

Board of Okanogan County Commissioners
Tuesday, December 15, 2020 PM

Present:

Jim DeTro (JD) - BOCC Chair, District 3
Chris Branch (CB) - BOCC Vice-Chair, District 1
Andy Hover (AH) - BOCC, District 2
Lanie Johns (LJ) - Clerk of the Board
Leah McCormack (LM) - County Treasurer
Lisa Schreckengast (LS) - Staff, Treasurer's office
Cari Hall (CH) - Auditor
Josh Thomson (JT) - Public Works
"Undersheriff"
Larry Gilmann (LG) - Assessor (Listening)
Dave Rodriguez (DR) - Coroner

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/Commissioners/Minutes%202020/2020%Minutespage.html>.

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

Summary: Tuesday, 12/15/2020 PM:

Public Comment Period : Question (Spohn, Twisp) regarding timeline for resolution of audio on AV Capture failure in BOCC Hearing Room (Answer: end of January, maybe February.) After AH had raised fire protection plan in AM, she points out Okanogan County Community Wildfire Protection Plan is pre-Carlton Complex and at least 7 deaths later, it still hasn't undergone the required update; discussion regarding the most effective way to budget for needed vehicle replacements including utilization of loans, carefully scheduling maintenance, purchase of heavier vehicles, sales of vehicles only over the web rather than at Fairgrounds. Debate as to whether public hearings require public comment: Cmr. Branch advocates for public comment after completed budget is available. Continuation of budget hearing to Monday, 12/21/2020 at 1:30 PM. Budget to be placed prominently on BOCC website ASAP so public can see it before final hearing on Monday.

1: 30 PM (2:38:15 AVC) - Public Comment Period

Isabelle Spohn, Twisp, commenting. Asks if there is any projected date for new mics to be installed. Also, good news: One woman who came to BOCC meetings years ago but quit because she couldn't hear and is hard of hearing - she is now able to monitor via County Watch website and can hear Zoom; but AV Capture is impossible for her to hear, so I've been wondering if there are any projected dates on that installation.

LJ - Equipment needed is ordered and the contractor will be coming at beginning of the year - it could be in February, could be at the end of January. That's where we're at as far as I've been told.

IS - I'd like to remind people that hearing impaired people have add'l difficulties with background noise. So I do think it's important. Did you get the info you requested on the Community Wildfire Protection Plan? One comment on that - to me, the most relevant thing is that these were pre-Okanogan Complex, pre-Carlton complex plans, and since then we've had 7 deaths I can think of off the top of my head, including the 3 young guys who wound up in an area where they probably shouldn't have been - and possibly if this or some good plan had been in place, that may not have happened. The Okanogan CWWP contains important things like guidelines as to egress and ingress, and another point was that it was supposed to have been added to the Okanogan County Comprehensive plan but was not. Don't know about the Methow Plan (which sounds like it's for the Town of Methow plan unless you open it up.) The CWPP was part of the lawsuit on the Comp Plan - where fire was not dealt with to the extent it should have been in the Comp Plan - fire and water issues were the main things. And so the lack of this kind of plan seems important to me, especially considering the large fires and deaths we've had since the plans expired.

1: 20 (2:43:40, AVC) - Financial Committee enters

1:40 PM (2:45:40 AVC)) Discussion returns to AV Capture issues.

Summary: Chit-chat - talking about Zoom and AV Capture: Branch - "I walked over there" and could hear everything I said. Everyone else also says they can hear with ear buds, etc. over AV capture. They all can hear well and I don't know why other people can't hear. May be the connections elsewhere. Branch says he should try it in different places. (*Can't hear the rest.*)

IS - Asks to speak: It's the rushing sound in the background that's so hard for some people. I have one note taker that just doesn't even deal with it (just uses Zoom) Actually two note takers...they take their notes only by Zoom . I generally have both of them (AVC and Zoom) up on my screen. But I've had to go back on AV capture to find things I've missed, and it's hard to find the spots - usually I can hear it then, but only with headphones and then only turned up all the way. That technology isn't , uh....- some people don't have it - and possibly there need to be recommendations for hearing impaired people. I alone, myselfjust listening to it alone afterwards, I can't hear well enough to take notes without headphones - and without turning it all the way up.

CB - When we get rid of that "white noise" we might have a different situation.

IS - That's right, that's the problem. And are the mics going to take care of that?

CB - I think they'll address it at the same time, because they are supposed to address the problem that noise is something in the system...

LJ - It's in the sound box, where the sound comes in - it has a fan inside of it that makes that noise, and that can't be helped, because it has to have something to cool it. System has to have a fan.

CB - Well, maybe they will need some new technology to address it.

LJ - I think the consultant will be addressing it because we need a new box, and there will be a new box that can accommodate the extra mics (speakers?), and central services addressed that sound issue with him, so I think the new box will have a different kind of cooling thing... so we're hoping that will be addressed.when they change out the box that the sound is going through.

IS - Will pass that on, because the note takers were wondering. In fact, right now, on Mondays there are two note takers that make recording the meetings themselves and post those on the county watch website so people can hear the meetings because AV Capture sounds so bad. (The 2 note takers on Tuesdays don't have a device to adequately record them.) I don't think it's good to have a situation where people can hear the meetings on the County Watch site but not on the Commissioners' site.

CB - Yeah, that could imply something.....(laughter.)

IS - Will pass that on, and will be looking forward to the fix. Also, you probably already know, with hearing impaired people it's not always the level of hearing...but that they cannot hear with background noise and where you may have some HI people that could possibly hear the words at the proper volume, the background noise may render it impossible for them to actually understand, and that's a federal issue.

CB - Agreed.

IS=- Under the ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act.)

CB -We're gonna fix it.

IS - Will pass it on.

1:45 - J.D: We have a continued public hearing. (Not on agenda.)

AH - (Beginning the "hearing") So can we go to the Planning? So , is that (pointing at screen).....???

CH - Initially, yes.

AH - Is that how you want to put that into all the different funds?

CH - Yes, I'm good with that.

R&M - \$3,000 R&M. Did not have the \$3,000 on it, right? Right.

CH - That is the only thing we were looking at yesterday. Goes over what was updated.

AH - "Un-red that line."

AH - "002." This one...

Impossible to follow ("this one, that one.")

1:50 - Miscellaneous dues, "623." Travel - They are not traveling, so cut down by \$1,000.
Why did Josh come up?

Why is "15 " still red?

AH - go to "009." Needs to have in the section that is Fairgrounds. All we have to do is put that into "009.

1:55 PM - JT & Undersheriff, Finance committee, BOCC, - Discussion of various ways to finance replacement vehicles in order to save money. Involves Roads fund, ER&R, whether to buy outright or not. On a 10-year deal, makes more sense.. if we could loan ourselves something for a 5-year period, we might save \$\$.

Hover proposes - Without taking a bunch of \$\$ from Roads - use committed in your budgeting to get an "x" amt of \$\$ each year, & maybe you don't use it every year.

Purchasing outright is \$3 million over 10 years. 7 cars this year. Outright purchase : 2 (?) SUV's, pickups, admin vehicles.

2:06 PM : JT, Dave Rodriguez has joined, Undersheriff, Financial Department.
Consensus: We will sell all online, not at county fair.

JT- Average , we get \$2,500 per vehicle.

AH - Also the 2 shops are the only thing we are talking about? Tonasket shop in Tonasket. Oroville shop we thought we might move -

JT - but it serves a purpose.

AH - We are good at plugging in 3 million . PILT (Payments in Lieu of Taxes) comes in at (? 2.7 million?)

2:12 - LM - It's been an ongoing problem with replacing vehicles - has been an issue for years.) Obviously the car thing is a big issue. We're trying to start something and we need \$\$ upfront. I believe the current expense fund is for an emergency - you can call it an emergency. Has been an emergency for years. Let's get it right. It's the right way to go. Then turn around and improve the current expense reserve. This is a necessity. We have never gotten it right.

AH - Looking at 3 million dollar houses in Douglas county. Some of those are worth more than our county. Issues brought out. Move another \$200,000 over.

JD - I agree with Leah.

AH - We put in paying off the entire loan. We can cut off \$90,000 if we do not repay the entire loan.

CH - The rest is on the conservative side.

AH - But there are always things that come up. We are budgeting now on a -0 carry-over budget. We are only ok now because people are being very careful. But what if that isn't true every year.

CH - We can put \$\$ back into current expense reserve

JD - So don't pay that loan off.

LM - We are not getting good return on investments like we were. It may be a good time to use this \$\$.
Cut pay-out in 1/2 for the loan. Be sure what the 2021 payout is.

2:19 PM : CH - We are clearing up a lot of the past. 102 - change the \$300,000.

Josh - does not include the road levy" (Yes.)

AH - So that is squared away. Un-red that line. Need to put big bumpers on them (vehicles.)

JD - Where we do the maintenance on these rigs? As taxpayer, I'd rather you get heavier duty vehicles.

AH - If we are in trucks, maybe they will last longer than 150,000. THANKS, JOSH FOR DOING ALL THIS WORK.

2:23 PM - budget again:

AH Where are all of the things we have for sale - fairgrounds items, vehicles, etc.
How many vehicles to surplus? Valued at 28 at \$2,000 apiece (They adjust for this.)

AH - Should do a resolution that this \$\$ goes immediately back into vehicle reserve fund.
How long can you stretch the purchase of vehicles out?

Undersheriff - Need to order 4 right away . Could probably wait on the others until June.

AH - Time of year is imperative. Wait until next Christmas for some of these *(to save \$\$, since a lot goes on sale at Christmas time.)*

AH - Put notes in as to why we have made changes, so we remember. Asks if everything we did, the mechanics, is ok?

(Yes.)

Around 2:35 PM CH & AH - Summarizing, All final amounts that have been shifted are ok. Page. They adjust all final amounts that have been shifted. Rodriguez discusses autopsy costs, etc. Adjustments are made.

2:48 - Public Hearing opened

AH - Pateros Budget is a problem. There are mitigating circumstances. Carlene Anders needs to be called.

CH - This should not hold up the budget.

2:57 PM - Hearing opened to the public. Closed to staff. No public comments, so a discussion occurs after AH's question whether public comments really need to be taken at a public hearing. Followed by CB addressing what a public hearing actually is.

CB: is this the 5th day of Public Hearings? (Yes.) My only comment is that the public hasn't had the opportunity to look at a budget to comment on ...and didn't know when the public hearing would be. I think we should run the hearing to another day - say, Here is the budget if you want to look at it. We have been having a hearing that is basically a workshop, for a few sessions now.

AH Challenges CB, stating that BOCC doesn't have to take public testimony at a public hearing:

AH - We don't have to take testimony at a public hearing.

CB - My comment is that you do.

AH - If the comments come in that you should change amounts, then what do we do?

CB - I'm just pointing out what a public hearing is. I earlier talked about what a budget is.

AH - Show me in the law where it says a public hearing requires public comment. We've done it the same way for 4 years now.

(Others taking a break.)

CB - AH asked for my opinion. I say that it's hard to have a public hearing without a copy of the budget, and you just finished the budget right now.

AH points out that Spohn is online taking notes - what does she think?

Spohn - States that a budget hearing was not on the agenda that is on the AV Capture Screen for today.

LJ - I usually don't revise the agenda for "continued" hearings.

Spohn - I agree with Branch, that the public needs to see a copy of the budget before there is a hearing on it. I have little or no idea what's going on in these workshops myself - it's almost impossible to follow it.

CB - Looking for legal citations regarding public hearings in response to Hover's question.

AH - Don't worry about looking it up.

CB - I need to - only asking about hearings.

Discussion of date/time: Monday is fine. Tuesday is fine.

CB - Leave Public comment open continued until Monday. Give some indication that public comment will be taken.

LJ - There's time on Monday, if Planning doesn't use the 2 1/2 hours scheduled for them.

AH - Public Hearing Continuation: at 1:30 Monday PM, December 21. Public comment remains open until we continue again.

CB - Has information found at MRSC (*reading*) - "Public meetings are governed by the Open Public Meetings Act: a governing body, etc.....: ***a public hearing is primarily to obtain public questions or comments before significant decisions are made.***" He goes on, saying that the public has no idea what's been talked about for the last 4 meetings.

CH - confirms. She will put it on the website, entitled "Final Draft."

(NOTE: FINAL BUDGET HAS BEEN PLACED CLEARLY ON COMMISSIONERS' WEBSITE.)

Coroner Dave Rodriguez on budget: Contract for autopsy services with Snohomish County Approved. All communities are having a problem with forensic pathology - we will be looking toward Moses Lake in the long term. And in winter, Snohomish is hard. Very difficult to get it all done in one day, there and back....but they are an excellent group to work with.

CB - Regarding Budget: Final draft is in the statute. We've done a lot of things wrong for 4 years and turned it around. Even though people Even though people might not respond, it's just because they don't know how to read it. MRSC even has suggestions on that.

3:29 PM - Minutes of Nov. 30 & Dec. 1, Dec. 7-8 approved. Consent Agenda Items 7,8,9,10 & 11 approved. Billing Services Approved. Move to sign interlocal agreement with city of Okanogan. Vouchers Approved. Moved and approved to sign interlocal agreement with City of Okanogan.

3:39: Note taker has to leave.