

Board of Okanogan County Commissioners
Monday, May 2, 2022 AM

JD—Jim DeTro, BOCC, District 3
AH—Andy Hover, BOCC, Chair, District 1
CB—Chris Branch, BOCC, Vice Chair, District 2
CHa—Crystal Hawley, Deputy Clerk of the Board
JT—Josh Thomson, Director, Public Works
MW—Mike Worden, Okanogan County Dispatch Center
DS—Darla Schreckengast, District Court Administrator
Tim—Tim Love, Dept. of Natural Resources
Pat—Pat Ryan, Dept. of Natural Resources
Ken—Ken McNamee, Dept. of Natural Resources
MG—Maurice Goodall, Emergency Management

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:

Josh Thomson of Public Works gives the regular weekly update to the commissioners. In addition, he discusses a list of roads that the North Central ATV club would like to see become eligible for WATV use. After taking Gunn Ranch Rd off the list, the commissioners decide the next step is to set up a meeting with the Forest Service, DNR and DFW to see if they have concerns about WATV use on the roads. Commissioners hear a request for \$52,000 in ARPA funds to improve security at Dispatch and the District Court. This is in addition to the \$35,000 grant the District Court has already received. Commissioners also update the spreadsheet of ARPA recipients. Finally, the Commissioners discuss preparation for the upcoming fire season with employees of the DNR.

06:30—BOCC meeting begins with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Discussion and update from Public Works about Wheeled All-Terrain Vehicles (WATV) routes. AH decides that the BOCC not meet Tuesday AM to accommodate the Superior Court which may need to use the commissioners' meeting room tomorrow.

JT—Begins with regular Public Works update.

JT—Finished soil stabilizer, grading still being done, still some shoulder work. Methow Valley, Tonasket and Oroville shops will be doing chip-seal and pre-level. Other three areas will assist.

JT—Osprey Drive currently a private road where Hwy 20 crosses 97 in south Okanogan. Serves several houses. State trying to surplus the road. Road not built to county standards. County didn't accept it as a county road in 1980, and nothing done since then. Pretty much sand. Maybe state can generate an easement since it's not a county road.

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JT—Bridge B4 replacement. Planning to mill the bridge deck next Monday and I'd like to be on site then so can I cancel my update next week?

AH—Yes.

JT—Methow Salmon Recovery is pursuing a grant for the Twisp levee to set the levee back to create more riparian area. Asked me for a letter of support for the grant they're applying for. I'm in favor of exploring the idea at least.

AH—Levee near the church?

JT—A mile upstream of the church. Provides some protection for church and houses. Originally built to protect the highway. County owned levee. Enrolled in the PL 84-99 program so if there's any damage done to it, it's eligible for repair funds. (*Note: Enrollment in the Public Law 84-99 program provides reimbursement for specific damages to levees that result from high-water events.*) Corps of Engineers is also involved in this.

AH—I want a hydrologist to examine this to know what the flow will actually be. Cites problem from many years ago when the county removed a levee.

JT—Some feel the levee is currently causing erosion on the opposite bank. They'll do a lot of studying about what the impacts will be downstream. They do a good job.

JT—Consent agenda—cattle guards franchise renewals and authorization to call for bids for gravel crush and salmon creek drainage projects. In two weeks we'll bring a recommendation for vehicle gps system. Monitors and tracks where vehicles are.

AH—Can you meet me sometime about that. Maybe talk about union stuff.

AH—Discusses cattle guards installation.

JD—On Upper pass of (*inaudible*) Creek by the Grange Hall. I guy told me this morning that the blade operator up there is the best he'd ever seen.

JT—Great. I'll pass it along.

19:45—North Central ATV Club request to open some routes in the Methow Valley to WATVs. They provided a list and maps. RCW46.09.455—Authorized and prohibited uses for wheeled all-terrain vehicles. Reads section c that says counties can open roads to WATVs using ordinance process. Usually involves State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA).

First group—All of Cub Creek Rd and portions of East and West Chewuch Rds. Quite a bit of roads with speed limit over 35 mph. Some of Cub Creek is 50 mph.

AH is surprised. It goes up a steep hill. Really odd that speed limit is 50 mph. We could look at reducing it to 35 because it's winding and steep.

AH—E Chewuch would be good because you can come over from Boulder Creek. Meets Forest Service road. I get lots of complaints about people riding bikes and roller blading. Near Lundgren's property. But the straight stretch would be tough.

JT—From Bear Creek to the irrigation crossing.

AH—Don't want to take it off. See what comments we get. Keep all of those roads on the list and see what comments we get.

23:50 Second group—Upper Beaver Creek from Balky Hill to Lester Rd., All of Balky Hill Rd. Eastside County Rd from Twisp to Balky Hill, Twisp River Rd to Poorman Creek and all of Poorman Creek Rd. Some within Twisp so not the county's jurisdiction. Some are already 35mph and gives good connection to Forest Service roads. On the Twisp River Rd side, some up to 50 mph.

CB—Some roads are 50, but I bet not many are driving that fast.

JT—We can do a study to see how fast people are driving.

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AH—The ones going 40—dropping it to 35 shouldn't be a big deal. So I think we should keep them on the list.

33:45 Third group—Goat Creek Rd from Goat Creek Sno-Park to the Mazama Store. Currently it's mostly 50 mph.

AH—It's mostly a straight stretch. They probably wanted that to get fuel in Mazama. Leave it on the list and see what public sentiment is.

35:17 Fourth group—Bear Creek Rd. from E Chewuch to Lester Rd and all of Lester Rd. Already 35 mph.

AH—Don't include the little tail of Lester Rd. I bet the DFW will have something to say about this. There's the wildlife area all along there.

36:45 Fifth group—Next is Rendezvous Rd to Gunn Ranch Rd and all of Gunn Ranch Rd.

AH—No.

JT—The only benefit I can see is if there's somebody who lives along there and wants to connect to it.

AH—There are so many people using Lewis Butte trail and there's not a great place to park. There's no room to park trailers.

37:50 Sixth group—Bill Shaw Rd. entire road. Pateros to Watson Draw Rd. Some in Pateros. Some is 50 mph. Up to FS Rd 415100. That road is gated in some places and FS doesn't have clear title. Could be an issue.

AH—Didn't we do Bill Shaw the last time?

JT—No. Didn't get down this far.

Discusses alternate connections if there's a gate.

AH—This group is a question mark in my mind if it's gated. Well, we should leave it on there and we can have questions if there's a hearing. That's the whole list?

JT—Yes.

AH—Except for Rendezvous-Gunn Ranch, I say leave them all on the list. Do we ask the agencies for comments first? Forest Service, Dept. of Natural Resources, Dept. of Fish and Wildlife. They can point out stuff.

CB—Great to consult with them before SEPA comments.

AH—We can set up meetings with the and Josh and us. And please send me the list and maps.

JT—Will do.

1:06:30—Discussion of American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding request for video and security improvements at the court house and dispatch center.

MW—I'm Mike Worden with the Dispatch Center. The jail is looking to replace the video security system. Looking to piggyback on their system to get same vendor, common platform. Replaced my cameras several times. Heard that Darla and District court looking for security system. My vendor talked to Darla about District Court needs. Now we've got quotes. Court got a security grant of some kind.

DS—We're guaranteed \$35,000 from Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) and maybe get more but there's no guarantee of that right now.

MW—Some is to replace panic buttons at the end of their lives and cameras. \$49,000 for cameras, which is more than the grant, so we're asking for ARPA funds. My cameras are \$19,000 because all the recording would be done by the Court.

DS—Upgrade panic buttons--\$19,000. \$49,000 total for cameras.

MW—Asking for \$51,000 to \$52,000 to cover both her needs and mine.

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AH and CB discuss changes to their ARPA spreadsheet, showing which lines are locked in (green) and which they are still unsure about (orange).

AH—Will \$500,000 cost for coroner's suite go down?

MW—Don't know. I'd be surprised if it did. Full suite is like a medical facility.

AH—Once we get projects locked in, we'll send letters telling recipients when the money must be spent by.

AH—To CB—Can you add up all the ones marked with orange?

AH—OK. So, we've got \$2,300,000 that we're not positive on the spending (the orange ones). I think with the \$52,000 that they asked for....

CB—It's a small amount compared to the rest of this.

AH—I just want to make sure we don't promise if we don't have it.

CB—So how to allocate it. We've got the line item for ARPA in the budget. Do we want subcategories?

AH—Did you do that report?

CB—Yes. But it was project allocated and spent before March 31, so there was only one item in it.

AH—That was the building?

CB—Right.

AH—If we hard allocate these—send letters—then they're hard allocated.

CB—Before we send letters, we should call them up to see where they are.

AH—We're good with the \$52,000.

MW—Good. To DS—Are these final, firm numbers?

DS—Panic buttons are. Just talked to them last week and they haven't changed.

MW—Maybe some adjusting, so we'll proceed with finalizing the projects.

AH—Where do the cameras go?

MW—There's a map to show where the cameras go.

DS—Our cameras will be interior. I believe they're going in the hall.

AH—Not in the court room?

MW—We need to finish developing the project, but we needed to know we'd have the money to pay for it.

AH—Camera in the court room would be odd.

MW—I'm sure there are rules that apply

AH—We need to have policies written up re: who gets to view the recorded video, etc. compatible with state law.

1:36:46—MW—Another thing: I got a call from Kittitas County Emergency Management. They've talked with Senator Murray's office. Looking for \$20,000,000 for radios in the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) in Cle Elum. Her office wants to put it together as a Region 7 set of needs. So I'll put it together. Subscriber radios. I'll list our dispatch facility and see what happens.

AH—Definitely organize into Need 1, Need 2, etc.

MW—We've been doing that. I'll try to bring that back to you, but time is short.

MW& DS leave

1:46:20—JD—Move to go to executive session for 10 minutes under 42.30.110.1(i) inviting Ester Milner and Pete Palmer. Motion passes. Litigation.

2:09:20—Discussion with the DNR—Pre-Fire strategies with Tim Love, Pat Ryan and Ken McNamee. Maurice Goodall and Mike Warden are also present.

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Informal discussion about preparing for the coming fire season. Discuss plans for prescribed fires (called Rx fires.)

MG—I want them to know who we work together at fire time.

Tim—We’re saving resources for the initial attack. Keep a fire under 10 acres. We use air craft heavily.

Ken—We’re working towards helicopters using night vision.

Tim—Also experimenting with on-board mixing. The aircraft scoops up the water and the gel or surfactant is injected into it and it gets mixed up as we fly. Water from a high-alkalinity lake was used once and it caused the gel to glob. They want to make sure it doesn’t happen again. It doesn’t look like Okanogan County has any alkaline lakes.

AH—Discusses the need for housing in the county to attract people to work on the fires. Everyone agrees that housing is a problem all over.

Ken—Last year one team got Covid. Only one team, but unfortunately one person on the team died and another was hospitalized for a period.

Discussion of vaccination requirements. Employees of local Fire Districts have to follow the requirements of that District. Employees who work for the DNR must be vaccinated. But some Fire Districts may not have a written policy.

Discussion about efforts to coordinate burn bans across the county to make them more uniform. MG is involved in that effort.

Meeting adjourns until 1:30 Tuesday afternoon.