

Board of Okanogan County Commissioners
Monday, August 1, 2022 AM and PM

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
Cha—Crystal Hawley, Deputy Clerk of the Board
PP—Pete Palmer, Director of Planning
MG—Maurice Goodall, Emergency Management
NP—Naomi Peasley, Fairgrounds Manager
EM—Ester Milner, Chief Civil Deputy Prosecutor

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Summary of significant discussions:

PP and BOCC discuss Sub-Area Advisory Committees. Decide that they should be limited to property owners, but anyone can have input in the process. They hope to form the committees by September 15.

NP updates the commissioners about a small tractor that doesn't work, the newly arrived bleachers and soil erosion at the walkway near the grandstand caused by the unexpected rain.

After the lunch break, CB and the Fair Advisory Committee discuss the Poultry exhibit during the fair with respect to Avian Flu. The commissioners decide to go ahead with the Poultry Barn but the exhibitors should know that the situation could change.

4:15—CB says the Fair Advisory Committee will discuss avian flu and its effects on the upcoming fair.
CB—Interesting development with the guy that called and yelled a lot of profanities at me. He was upset at what goes on at Legion Park and drug deals there. It's a city park and so the county has no authority over it. The guy is feels like he's being passed around by everyone. He may come to the discussion with Mr. Beamon tomorrow so we should be prepared.
CB—Forest Health Collaborative quarterly meeting on Wednesday.
AH—I have a meeting, too, on Wednesday.

AH—NP says the little tractor has another issue. We should surplus it and get a John Deere. LJ says the lease is over so we own it. We can surplus it if we want. Surplus auction is next spring.

18:15—No public comments.

Board of Okanogan County Commissioners
Monday, August 1, 2022 AM and PM

CB—Lori Caswell invited Lauri (Jones of Community Health) to the FAC meeting, but she sees to threat to people from the chickens at the fair, but recommends hand washing stations.

JD—Talks on the phone about tickets for friends to an event.

23:15—JD—Josh (Thomson, County Engineer) was telling us last week they were going to buy ice machines because they're spending \$5-6/day on ice. There's a new L&I ruling. On site, we have to provide water every three hours and with the ice they'll have cooler water. Did the price of water go up? JD—Pritchard, MT, has a completely self-contained ice machine. Just put the money in and a block of ice or bag of cubes comes out. It's plumbed to water.

36:25—PP—Working through the fee schedule we adopted last year. A few things weren't quite clear we're going to bring it back for revisions. Make it clear that the fee for the hearing examiner and SEPA fee are in addition to the permit fees.

PP—Asked to have the Health Department to start providing us with a report on applications for on-site systems compared to whether or not they've site analysis with them. So I received the first report for July 1-14. 11 permits that came in. 4 were actual permits and 5 were under review. Out of the 11, 5 don't have a site analysis. New systems.

AH—Can you email the report to us, and highlight which don't have site analysis done?

PP—Yes.

PP—You asked some time ago to provide a report to Parker at Department of Ecology. Turns out a lot of the emails, mine and Gene's, were going to his junk mail. When we finally got in contact with him, he want to chat about supporting a contract or re-upping and extending the annual (?) hosting for Riverbank. Says that he's been doing a lot of tech support but not billing for it.

AH—But aren't we paying an annual fee.

PP—My staff says Riverbank has never been up and running well. We can enter debits and credits, but there are glitches.

AH—I'll set up a meeting with Parker. I think we pay a hosting fee that includes tech support. Can you find the documentation about that?

PP—Yes.

PP—Last thing is that I received an email from Isabelle Spohn last Friday talking about advisory groups. She thinks people are unwilling to volunteer until they get answers to their questions. Hearing a lot of skepticism about whether the county will do what they've promised. Uses Squaw Creek and the gravel pit as examples.

AH—We don't promise things. We put people together and in their advisory capacity we say "this is what the advisory group says".

AH—As for Squaw Creek Rd, one woman was adamant that there should be a name change. All the people of the road signed a petition to change the name to Hunter Mountain Rd. Because it's a county road, that's the way you change its name.

AH—The gravel pit. The concerns were dust and noise. We've got 7-10 years worth of gravel crushed. I asked Josh to use a decibel meter during the crush. The traffic going by was louder than the crusher.

PP—Neither one of those issues had to do with what the advisory group would be doing. I think there are lots of misconceptions about what the committees will do. They're going to be planning.

AH—I'd like to extend the timeline. Discusses the MVCC deadline. I've set up a meeting with people in the lower valley to talk about stuff. The entire zone code will take a while to get through. We need to discuss hot button issues re: zoning: airports, urban growth areas—are we zoning well if the cities decide to annex, etc. These people have the ability to come to the BOCC and say we have an issue with

Board of Okanogan County Commissioners
Monday, August 1, 2022 AM and PM

some particular zoning. R-5 vs MRD-5 for example. Valid change because there's no water for group use. So I have a meeting set-up for August 18 at 7 PM in Methow.

CB—One point you make is quite valid. The expectation that the advisory committees are feeding their information to the Planning Commission. There's no promises or guarantees, especially for things that are allowed—gravel pit for example. There's no group formed yet.

AH—I want to hear ideas re: zoning that could be done prior to us doing it. Incremental change.

CB—I understand that the concern is that they did this before and their concerns weren't acknowledged.

AH—A group of 10 could come up with ideas that aren't possible. But we can learn what they're concerned about.

PP—I'll go ahead and clarify what the advisory committees will do and who can apply.

AH—Who can apply. It says property owners and Isabelle asked about people who rent and have lived there a long time. Teachers who've worked for a long time but can't afford a house. But if they're living in the cities, then that property isn't affected. I think we have to keep it with land owners.

JD—You can top-load with those kind of people.

PP—And people can still have a voice without being a member of an advisory committee. I think the whole issue of getting the advisory committees going is getting bogged down with zoning questions.

AH—Set a deadline of September 15 to get it going. Is that OK with you two?

CB—I think we should use the same criteria as the Planning Commission. Citizens of the county. Renters should have a voice. They're not setting the zoning and reviewing, developing proposals. But we're remiss in leaving them out.

AH—But people with a lease have no skin in the game. They can move at any time. Owners are stuck with whatever decisions are made.

CB—Wonder why the law doesn't make the Planning Commissioners be owners.

AH—The Planning Commission is county-wide. Our planning takes into account the borders between cities and county. Some sub-areas don't touch a city.

CB—If that's the decision of the board, fine. But the recommendations go to a commission that isn't limited to owners.

PP—The spirit of the Comprehensive Plan we just adopted, so if we change that from owners, we'll have to change the Comp Plan, too.

CB—That's not a big deal for me.

PP—Isabelle also mentioned that the lower valley group met for two years without being accepted or acknowledged.

AH—Because they weren't appointed by the commissioners.

PP—That's the first I heard of a lower valley plan.

AH—If you want to keep holding onto the past, and keep going back to what happened then...

PP—That's my point. Let's move on.

CB—Point is well taken. We don't have any control over previous or future administrations.

AH—And right now, we're asking for people to be on a committee that provides input.

CB—There was an effort way back then, even if they weren't named to a committee. In this particular case, it was different and we can't do anything about it now. It was a slap in the face to the public. There was a big meeting asking that they provide input. We have to make a commitment, we do a good job of listening and if they make useful points, we use them. But that work that was done in the past was not respected. There was a bit of a take-over in this county by people that were able to leverage power and change everything. That's where the mistrust comes from. We want to avoid that.

AH—We've done something down there that people complained about for a long time—one acre zoning.

Board of Okanogan County Commissioners
Monday, August 1, 2022 AM and PM

CB—Because it made sense. I agree I don't want to fight over how it all works.

AH—Let's give it to September 15.

PP—All right. I'm all done.

1:01:20—AH—Maurice, do you want to go?

MG—I'll meet with the fire advisory board. Getting close to banning campfires. Forest Service and DNR still allow them. We had a few small fires. I'll let you know when campfires are banned.

MG—Retention bonus for my employee. Refers to retention bonuses offered in Sheriff's Department. My employee is very dedicated and works above her job description. Ask that you consider that for her position. I think it's unfair.

AH—Duly noted.

CB—The way the resolution was as specific as we could get but pretty general, but we can fix unintended consequences if we left out an employee.

AH—Need to remember there were levels of work where people could work from home, but others couldn't. So people weren't forced to work with people who might be sick.

MG—If we were to work from home, supplies wouldn't have gotten to the jail....

AH—You have to make a case during Covid.

MG—that's what I was doing. We couldn't work from home. Delivering supplies, sometimes after hours.

CB—If you submit what that looks like, that'd be good to have.

1:08:20—AH—Naomi, we talked about your tractor this morning. LJ can update about its status.

LJ—Last payment just went out and should arrive this week. Then it takes them up to two weeks to do process a "paid in full" letter for us. So we should have it at least by the end of the month.

AH—Thinking about surplus the tractor and getting another one.

NP—There's also the trade-in option.

AH—We'll look at that, too.

NP—The tractor—the bearing went out. It wasn't put back correctly. A couple of mechanics said that. So we're renting a tractor this week—two huge events coming up.

NP—Bleachers are half-way set up. They came in on Friday. I hired a contractor to put them together. Discovered they sent the wrong bleachers. Sent us non-elevated instead of elevated, so I've requested for a refund for the difference between the two. There's no ramp with non-elevated. \$25,000-\$30,000 difference in price, but they'll work just fine. Not going to recommend to anyone that we work with this company again.

NP—Bleachers will be up by this weekend. Workers working between 12:00 and 4:00 in the morning to avoid the heat. The bleachers came in 71 different pieces. Had to hire some people to put them together. Cost \$4,000.

NP—Received \$15,000 grant from the Washington Festivals and Events Association. For fair and entertainment.

AH—So how much was the lighting?

NP--\$21,000.

AH—The Fair Fund paid for that, so the grant money goes back into that fund.

NP—Asked Cari (Hall, County Auditor) how to do this. Haven't got the contract yet. Just the award letter.

NP—Very, very busy. Asked last week if my helper could work full-time for two months. Shelley (Keitzman, HR) said you need a resolution and a budget supplemental. So please consider this. She used to be full-time, temporary but now she's part-time permanent and she can't work over-time.

Board of Okanogan County Commissioners
Monday, August 1, 2022 AM and PM

AH—I don't see a problem with the change. Work with Shelley and get a resolution drafter. Figure out how much it'll cost. August 15 through October 15.

NP—Currently on top of toilets, RV camp, bleachers, pedestrian walkway being eroded away by the grandstands. Because we didn't allow the contractor to dig down further as he requested, so it's eroding the walkway. He asked permission to dig down two feet further and was told no, so that and all the rain has caused the erosion. Trying to deal with that.

AH—Let's back up.

NP—I'm dealing with the problem right now. Ordered sod.

CB—Let's be clear about who said we couldn't do that.

AH—Yes. We had specs. Josh, me and you looked at it about trying to cut the slope down but it wasn't in the specs. There was no talk of water eroding the walkway because all that stuff was going to have sod on it. And how is it eroding because it hasn't rained in a month?

NP—It was the rain last month that caused the problem. I have pictures.

CB—I want to make sure we don't spend our time blaming. I think AH was getting blamed. Let's just deal with the issue.

NP—I didn't blame AH. It was our doing and us three that didn't take into consideration the unexpected rain.

CB—I know, but you said you were told no and that's why I have to ask.

NP—Totally assume what you want from it. Yes.

NP—The budgets are done. Fairgrounds Committee has a lot they're dealing with now. I think you'll discuss another issue this afternoon.

AH—The fence?

NP—I ordered them the day you approved them. Just waiting for them to arrive.

AH—Cool. Thanks.

NP leaves.

AH—The thought was already there. Yeah, it's going to be steep, otherwise you'll be in a pit. The remedy is to plant grass there.

CB—In the middle of a project and it rains, sometimes you get adverse effects. My issue was that it was everybody's issue, but that's not what it sounded like and that's not right. I'll continue to point that out.

1:23:10—LJ gives her report.

LJ—I met with Rena Shawver on Friday. Executive Director for Community Action. We went over the affordable housing and homeless housing reports. Discussed various needs to decide which way the Housing Coalition would go when they meet with you on August 9. Productive meeting. Wanted update to Professional Services agreement we had with them. Told her it was used for tiny homes that the Okanogan Community Homeless Shelter was going to build. Group will bring forward some new ideas as well

LJ—Tomorrow BOCC will meet with Michael Beaman tomorrow about the 20-Master Plan. I've invited the offices involved.

LJ—Budgets for 2023 have been submitted to the Auditor's Office. Lists numerous budgets. Other line item budgets still need to be submitted by Friday. Also EMS budgets for Tonasket, Oroville and Methow districts. Due in November.

AH—What about the levy question on the ballot?

LJ—I'll get to that. Also reviewing budget status for 2022.

Board of Okanogan County Commissioners
Monday, August 1, 2022 AM and PM

AH—Methow Valley EMS District. The Auditor sent me the jurisdiction resolution check-list. Due on Friday. There are several things that need to be done by Tuesday. Asked Ester and she'll prepare explanatory statement. We have a template that will help. Form to appoint committees to write for and against statements. Or the Auditor can advertise for them. Due August 16.

LJ—Haven't started on ARPA resolutions yet, but it's at the top of my list. Hope to have them done for you to consider next week.

AH—The ARPA stuff didn't have to be done today, and the EMS stuff did.

LJ—When I met with Rena on Friday, she asked how the money for the food assistance was doing. Told her we were going slowly, but had a template for an agreement. Would you like me to send it?

AH—Yes. I want it reimbursable. After last year...

LJ—...it's much easier at audit time if you've already got all the documentation in the file.

LJ—The Otis elevator situation. Otis said we could get the oil tested by some other company, or just move forward with changing it.

CB—Just get it done. It doesn't save money. And looking at options, this is more efficient for the way we operate.

AH—And test it for what? If you pay for the test, but don't understand the results, just base the decision on age.

CB—It's easier for the company doing maintenance to just change the oil.

LJ—One last thing. I set up a meeting with Will Keller and Community Homeless Shelters to look at the progress of the tiny homes. County paid a lot of money to get the project underway, so it'd be good to check on it. Tomorrow at 3 PM. Hope Michael Beaman is done by then.

LJ—That's it.

1:37:30—AH—Ester (Milner)—We have an executive session.

EM—With Jenna Mandell-Rice.

CB—Move we go into Executive Session with Ester, Jenna and Tadas Vasilius (?) to discuss land use litigation. Until 11 AM.

2:04:20—We don't have any other business until 1:30, so we'll recess until then.

2:06:35—JD hasn't returned from lunch. Discussion of ideas with the Fair Advisory Committee (FAC) and Chris Branch.

AH—We're back in session.

CB—I'll start the discussion and then anyone who wants can join us. Last week we had a special meeting concerning the Avian Flu. Pros and cons of not allowing any poultry at the fair. The state veterinarian recommends not allowing poultry exhibitions, etc., until 30 days after the last outbreak in the state. Lori checked.

Lori—It's been no new cases in the state since last Thursday. But no new cases in Okanogan County since last May.

CB—Lori also checked with Lauri Jones. Said they've had it before but it's not a threat to people. Recommend hand washing.

AH—So just a threat to the animals, taking it back to the flock.

CB—Sheila, superintendent of the poultry barn, had some recommendations. State vet also had recommendations that we can do.

Lori—Sheila says she'll do whatever is necessary.

- Not allow any sick birds.
- Restrict public from touching the birds.

Board of Okanogan County Commissioners
Monday, August 1, 2022 AM and PM

- House the waterfowl separately.
- Have some birds inside and some outside the barn to keep them more separated.
- Show chickens and turkeys first. Clean everything and then show waterfowl.
- Clean and disinfect frequently.
- Verify that poultry wasn't recently acquired.
- Don't share equipment.
- When you take them home, isolate from the other birds for 30 days.

CB—Lori is the secretary of the FAC. We gathered information and since the county is ultimately responsible for the Fair, that's why we're having this meeting today.

AH—There's no recommendation from the state NOT to have poultry?

Lori—The state is recommending you not have poultry, but it's only a recommendation, not a rule. A lot of fairs have cancelled their poultry. Some parents have said they don't want their kids to bring their poultry. But of the 14 who got back to Sheila about it, there was only one that was iffy, more like let's see how it goes as we get closer.

AH—How many poultry folks are registered?

CHa—Sheila is having a hard time getting into the meeting.

AH—Do we have a decision point? When?

Lori—If we decide not to do poultry, it gives the kids a chance to get a rabbit or something. If there's no exhibit, we can still do the auction online, but that takes time to arrange. If we have the exhibition, it gives them time to do what's necessary.

AH—There's no recommendation from the FAC? It's all on the commissioners?

CB—In the conversation, they'd like to go forward, but commissioners have the final decision.

CB—If we decide to go forward, everybody knows that if things have to change, they will change. Sheila would be happy to make the accommodations if she has to.

AH—Talking to Kelli Evans from the Methow Valley. Kelli—How many kids do you have that are in the poultry program.

Kelli—Of those that responded, 4 in 1 family, 2 in a family, 1 in another. Two have pulled out totally. Two have chosen to do rabbits. Another family decided not to risk it because the chickens are pets.

Lori—Sheila says "usually there's about 75 kids".

AH—Maybe Sheila contacts the people and tell them we'll plan to make the decision in the next two weeks.

CB—I'd say yes now and make a commitment to adapt going forward.

AH—I think we had avian flu when I was first a commissioner.

CB—And Sheila had lots of ideas of how to deal with it. If you're willing to notify everybody that things might change.

Lori—Entries start today. No entry fee.

AH—So what's the point where we say "this can't go on"?

CB—I can't define a definite point. Potential for a serious outbreak, but maybe the group won't decide to go forward. But if enough people decide to pull out, maybe then it'd have to do the virtual stuff.

Lori—And kids can still do educational posters and videos. And Fairs won't be docked if they don't have poultry.

CB—I'll make a motion. Move to allow the fair to go ahead with the poultry competition, conditional upon the Poultry Barn superintendent responding if the situation gets worse or we get new information.

AH—Yes. Go ahead and Sheila can come to us she thinks the Barn should be shut down. We'll make the final decision.

Passes 2-0.

AH—I don't want Sheila to feel responsible.

Board of Okanogan County Commissioners
Monday, August 1, 2022 AM and PM

JD arrives and the other commissioners update him.

JD—I ran into Rod.

AH—Need the letter of engagement with Summit Law to work on Sheriff’s Office and binding arbitration.

JD moves to authorize the chair to sign the letter of engagement. Passes 3-0.

BOCC adjourns at 1:51 until Tuesday at 9:00 AM.