

Okanogan Board of County Commissioners
05/04/2020

JD—Jim DeTro
AH—Andy Hover
CB—Chris Branch
LJ—Lalena Johns-clerk to the Commissioners
PP—Pete Palmer, Director of Planning and Development
DH—Dan Higbee, Building Department
DG—David Gecas, Dept. Pros Atty
RH—Rob Haneline, Ameresco
KL—Kirk Lundgren, Ameresco

This is a paraphrasing of conversations by one of several volunteer citizen note takers and published on the website of Okanogan County Watch (countywatch.org) Any writer's comments or explanations are in italics. For officially approved minutes of Board of Commissioner meetings, normally published at a later date, see www.okanogancounty.org.

Summary of significant discussions:

Briefing Among Commissioners: Commissioners vote not to extend the May 4 ending date on County Resolution 51-2020.

Planning Department Update: Commissioners agree to amend the Aspect Consulting grant, agree to authorize tree work in Sa Teekh Wa Park, in Winthrop, and go into executive session with David Gecas to discuss a piece of property between Winthrop and Mazama

Discussion of Ameresco Proposal: In a 3-part voice memo, the commissioners discuss a proposal for an HVAC system with Ameresco personnel. They talk about bidding procedures to make sure bids from different companies are easy to compare, as well as other bidding procedures.

Briefing Among Commissioners:

AH—Does the county issue any business licenses?

LJ—A few. Pawn brokers, for example. Their licenses are issued by the sheriff.

AH—People ask us to open up the county, but we never closed it.

CB—Yes. Except for hospitality businesses with resolution 51-2020.

AH—I move that we not extend resolution 51-2020 which deals with nightly rentals.

CB—I second the motion.

JD—Any discussion?

AH—I've had questions. Basically, are we going to extend the closure (Resolution 51-2020 expired on May 4, 2020.) It's a decision for the BOCC.

AH—I believe businesses are following the state's guidelines and the county doesn't need to duplicate it.

CB—Some counties are suing the state. The state says if a company is violating the rules, call this phone number and call the sheriff. How does the enforcement work? Our resolution is a political statement.

AH—It's not really political but just adds certainty. We don't need to rescind the resolution if there's an end.

CB—Controversies may come in different forms. Constituents are concerned with whether we're dealing with something real or if we're dealing with a conspiracy. We need to make a statement that what we're doing makes a difference.

AH—It does make a difference but it's unfair. Some businesses are up sales volume. Walmart is open. Why can't smaller retail be open? Stores can do this, with sneeze guards, masks, etc.

CB—Do I agree with disparity? No, but how do we deal with it?

Times from video:

1:45 Discussion begins. CB discusses business disparities between big box stores and small retail

4:50 CB would like a list of closed businesses. Discussion continues concerning ramifications of closing businesses.

6:15 AH discusses need and uses of data.

8:43 Commissioners vote on motion not to extend the ending date on County Resolution 51-2020. It passes 2-1, with AH and JD voting Aye and CB voting No.

8:55 Commissioners discuss whether or not an executive session is needed to discuss a complaint about an employee. They discuss RCW42.30.110(1) (f): *To receive and evaluate complaints or charges brought against a public officer or employee. However, upon the request of such officer or employee, a public hearing or a meeting open to the public shall be conducted upon such complaint or charge.*

David Gecas is included in the executive session.

12:40 Commissioners adjourn for a 20 minute executive session.

After executive session.

DH—I'm getting calls about extensions on building permits.

AH—I move we allow extensions to building permits.

CB—Second the motion. Do you (DH) have an idea what extensions you want to permit?

DH—Yes. Six months isn't going to break us. We haven't been slammed with extension requests this morning.

AH—Any permit that's still active, you can extend it for 180 days without a fee. You'll write a resolution?

DH—Yes.

Planning Department Update

PP—I have three items to discuss.

1. I need to amend the Aspect Consulting grant. BOCC passes Resolution 52-2020 in a 3-0 vote.
2. I've been reading the emails concerning work that the Town of Winthrop wanted done on trees in Sa Teekh Wa Park. It's owned by the county, but you wanted Winthrop to issue the permit. I've learned that the crews doing the work are considered DOE employees and so will be covered by L&I and for liabilities that may happen. (Discussion about why the county owns the park instead of the Town of Winthrop)
CB—Do we just need to approve the work to be done?
PP—Yes. I started to write a resolution. It'll take about 20 minutes more.
CB—Let's just do it on the consent agreement tomorrow. JD or I will be here to sign it.
3. I have an update on a specific property near Winthrop. AH—I think this has to go to executive session. DG, PP and the commissioners go to Executive Session.

After executive session

Discussion of Ameresco Proposal

Voice Memo #1 Commissioners discuss Ameresco Proposal for a HVAC system that uses VRF (Variable Refrigerant Flow) and another system that uses Geothermal. Discussion includes Rob Haneline and Kirk Lundgren, both of Ameresco, and Joe Poulin, Maintenance Supervisor for Okanogan County. Haneline wants to be sure that when the commissioners compare proposals, they're comparing apples to apples. Commissioners also discuss which bidding procedures should be followed.

Voice Memo #2 Continued discussion of how to format bids so that they would be easily comparable. Haneline asks if they'll use the design/bid/build or the design/build strategy. BOCC decides it's not ready to decide right now but needs to figure out how to make the comparisons. They also discuss bonding requirements. Finally, the commissioners approve several vouchers.

Voice Memo #3 Commissioners continue to approve vouchers. Then they continue to discuss bidding processes, bonding and the small works roster.