos. Participated in the water quality plan many years ago.

AH—What's the water quality now?

CB—Lake Osoyoos Water Management District monitors the quality now. Biggest problem now is water temperature. There's an international joint commission that collaborates on the water quality.

AH—I attended the Fair Conference. It's geared towards Fair Managers and Fair committees. I learned that menu restrictions are common. Everyone does that, but burgers aren't restricted. Lots are non-profit so they're different from us. One woman in Spokane was going to get a stadium liquor license, so you could have open drinks in the grandstands. A lot of people are dealing with homeless camping at fairgrounds. Other counties want to earn extra revenue at their fairgrounds, but we're booked almost every weekend with quinceaneras, etc. Attending was useful, but we don't need to attend every year.

CB—You hear about non-profits taking over the fairs.

AH—if you do that, then you don't have much control over what goes on at the fair.

LJ—Planning Commission meetings are at 6:00 PM now for the winter months.

Discussion about how the meeting was advertised. The BOCC agenda says 7:00 PM, but the Planning Commission agenda says 6:00 PM.

AH—PP says it's at 6:00 and that's how they advertised it.

LJ—Our agenda didn't give 24 hour notice.

Commissioners decide that because the Planning Department gave 24 hour notice of the meeting, they won't worry about the incorrect time on their agenda.

LJ—TreadMap is offering training on their app.

AH—It'd be good to have the LTAC (Lodging Tax Advisory Committee) Chamber of Commerce, OCTC (Okanogan County Tourism Council) to be there.

AH—At the LTAC meeting, I was asked to meet with OCTC to talk with them about the direction LTAC thinks the DMO (Destination Marketing Organization) should go. We hold a contract with them. Is that OK with you two?

LJ—Another meeting with LTAC in February. The DMO is required to meet with BOCC to talk about what happened in the prior year.

32:15—Discussion of procedure for a rate increase of the Weed Board assessment.

No public comments.

33:45—NP gives Fairgrounds update.

NP—We have two events at the Fairgrounds this week.

NP—Sewer issue at the Agriplex. Put a camera down the sewer system. Found two severe breaks need to be replaced. We can manage with maintenance right after each event, but eventually need to be replaced.

AH—How many weekends are scheduled until it freezes?

NP—Every weekend until December. NP shows a map of the sewer system and where the problems are.

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AH—It's the sanitary T's.

MG—Doesn't look like T's to me. Called clean-outs on the maps, but...

AH—Whatever they are, they need to be dug up and replaced.

NP—The guy that did the camera recommends 45 degrees instead of 90.

Discussion of how to do the repair, who will do the digging (Public Works) and who will do the replacing of the pipe (Norm). CB wonders if there is sewage leaking close to the well, but if that's not happening, then they should proceed.

49:25—AH discusses new tractor. Because they'll trade in the old tractor, there's no need for a public hearing. BOCC passes a motion to spend \$38,000 for the tractor.

NP—Starting gates are being delivered to the shops.

AH—We'll need a budget supplemental for the \$38,000. Where do we want the money to come from? The extra interest we've been earning? Naomie, could you ask the Auditor if we could use the extra interest?

NP—Will do.

AH—The barns. You've got the letter about \$30,000 from Boots and Saddles, and \$120 for the (*unclear*) fund. The barns were about \$250,000 so we need to come up with the other money. We can chat about it later.

NP—Great. I'm done.

54:10—MG—Emergency Management Update.

MG—I wasn't involved in Nespelem (a *shooting*) except that I reached out to Grant County and we had a discussion about how to post a few things. Also did a Search and Rescue for an evidence search.

MG—There was a fire at Benson Creek. Caused by a person. Everything went well. They used one helicopter. About 100 acres.

MG—Tomorrow morning Corps of Engineers will talk about Conconully. They'll explain what they're doing to manage the flow of water.

MG—I'm discouraged, upset, baffled about condition of the water infrastructure at the Fairgrounds.

MG discusses the need for an accurate map of the plumbing system. Can't keep on doing little fixes.

AH—The problem is there's no continuity. Lots of turnover in personnel. Once Norm learns the system, it'll get a lot better.

CB—Can we get an operator's manual for the system? Somebody has to write it. And we need a requirement that you log what you change. You have to do this in the military because people are in and out a lot.

MG—Really need to instill in them the need for a manual.

CB—If were talking about any changes of management in the Fairgrounds, and we need to talk about that a lot more, we have to talk about who hires the maintenance people. Because you've got to know about that stuff to hire somebody.

MG—Really what needs to happen is not to do a quick fix. Step back a little. Let's fix it but let's also talk long term.

CB—There's fundamental stuff and then there's management. Management has got to know about the systems. We know we have to pay people who know. If we had someone with a municipal background, that'd be wonderful, because they manage water systems. They know what's required in public water systems. My suggestion is we have an operator's manual and anyone who starts the job has to learn the system. On a ship, that's the first thing you have to do is learn the system. Physically follow it out so you know it. Otherwise, you'll turn a valve to throttle the system, and if you don't know what the system is, how can you do that?

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MG—Any more questions?

CB—No, but thanks for helping AH with the water situation.

MG—They’ve still got to blow the lines out, but that’s a good learning experience.

1:06:40—PP with the Planning Department update.

PP—Just a few quick things. The Hearings Examiner is requesting adjustment to his contract. I was asked to look at other counties to compare the contracts. Chelan, Douglas and Grant—they all contract with Andrew Kottcamp. Our examiner has been here since 2013 and his contract auto-renews each year.

CB—Auto-renews?

PP—We supply him with a computer and county email address.

CB—Do we have other contracts that auto-renew?

AH—We should do an RFQ (Request for Quote) for Hearing Examiner services because our guy has asked for a wage increase. Can PP put something like that together? And since plagiarism is your best friend, find out if someone else has done this and use that.

PP—Sure. I looked at the paperwork when he was hired and the qualifications were pretty vague and minimal.

CB—Is he an attorney?

PP—I didn’t look into it, but I assume he has some kind of land use law background.

CB—I went to a conference for examiners once and most were attorneys, and a few of those who weren’t attorneys were experienced planners.

PP—Working with Prosecutor’s Office so all of my staff can get training in Public Records Requests in December. Last Thursday I did all of the Public Records Request that was submitted in June.

CB—Training in December? We’ll know who the newly elected officials will be then, and maybe they can be included in the training.

PP—I’ll mention it to Ester.

AH—The Auditor mentioned getting a Records Request Officer. They’re getting a lot of requests.

PP—Oh, there’s a black widow crawling underneath there (by AH’s area).

AH—What? I have no arachnophobia. AH deals with spider and there is a short discussion of black widow spiders.

PP—The Planning Commission has a public hearing to do the mapping error corrections. We put the notice in the paper and our website.

PP—On Nov 1, I’ll meet with Oneza (a consulting firm) via zoom as a kick-off meeting. I’ve been working with Kirk and Michelle to finalize the public participation plan for the SMP (Shoreline Master Program), and we’re just about to the final draft on that. Then we’ll schedule meetings with the Planning Commission

AH—SMP?

PP—Yes. We have to do the SMP before Critical Areas.

PP—That’s all I have.

1:16:30—AB—Is this for public comments?

AH—It’s usually at 9:15, but if you’d like to give one, that’s fine.

AB—Don’t know if this is the right forum. Lots of the candidates are open about if they’re Democrats or Republicans. But other groups are actively trying to lobby for candidates. I’m concerned about

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Okanogan County Patriots. Been around before the Patriots were busted in Idaho but similar to that group. They're a church group. They act as a conservative group, but they're the most liberal conservative group I've ever seen.

AB continues to discuss this group, their activities and her concerns about them in the upcoming election.

CB—Candidates can be a member of whatever group they want to be. I would ask the Washington State Association of Counties.

JD—Just for your information, the BOCC has no jurisdiction over elected officials.

AH—The Public Disclosure Commission handle complaints about things like this.

CB—You can pose that question openly to them.

AH—Well, we've got to move on. Thank you for your comment.

AB—Thanks for your concern.

1:28:00—CH—Because we have the one district pushing back on us, I'm more than willing to push back the date for the Junior Taxing Districts.

AH—We said we needed it by Nov. 1, right?

CB—The budget (not the levy certification letter she's quoting) has to be in by Nov 1, so we'd have ample time to deal with all the budgets. This district has pushed by anytime there's something to do with the budget. Now they're quoting the Fire Commission's manual. Only one other district is concerned about the date. The rest have had special meetings to pass the budget. They're very difficult to work with. I'm getting the state auditor in on this too.

AH—If they don't have the budget submitted by the date we pass our budget, then I don't care. We can't pass their budget. Then they'll have to do something, but it'll be a lot of work to do it.

AH—If it's completely done by the end of November, we can do it. If they don't have it by then, we'll just put zeros in it and pass that.

CH—Levy Certification has to come to the county board by Nov. 30.

AH—Is it our responsibility to figure out their problem? No.

CH—These guys always are a problem, and I wanted to give you a heads-up.

CB—I think this is resolved.

1:35:20—Budget Work Session—Prosecutor's Office—Albert Lin

Discussion of salaries, including how much the state contributes to them. Also discussion of possible procedures for two departments to split the cost of a pallet of paper to save money.

2:52:30—Budget Work Session—Coroner's Office—Dave Rodriguez

Discussion was delayed 20 minutes because AH's computer began to update and restart at 11:30.

DR is requesting a new position in the Coroner's Office so that he has back-up. Currently, he's the only person working in the department. BOCC is supportive of a new position and there's much discussion about an exempt employee vs an hourly employee.

Recess until 1:30.