

Board of Okanogan County Commissioners
Tuesday, March 30th, 2021, 1:30 PM

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Present:

Chris Branch (CB), BOCC District 1
Jim Detro (JD), BOCC District 3
Andy Hover (AH), BOCC District 2
Lanie Johns (LJ), County Clerk
Roni Holder-Diefenbach (RH-D), Economic Alliance
Lael Duncan (LD), Community Action
Isabelle Spohn (IS), former member Methow Citizen's Council , head of County Watch

Time stamps refer to Zoom recording on website.

Summary of Important Discussions: *Public Comment regarding Planning public hearing recommends more sub area input for comp plan, regrets lack of consideration for due process at hearing; decision on legal printing bid stalled on a technicality; County joins Economic Alliance to help procure grant for Loomis Firehouse feasibility study; Close-out on CDBG grant administered by Community Action giving food aid to a quarter of the county's population, and providing housing assistance; shuffling of budget funds to accommodate: unused election aid, donations to Veteran's Office, Planning, Noxious Weeds positions and Pest Board reorganization.*

Comment on Planning Commission deliberations on Comp Plan - (4:48) IS: Supports Palmer's approach to Sub Areas (BOCC, yesterday); but a supportive resolution from Commissioners would be needed to restore public confidence. If too many Sub Units (Hover) is an issue, Spohn suggests: 1) Chelan County, smaller than Okanogan County, has six functioning Sub Areas. BOCC could draw on visions, goals and policies already previously drafted by 3 potential Sub Areas: Mazama area (Sub Unit A) , Middle Methow (Sub Units B,C,D) and Lower Methow Valley, thus preserving socioeconomic/ cultural differences. Remaining areas of the county could add 3 Sub areas. 2) Reinstate long-standing and functional Planning Commission of 9 members to assist in management of Sub Areas.

6:28 - IS: PC deliberations on Public Comp Plan comments were a "slap in the face" to the public once again. PC leadership prevented discussion of comments, reasoning that no comments dealt with "legalities" and they were basically all from one organization. Spohn objects, stating that her own comments were original and a major section was apparently read by only one PC member. Do not request citizen comments if they will not be considered! Also, self-appointment of chair and vice-chair (over objections of three other PC members) with only 25 seconds of discussion showed disregard for Roberts' Rules of order.

10:40 - CB would like to see repeat of 2009 process with "input from neighborhoods to the plan", not "creating other commissions to be fed but groups with input for their areas." (20:22) An appointment process would require staff personnel to be working with them, accelerated training;

county has already hired new senior planner. (23:33) IS: "State says commission's main job is to develop a comprehensive plan." CB: "Under the direction of a Planning Director."

30:21 - Legal printing bid might not be accepted from the cheapest bidder (Gazette-Methow) since they didn't send a rate card as County's bid request had specified.. CB: "Statute says can't they exceed national rates but doesn't say it has to be included in bid." LJ: "Can't tell if they don't provide rate card." JD: "Want to get a legal opinion on it?" A decision before April 5th deadline.

53:30 - County needed as physical agent in grant request for Loomis Firehall feasibility study says Economic Alliance head, RH-D. Consultant has been found, study to take 4-5 months. Resolution passed to authorize county administrators' in-kind contribution (paperwork, sending in reports, providing signatures).

1:16:32 - BOCC proceedings from 3/22 and 3/23 and County and Public Health vouchers and payroll approved; retro payroll for Public Works and consent agenda approved except agenda item 1 (Driskell to Verestar Road project, Grant Construction).

1:27:51 - Close-out of CDBG Grant for sub-recipient Community Action. It had been extended from July to February. About \$2.2 million was spent on emergency housing, rent relief, mortgage payments and food pantries. Local groceries benefited from the purchase of \$10,000 worth of meat. The National Guard aided in the distribution. 10,217 people had benefited by February, a fourth of the county according to CB.

1:32 :25 - LD: Thanks to Sen. Short, Senate has approved a request, now going to the House, for aid in purchasing land for resource and training center to provide job training for low income people and resources for shelter in disaster. Place moved to be more accessible. "With more construction we could build more affordable houses."

(LJ mentions receiving "about 32 questions" which she forwarded to Planner Pete Palmer to answer.)

1:57:42 - Public Hearing, Supplemental appropriations - Comm. passed Res. 39-2021 to authorize budget supplemental appropriations to allocate funds within the budgets of Current Funds Planning, Veterans relief fund, Noxious Weeds fund. Auditor's office gave back \$125,000 in unused Covid grant money given up front for federal elections. (Retiring) Veteran's Officer Pam Stevens will make money available donated by the Armed Forces Legacy for the purchase of scanners. Noxious Weeds is channeling asst. Manager wages and unreserved funds into field tech position and minor equipment.

2:02:53 - Supplementals, Pest Control - Comm. passed Res. 40-2021 "authorizing budget supplemental appropriations to allocate funds to Tri-county Inter-local Agreement for Pest Control" AH: remove expenditure line for bounty fees, send to Central Services for Tri-County Board. Previous Board financed materials for trapping starlings and was reimbursed. Public Hearing on new board April 15th.

2:24:45 - Meeting adjourned