

**Board of Okanogan County Commissioners**  
**Monday, November 9th, 2020, AM**

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**Present:**

Chris Branch (CB), BOCC District 1  
Jim Detro (JD), BOCC District 3  
Lanie Johns (LJ), County Clerk  
Joe Poulin (JP), Maintenance Supervisor  
Naomie Peasley (NP), Fairgrounds Manager  
Pam Stevens (PS), Veterans Relief Board

*(Time stamps refer to a Zoom recording of the meeting, available on the County Watch website. First hour only available on AV Capture recording)*

**Summary:** AH urges budget restraint, assures that extra expenses will be approved as needed. Budget work sessions for; Maintenance (harmonizing pay scales); 00:00 - Fairgrounds requests: water truck, 9 new toilets and paint job for Fairgrounds bathrooms plus a new shower room, a snow blower for courthouse activity at the Agriplex (hopefully reimbursable with Covid funds), resurfacing of parking lot; 58:04 - Veterans Relief Board (increase in travel funds); 40:41 - Emergency Medical Services providers are seeking CARES funding for respirators and cardiac monitors. 1:26:00 - Chris Branch is concerned about behavior of a county official

**Maintenance** - Raise grade of two custodians at first of next year, resolve the too-big difference between pay grades 10 and 12. A part time custodian position has been hired to clean the Agriplex. When normal courthouse activity resumes, this post, to be reimbursed with CARES money, will be cut. Reductions made in provisions for travel (halved to \$750), advertising (decreased by \$500) and general maintenance which pays for several service contracts (down \$14,000 to \$60,000). AH says instead of budgeting for "what might be needed", to budget "tight" and later get extra costs approved by the commissioners.

**Fairgrounds** - JP requests \$25,000 for a new water truck seeing as "all we have is 5-gallon cans." Paint jobs needed for bathrooms inside and out, outside railing of racetrack and grandstands. 00:00) Request for outside contractor to spray for weeds met by AH's call to compare options--with their own sprayer it's a "5-day job", or the proposed water truck could do it with its 5-foot boom. A new room is needed for the north showers since they are situated next to the water heaters, making access difficult in case of repairs. The existing tank toilets in the older bathrooms lack pressure, should be replaced at a cost of \$27,000. AH says it should be done in phases. A new snow blower will cost \$15,000 and should be considered a Covid expense, likewise a \$10,000 upgrade by professional services of the sound system in the Agriplex. NP explains that a \$10,000 advertising budget is needed to adapt to social media: "It's a new thing." AH prefers retaining last year's figure of \$4,000, then re-evaluating.

Revenue - Facility rental, expected to increase with the prospect of holding the fair next fall, set at \$75,000. This also includes arena rental and RV park rental fees. (32:37) Advertising revenue from banners on fair buildings could bring in \$3,375 and fair admissions \$100,000.

- 40:41 **Emergency medical services (EMS) providers** - are seeking reimbursement for Covid-related purchases: Fire District 15 (with a budget of \$241,600 for salaries and \$40,260 for other expenses) contracts with the for-profit ambulance service Lifeline which is requesting \$196,811 for ventilators and cardiac monitors. Air Methow, a non-profit, estimates it's added expenses at \$44,393 (replacement of two defibrillators, public information and public service). There needs to be an addendum on the contract with Lifeline stipulating that if the company should cease to exist, this equipment would return to the county.
- 58:04 **Veterans Relief Board** this year had a starting fund of \$86,000 and finished with an ending balance of \$77,000. Its monthly budget averages \$30,000, offset in part by property taxes, (down 8,000 from last year), DNR, FWL and donations. PS foresees cutting spending on clothing, funerals and burials, and raising spending on travel, there being fewer volunteers to help with getting to and from appointments, and on housing rental. Other current expenses: insurance, utilities relief, vehicle, accreditation training, computer equipment and a part-time office assistant. AH intends to send an e-mail out urging departments to slow down on spending, making it easier to manage the end of the year.
- :26:00 **CB raises concern** after learning that someone working for the county showed disregard for the Covid situation by saying "there's that Covid thing, whatever," in a Facebook post. He feels there should be a policy for the discussion of controversial topics on social media by public officials if those can be taken as the position of Okanogan County. AH says as an individual it's freedom of speech. Secondly CB said that in the meeting room people should wear a mask. "We have a policy. They should give an excuse if they can't wear a mask." AH adds "If they can't wear a mask or stay six feet apart." CB says "Doesn't it say on the door?" AH replies that it doesn't have to; they're not open to the public.
- :34:40 Meeting adjourned