

**< Board of Okanogan County Commissioners
Monday, January 5th, 2021, AM**

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(Time stamps refer to a Zoom recording available on County Watch website.)

Present:

Chris Branch (CB), BOCC District 1 (by Zoom)
Andy Hover (AH), BOCC District 2 (by Zoom)
Jim Detro (JD), BOCC District 3
Lanie Johns (LJ), County Clerk
Will Carpenter(WC), Pest Board Director of Chelan and Douglas Counties

Summary of important discussions: (7:30) Broadband access - NCW Economic Development District (the county plus the Tribes and Methow Broadband Action teams) is applying for a grant; (29:30) Chelan-Douglas County Pest Board Director Will Carpenter offers his help to include Okanogan in a 3-county effort to contain the Hawthorn/apple maggot outbreak; (1:32:00) CB pushes to raise the salary of new Senior planner

- 7:30 Broadband - Commissioners and LJ discussed the wording of a letter of support for the Economic Development Administration (EDA) broadband grant application. Opening sentence: "The Board of County Commissioners, in partnership with the Economic Alliance, the Colville Confederated Tribes Broadband Action Team and the Methow Broadband Action Team, supports the submission of the EDA broadband grant application by the NCW Economic Development District."
- 29:30 The biggest issue for the County Pest Board, down to one member following three retirements including the director's, is the apple maggot which will require a partial or full quarantine within three months. In Chelan and Douglas counties, reports WC, orchards pay a \$1 tax per root stock acre and in Chelan Co. a \$3.50 per parcel tax. AH: A 3.50 per parcel tax in Okanogan could yield \$91,000 but they need to designate land types with zero tax for those who receive no benefit. JD: There's never been apple maggot found in a commercial orchard in Okanogan Co. WC adds "Or in Eastern Washington." But in Bridgeport the PUD has removed Hawthorn (which attracts the maggots) from 200 acres and it is proliferating in riparian type areas. The commissioners raised the need to hold a public hearing to classify property and determine a "just amount." WC offers to include Okanogan Co in the two other counties' data base and to form a partnership to work out a common strategy and establish a uniform tax rate. CB says they'll ask former Pest Board members what the industry can bear as far as a per-acre rate. WC says he can also fill the new Pest Board Director in on the situation and help the county to replace the vacancies on the board.
- :32:00 The senior planner is two steps below the planning director on the salary scale, says CB, but should be on the same level given her education and contributions to the commission, as she is "really her right hand." AH says to mover her up would "create a ripple," but agrees there should be some sort of incitement for having a degree, maybe a stipend, and agrees to ask for comparisons with the salaries of other senior planners.

1:35:49 - Meeting adjourned.