

Board of Okanogan County Commissioners
Tuesday October 25, 2022 AM

Present:

Chris Branch (CB) – BOCC Vice Chair, District 1

Andy Hover (AH) – BOCC Chair, District 2

Jim DeTro (JD) – BOCC, District 3

Lanie Johns (LJ) – Clerk of the Board

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

Time stamps below are in real time. To locate specific topics, a click on the AV Capture video screen at <https://okanogancounty.org/avcapture.html> can assist in finding the correct spot on the video recording.

Summary of Significant Discussions or Actions:

Fire Chiefs haven't decided about ending burn ban yet due to not enough rain, Staff from the State Auditor Office gives Award to Okanogan County Staff for excellence in Financial Reporting citing strong internal controls, good communication between departments, leadership, willingness, and over all good stewards of taxpayer monies, Roni Holder-Diefenbach – Director of Economic Alliance provides 2 lists with priorities for infrastructure projects – Omak Reservoir Project given the highest priority, BOCC wants to meet with OCOG (Okanogan County Organization of Governments) & Economic Alliance to discuss utilizing monies in Economic Alliance fund for different projects and possible changes in process. Big career event at the Agri-Plex tomorrow.
Public Works Update, and Update from Emergency Services and Army Corps of Engineers on dredging work in Conconully following the fire and flood. Recessed at 11:52 until 1:30 session.

9:18

CB mentions that the Fire Chiefs haven't decided about whether to lift Burn Ban yet as there has not been enough rain. *Recent fire in Benson Creek Road area.*

9:30

County Staff and State Auditor staff in attendance. County Staff are being rewarded for excellence in Financial Reporting. This is only the 6th time this Stewardship award has been presented to any county. State Auditor commends staff on keeping government open through pandemic difficulties and recognizes County Staff's strong internal controls, effective communication between departments, willingness to learn, good leadership, and overall good stewardship.

9:37

AH thanks the State Auditor staff for their help.

9:40

Pam Johnson (PJ), Deputy Treasurer (*currently running for position of Treasurer*) thanks all staff – a team of the entire County.

JD states that in his 12 years as a BOCC member, “this is the best news and the first time I haven't chewed out the State Auditor”

CB cites the Finance Committee's good work.

9:55

BOCC moves, seconded, and carried to approve the Consult Agenda as presented.

Consent Agenda:

1. Agreement Amendment #1 – Sheriffs Equipment/Coroner Building – Beaman Architecture
2. CDBG – PS-CV-1 Grant 20-6221C-119, Request #21 – Dept of Commerce
3. Purchase Award – Walter Truck-Mobile Fleet Service – Public Works
4. Purchase Award – Rolloff Truck – Mobile Fleet Service – Public Works
5. Plans, Provisions, & Specs – Central Landfill – Public Works
6. Plans, provisions, & Specs – 2023 County Wide Guard Rail – Public Works
7. Approve 20-year master plan Pre-Design – Beaman Architecture
8. Resolution 151-2022, creating Fund 172-LTAC

10:00

Roni Holder-Diefenbach (RHD), Director of Economic Alliance presents 2 lists for infrastructure projects to the BOCC. There are public projects and others - prioritized by a Committee - The Omak Reservoir Project being the highest priority. AH notes there has been no request for ARPA funds for this project. RHD notes that she had sent something over regarding this project earlier.

Discussion followed regarding how this list is made and prioritized – an old process that may need revision. Economic Alliance has \$41 million at present in this fund and has not paid out anything yet.

Quite an involved discussion mostly between CB and AH regarding how to change process and how to get people (Cities) together to discuss this.

RHD suggests a roundtable with the Cities invited. CD offers that OCOG might be a good place to get everyone together to discuss this. AH concerned that government takes too long and would like to expedite the discussion and awarding the money for different projects. AH concerned that OCOG might not be the best place to discuss this. CD argues this structure is in place and it might just be the forum to do this, if they are asked to come to a BOCC meeting, rather than just a representative from BOCC. All incorporated cities in the County need to be invited.

10:35

AH states that what he is proposing would be to go off the infrastructure list and approve the projects. Currently, the funds are to be split 40% County, 40% Cities, 20% Economic Alliance. We may want to change this breakdown.

Discussion regarding history of this fund, and the need for an equitable process. Also, communication styles between the BOCC.

AH would like to remove the moratorium on spending these funds. The wheels of government are too slow.

CB states that local government people historically, don't see eye to eye.

RHD thinks maybe she should talk with Leah McCormick, Treasurer. Also reminds BOCC that she is here to get an approval for the lists by the BOCC and answer any questions regarding them.

10:55

Moved, Seconded, and Carried to approve of the list and according to the priorities. Also will need a Resolution prepared.

RHD reports there is a big event at the Agri-Plex tomorrow, and invites the commissioners. Many vendors and participants together to expose students to different career opportunities.

11:09

Josh Thomson (JT), County Engineer reports on maintenance and road conditions. Awaiting rain. Salmon Creek Project should be back on track this Saturday. Road will remain closed until Tuesday, then paved.

JT has been doing field work of bridge inspections. Currently, looking at bridge on Bally Hill Road.

There are 2 open positions in Public Works:

Office Manager is moving out of state.

Doing interviews for truck driver in Area 1

The Trails & OCOG position still being prepared

Also talking with HR/Risk Manager about insurance. Looking at other possibilities for insurance, possibly utilizing insurance offered through Union. Not sure if you must be all in the Union or can just utilize the insurance. Will learn more.

11:30

Daryl Downing (DD) from Army Corps of Engineers and Maurice Goodall (MG) Emergency Manager reporting on the dredging work being done on the Creek going through Conconully. They have diverted the channel and different entities including the Tribe netted 108 fish. They are trying to capture the debris before it gets into town. It's been a great effort so far, per DD. Have been utilizing local contractors who really know the area and care about their work. They are hoping to keep the water moving. They have been moving 3000-4000 yards of material. This should improve habitat for fish also. Army Corps of Engineers have been lucky to get on this project right after it was approved 10/1 and have been able to do 'after the fact' permitting.

They will be working in Conconully everyday through Saturday and invited BOCC to come and check it out.

11:52

Recessed until the 1:30 meeting in the PM