

Board of Okanogan County Commissioners
Monday, December 12, 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
MG—Maurice Goodall, Emergency Management
PP—Pete Palmer, Director of Planning
NP—Naomie Peasley, Fairgrounds Manager
CH—Cari Hall, Okanogan County Auditor
ES—Emily Sisson, commenter

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Summary of significant discussions:

- *Commissioners discuss rules for use of ARPA (American Rescue Plan Act) funds with respect to Fire District 6's request for money to cover cost overruns during construction of the new Fire Station.*
- *CB discusses the Forest Service's announcement asking people to apply for the advisory committee for the Forest Plan. Also discussion of the Forest Collaborative.*
- *Pete Palmer, Planning Director, says there are now enough applicants to create an advisory committee for Subarea B in the Methow. She also reports that it was probably a clerical mistake that caused Dave Schultz's name to be left off of the email list for the Planning Commission.*
- *Naomie Peasley, Fairgrounds Manager says there is water damage in the Agriplex due to an ice dam on the roof.*
- *Commissioners return to the topic of ARPA funding rules. They list the funding requests they've allocated or spent and decide to fund FD6's request.*
- *Commissioners resume the public hearing for the 2023 county budget. A few errors are corrected and a motion is approved to adopt the budget.*
- *Commissioners approve a budget revision for the Okanogan Conservation Board.*
- *Recess for lunch at 11:30.*

(Shows a photo of a collapsed roof?)

AH arrives. Whose is that?

MG—a person. There's nothing going on. Just minor stuff.

Pledge of Allegiance.

Everyone trades snow stories. Plowing, driving in, cattle in snow, etc.

15:20—AH—The ARPA payment to FD6. You'd sent...

CB—Information I'd found.

AH—CH read it to me. It does say "in support of".

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CB—Reminds me, ARPA or not, of when we gave money to the Methow Conservancy Board. Conclusion I read in MSRC, or maybe their attorney sent it to me. Said it was legitimate because they were doing a service the BOCC wanted.

AH—I kind of remember it. That might be the verbiage we use. Also cut out some of the verbiage that the Fire District supports capitol infrastructure of the county. That's what they do. If you've got a fire at a repeater.

AH—Just a second. Any public comments? No.

CB—Just like we were talking earlier, the well and the pump in Mazama, it's in support of every piece of infrastructure we've got out there, plus the citizens of the county. From standpoint, it's "heck, yeah".

AH—One thing I was looking at. The extra propane for heating. I don't know about that.

CB—I thought about it, too. You have a project.

AH—I'm thinking both ways. Do we just say we're assisting in construction and...

CB—Those are the costs of the building.

AH—I talked with Cody (Acord, Fire Chief of FD 6). He says if they're cut out, it's not a huge deal.

CB—But if you take apart the details, it seems like it's not necessary, but you can do a lot of hair-splitting. It's not like they were having a party in there and wanted to heat the place up.

AH—I know. They have me a tour of the building Friday. They did a good job. It's big, but they kept it to the things they need. They've got a lot of volunteers. 45.

JD—Wow. That's good.

CB—Another project I thought about out there. It's an emerging issue. Emerging opportunities and the .09 dollars. I used to joke and call them emerging necessities because they weren't opportunities necessarily. They were infrastructure projects that had shortfalls like that. Tonasket had one like that and we funded it out of emerging opportunities. Also the trail we bought from the private developer.

AH—That's the hard part. How far removed can you tie it to economic development by .09 purposes.

CB—Even though you can't do development without those pieces of infrastructure.

22:10—JD—We have the budget hearing today at 10:30? Is there anything more that Cari or the girls have to do?

AH—They found a few issues. One with a formula. Also, I got a call from the Water Conservancy Board and they've got an issue. Finish up those two little things, open it up to public comment and adopt it.

JD—Congratulations to you.

AH—Congratulations to us all.

CB—Have the see the announcement calling for people to apply for the advisory committee for the Forest Plan? They're building an advisory committee. Twenty people with various representation. Nine of them identified with some specialty. I thought about applying for it because of the Forest Collaborative work we do. But my co-chair is applying for it. Mike Anderson. On a personal basis, I'm going to write a letter of support and I don't know if you guys would be interested in that as Commissioners.

AH—What does Mike do?

CB—Works for the Wilderness Society. I can share his resume. He's very collaborative. Treats all the members the same. We have the AFRC and we've joined with them in the collaborative. Probably will do that again with what's coming up in Twisp.

AH—Again?

CB—Twisp restoration. Not Mission, but Twisp. I forget how Mike described it. They're just outside of the environmental groups. So they're filing. We were talking about it. AFRC is willing to put up an attorney. AFRC is the American Forest Resource Council, an industry group. Unique partnership. There's

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an act that has to do with communications with Forest Service. Communicating with entities outside of the Forest Service to get SEPA process done. Wilderness Society, Nature Conservancy have contributed money to get the SEPA done. That's why it's a successful coalition. It's not easy. MVCC and Conservation that joined. They didn't join AFRC necessary, but files an amicus brief of their own. It had been open for them to be a part of it.

CB—Mike has substantial respect from most groups. The Wilderness Society and Nature Conservancy are some of the most positive and productive environmental organizations part of the Collaborative.

JD—Where did Tom Bugert (?) ever go? He used to be the Nature Conservative representative.

CB—The guy now is Lloyd McGee. He used to work for (loggers?).

JD—I know the Nature Conservancy when Tom was there, they were actually logging.

CB—He's for treatment. He knows what a saw mill needs to keep going. He's trying to get a saw mill in our region.

CB—You know Lisa Janicki? They've got a logging company. And she's a commissioner in Skagit County (or maybe a different county.)

CB—Three nomination for advisory board for Natural Resources Board. Three openings and Janicki is one of them.

31:30—AH—It's 9:30 and time for staff meetings. Pete?

PP—Good morning. I'm Director Palmer. Just two quick updates.

PP—It's time for the quarterly updates about the advisory committees. Right now we have eight applications for Subarea B (the Central area) and three for Subarea C. We were going to have seven on each committee. Should I forward them to you?

AH—I'd like to get it going, so, yes.

PP—Last thing is that somehow Dave Shultz was omitted on the Planning Commission email list and was replaced by Dick Ewing. Now it's fixed. It was unintentional and we're glad the problem was pointed out.

CB—Oh, that's what it was...

AH—OK, that's good (that it's fixed). Whew.

CB—Thanks for reporting that. I was going to get a phone call, or make a call about that this afternoon. That's good news. I mean, not really GOOD news, but good that it was fixed.

PP—Dave never said anything about not getting any emails.

CB—Oh my gosh.

35:45—AH—Naomie?

NP—Good morning. Not much to report. We're dealing with lots of ice and snow. Where to put the snow and what about flooding in the facilities when it starts to melt. Water damage in the Agriplex. Interviews for a maintenance tech to be Norm's assistant.

AH—Get some sand tubes.

NP—Norm and I talked about it already, and looked into getting it.

AH—Maybe Maurice has ideas. Also, the roof of the Agriplex is always a problem. Any ideas?

NP—Someone suggested heat tape last year but they said it wouldn't work. Two contractors said put a new roof on it but that's not possible. Meanwhile, we've got major water damage on the walls and electrical problems. Ice is really bad on the SW corner of the Agriplex. Doing the best we can.

AH—OK. Sounds good.

NP—That's all.

AH and LJ discuss how to search his email with his new computer.

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1:04:30—CB—I brought that thing up with the Forest Plan because I thought you might be interested in applying.

AH—Maybe I am. I'm reading about it right now.

AH—So I read through the provisions of the Final Rule in the Revenue Loss category. It's stated directly in our resolution the piece I was looking for. It says *"Government services include but not limited to maintenance or pay-go funded building of infrastructure (and that's what that is) including roads, modernization of cybersecurity including hardware, software and protection of critical infrastructure, health services, environmental remediation, school or educational services and the provision of police, fire and other public safety services."*

CB—A lot of those aren't specifically county government deals, so that says it's part of what we can fund. Those guys don't get ARPA dollars.

AH—The amount of the submitted cost overruns are \$251,073. I'd like to send a letter to them letting them know they can apply for up to \$252,000. I think we've done enough research to cover us. Our decisions are based on the Final Rule. The State Auditor said as long as it's applicable within the funding source, it's OK. So whether we as county government could give money from current expense to them isn't relevant to the fact that this is different.

CB—Those who were audited during a time of more uncertainty, the Auditor's Office told them to show them where it was acceptable. I thought the State Auditor should know that.

AH—Are they going to come up with any other definition that you. If you ask them, they say "ask your attorney".

CB—That's what came up in the meeting with WSAC. That's what they said the Auditor told them. Very frustrating. One guy was thinking about quitting. They created another position in Commerce.

AH—The fire districts protect county infrastructure, and they protect the tax base and economics of the county.

CB—So can we give money to a private company that does prescribed burning? I thought of this because just this morning I watched a video about how they set the fires in Chico or maybe New Mexico. They set it from the top on the mountain and work down.

CB and JD discuss prescribed burns.

1:16:15—Discussion of photos of snow and ice on the roof of the Agriplex.

1:21:15—CB asks AH to bring the spread sheet up that shows what projects they were considering for ARPA funds.

CB—Their scope of work should be there when they advertised.

AH shares his screen. Discusses proposed allocations:

- The building was \$1,500,000.
- Public Health for \$1,000,000
- Food and nutrition for \$250,000
- Public Works for \$249,000
- Economic Alliance \$450,000
- Broadband \$750,000
- City of Okanogan \$438,750
- Mazama water hydrant \$75,000
- Town of Winthrop \$100,000
- Town of Twisp \$75,000

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- Tunk fire hardening \$275,000
- Court House security cameras \$52,000
- Dispatch Center \$350,000
- Incentive pay \$500,000
- Rebuild morgue \$500,000

That's \$6,600,000 allocated or spent out of \$8,200,000.

AH—I think we're looking pretty good. We've got about \$1,600,000 that's not in here. We're going to start finding stuff pretty quickly. Not just budgeted but actual letters signed.

CB—Another area just emerged. Second Harvest provided \$1,500,000 in past years. They cut all the food banks off completely.

AH—Why?

CB—Haven't got a complete answer yet, but USDA and the state agriculture have been contacted. It's a huge deal.

AH—We have interim funding.

CB—I'll send you the information.

AH—Cut them off right before Christmas.

CB—Second Harvest cut off all the food banks and they've got a lot of federal grants that support them. They provide food to our local food banks. About two weeks ago.

1:29:40—Andy Hover—So, are we good with what our funding looks like?

JD and CB—Yes.

AH to CB—Do you want to do this?

CB—I move to approve the notice to Okanogan County Fire District, informing them that we would provide in ARPA funds \$252,000 for their Fire Hall needs project.

AH—Discussion. It's Fire District #6. And it's up to \$252,000. Any further discussion?

AH—Madam Auditor, we looked into it and it specifically says in the rule “for the provisional fire services”. I don't think we can get any more clear for the. And our resolution actually reiterates that.

CB—And I sent Cari (Hall, County Auditor) both responses from WSAC and NACo.

AH—Any further discussion? All those in favor?

All three—Aye.

LJ—There's a similar one for the amount... It kind of got backwards, the processing part.

AH—I think this was the very, very first one we had, so I don't know if we lined it out correctly. Commissioner Branch? Can you do this one, too? That one we've already signed all the things for.

CB—This is for the hydrant project?

LJ—We haven't received the contract back from them.

AH—We haven't received the contract back?

LJ—We do have everything ready to go once we do.

AH—I'll send Cody an email for that. For the \$75,000.

CB—I move to approve the notification to Okanogan County Fire District 6 of the award of \$75,000, not to exceed, for the Mazama hydrant project. That's it.

AH—Any discussion? All those in favor—

All three—Aye.

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1:32:30—AH—OK. We have a continued public hearing at 10:30. 2023 Budget. We were opened to staff when we continued it. Just a few minor things that we need to look at. CH discusses errors she's found. She says if we use these spreadsheets next year, we should build them from scratch. When you copy and use them for a couple of year it gets corrupted. Now it's all quadruple checked.

AH—Also we need to look at the Water Conservancy Board. It's Budget 139. We need to include \$10,000.

AH—Anything else for the budget?

AH—Any public comment?

ES—I'm impressed with the budget and how AH and CH seem to understand what they're talking about.

AH—I appreciate that. The other two know the budget well, too, but they let me drive the bus. I'll close it to the public and open it to the board.

AH—discusses snow situation in the Methow and how it's annoying. Snow is dry but very heavy.

JD—I move to adopt Resolution 192-2022, to adopt the 2023 Okanogan County budget including current expenses funds, miscellaneous funds, public works fund and road fund budgets. Passes 3-0. Everyone is happy.

AH—I close the public hearing.

2:00:00—AH—Asks LJ to tell the commissioners about the request she's received.

LJ—We received a request from the Okanogan Conservation Board about their Title 3 funds. They submitted a budget which the BOCC approved. Originally requested \$3030 for contracted services, including hiring Team Rubicon for free hazardous fuel reduction treatment, someone to teach chain saw workshops and a contractor to chip material at Okanogan Conservation chipping events, but Rubicon couldn't follow through. Staffing changes prevented the district for organizing the chain saw workshops, but they did complete the chipping events under budget. OCD requests to move the remaining money to other categories: (reads a list of amounts and categories). Reads a list of items they propose buying so they can do their own outreach.

AH—The FAQs LJ submitted show these requests are allowed.

LJ—These are the FAQs for 2022.

CB—I move to approve the request and revise the budget to reflect the changes. Motion passes 3-0.

2:06:30—AH—Before we break for lunch I'm going to call Chelan County because they were drafting comments about the grizzly bear stuff and I want to be consistent. We need to get them in right. Also, the Farm Bureau wanted us to sign onto their comments and we've done that sort of thing in the past.

AH—Comes back from his call. Clerk of the Board says we can now do whatever we want. (Commissioners and others prepare for a party for JD.)

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CB—Did we get notice from the Treasurer’s Office is we got the first (?) deposit.

AH—Pam sent it.

CB—Filing for the opioid settlement.

Recess for lunch at 11:30